A year of labor/management meetings with a committee including all DC 37 locals that represent titles at the Henry J. Carter facility at 122nd Street and Park Avenue in Manhattan has yielded progress on a key demand of Local 768: increased staffing for our Respiratory Therapists.

We also made progress on management’s move to replace full-time union members with Respiratory Therapists hired through a temp agency. That practice has now ended, with temps called in only to cover lunch breaks for our full-timers.

Our lead negotiator in the discussions was First Vice President Michele Wilson (at right, in lab coat). She credits her persistence and good relations with reps from other DC 37 Locals including 420, who were also involved in the discussions, with the win.

That isn’t to say that no conflicts remain, however. “I bring up topics that have to do with disagreements between departments,” she says. “We want to resolve issues without going to a labor/management forum. That’s not always possible.” She says that sometimes issues discussed with management in what is supposed to be a forum for resolving issues lead to discipline against members—a practice that brings the entire concept of labor/management cooperation into question.

She notes that Henry J. Carter, already the City’s largest facility for patients on ventilators, has increased the numbers of critically ill patients being treated from 120 to 145.