KAISER PERMANENTE TO LAYOFF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EMPLOYEES

Kaiser Permanente, a large HMO in the United States, announced layoffs for 530 employees in Southern California. Kaiser Permanente said the layoffs will include personnel in the Inland Empire. The layoffs amount to less than one percent of the company's staffing. The company currently has a 65,700 employee workforce. Its facilities include offices and hospitals from Kern County to the Mexican border. The company serves around 3.5 million members in Southern California. Though some of the affected employees may be offered vacant positions within the company, and some may be rehired next year, the company is cutting jobs because it is waiting for membership growth. Some of the employees let go are part of a union. These employees may be able to benefit from a retraining and education program that will allow them to continue generating earnings, and be insured for up to a year. Union officials knew of the layoffs since October 2012. The HMO's layoffs come at a time when there are challenges in the health care industry as businesses implement provisions of the federal Affordable Health Care Act, and doctors suffer burnout. According to MedPage Today, a survey of physicians discovered doctor burnout and dissatisfaction with work-life balance affected patient safety. Of the physicians surveyed, 37.9% of doctors said they experienced burnout symptoms and 40.2% reported they were not satisfied with work-life balance. With more people seeing doctors because of healthcare reforms, healthcare professionals practicing in areas providing front-line care, such as general internal medicine, family medicine, emergency medicine, radiology, neurology, are at risk for burnout. Companies such as Kaiser Permanente may face medical mistakes and unsafe practices when there is a smaller workforce. The re-election of President Obama continue the development of a system that allows consumers to report medical mistakes and unsafe practices by doctors, hospitals, pharmacists and other medical providers. Such a reporting system might drive up malpractice liability and financial penalties for poor performance. Federal officials reported that medical mistakes usually went unreported. For example, a study found that doctors have little training to counsel patients with addictions, such as to lose weight. As part of a study published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine, researchers recorded conversations between 40 primary-care physicians and 461 of their overweight or obese patients. Overall, doctors talked about weight in 69 percent of appointments. The subject of weight was difficult to bring up for some doctors. Less than half of the doctors (38 percent) stated they had training in behavioral counseling. Do not worry about the layoff, visit granted.com to check latest health insurance jobs in California.