



Facilities Bargaining Association News Release

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Tentative agreement reached for 38,000 hospital and long-term care workers

Health unions representing 38,000 hospital and long-term care workers reached a tentative agreement late Wednesday with health employers after seven weeks of marathon negotiations.

The proposed four-year contract provides average compensation increases of 10.8 per cent. This includes a number of targeted classification adjustments to address recruitment and retention problems and to recognize expanded work responsibilities.

Wage increases will range from 8.5 to 32 per cent over the life of the agreement.

Workers will receive a \$3,700 early signing bonus and an additional lump-sum payment of \$500 to recognize past skill enhancements.

A key part of the package is improved protection for jobs and services threatened by privatization. This includes a cap on the number of positions health employers can contract out, enhanced severance pay for displaced workers and improved access to job vacancies.

The unions also negotiated new language to deal with crushing workloads that put workers, patients and residents at risk.

“This tentative agreement provides members with a measure of security and stability after years of devastating job losses and pay cuts,” says Hospital Employees’ Union secretary-business manager Judy Darcy. “We’ve negotiated solid gains on which our members will now vote – a right they were denied when government imposed a contract two years ago.”

The Facilities Bargaining Association is recommending members ratify the terms of settlement.

Full details of the agreement will be provided to members over the next few days in preparation for province-wide ratification votes. Those votes will take about three weeks to complete.

Health care workers covered by the contract work in more than 270 different classifications in areas such as: nursing; trades and maintenance; diagnostic testing; logistics and supplies; cleaning and dietary; medical records; human resources; information systems; and others.

Ten unions are represented by the Facilities Bargaining Association. HEU is the largest with 35,000 members. The B.C. Government and Service Employees’ Union has 1,300 members and the International Union of Operating Engineers has 950 members.

The other FBA unions are: Construction and Specialized Workers’ Union, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Steelworkers, B.C. Nurses’ Union, United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, International Union of Painters and Allied Trades and the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry.