



Bargaining Bulletin

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

THE HEART OF HEALTH CARE

HEU members vote against community social services agreement

But multi-union membership votes to ratify collective agreement that will now cover 1,300 HEU members

HEU members working in community social services have voted 57 per cent against a tentative contract reached on March 31 between the multi-union bargaining association and the Community Social Services Employers' Association.

But overall, members of the 13 unions in the Union Bargaining Association (UBA) voted in favour of the deal, so it will form the basis of three collective agreements covering the 15,000 workers in the sector – including about 1,300 HEU members.

HEU's Provincial Executive, provincial bargaining committee and community social services bargaining team had all recommended a no vote.

"This agreement fell short of the improvements required for stability in a sector rocked by low wages, mismanagement and lack of funding," says HEU secretary-business manager Judy Darcy.

"That's the message our members are clearly sending to government and employers with this vote result.

"And we're committed to working with the other unions in this sector to make government and employers understand that services to the most vulnerable – and the workers who deliver them – can no longer be neglected."

Darcy says there's a significant recruitment and retention crisis in community social services that is undermining the quality of care HEU members can deliver to their clients.

"Fixing this crisis will require a campaign to raise the profile of the important contributions made by our members."

The agreement provides compounded wage increases of 8.56 per cent and a signing bonus of up to \$4,200.

-OVER-

May 1, 2006

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And while the four-year contract provides some improvements on bumping and promotion language – and stat pay to casual workers – most priorities identified by HEU members going into bargaining were not achieved.

The votes were tabulated by the UBA based on the three subsectors within community social services.

In Community Living, HEU members voted no by a margin of 60 per cent (the UBA voted 79.3 per cent yes); in General Services, HEU members voted 67 per cent yes (UBA 80.5 per cent yes); and in Aboriginal Services, HEU's members voted 100 per cent yes (UBA 98 per cent yes).

Overall, HEU members voted 56.7 per cent against the agreement.