



Bargaining Bulletin

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

THE HEART OF HEALTH CARE

HEABC warned to pick up pace

Votes being scheduled for completion by March 31

Bargaining representatives for 38,000 hospital and long-term care workers say they are frustrated with the slow pace of talks with health employers, now in week seven.

The Facilities Bargaining Association says that a tentative agreement needs to be reached this weekend in order for health unions to report out to members and conduct ratification votes before March 31.

"I strongly urge government and health employers to recognize the urgency of coming to an agreement quickly," says FBA spokesperson Judy Darcy.

"Our objective is to reach a tentative agreement that we can recommend to our members. I hope that is the goal of government and health employers as well."

But with time running out, the Health Employers Association of B.C. continues to stall on key wage and job security issues.

HEABC has barely moved on their opening position on a general wage increase now at 1.5 per cent in year one and 1.75 per cent in each of years two, three and four -- plus a \$3700 (gross) signing bonus.

The FBA yesterday revised its proposal for a general wage increase to ten per cent over three years (4 - 3 - 3) and held to its proposal for a \$4700 signing bonus.

On top of a general wage increase, there are a series of special adjustments and benchmark reviews on the table that are intended to address wage rates that are currently out-of-sync with job responsibilities and skills shortages.

The FBA is pressing to have adjustments paid out earlier in the contract term -- not spread out over four years as HEABC is proposing.

On Thursday, agreement was reached on improvements to bumping rights.

But after six weeks at the bargaining table, HEABC has not tabled any language on job security or responded to union proposals on this critical issue.

"Job security language is needed to protect our members and the public in the face of a clear government push for more health care privatization, especially in the delivery of seniors' care," says Darcy.

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