



# Bargaining Bulletin

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

THE HEART OF HEALTH CARE

## Community health: formal proposals exchanged Wednesday

The January 24 opening session of contract talks for 13,000 community health workers began slowly, but health employers have agreed to exchange most contract proposals when bargaining continues Wednesday in Burnaby.

That's when union negotiators will table a series of demands to achieve the bargaining priorities of front-line workers, which include:

- wages and wage protection;
- job security;
- making up for previous rollbacks and cuts implemented by the provincial government;
- hours of work and scheduling;
- benefits; and
- health and safety.

However, negotiators for the Health Employers Association of BC did serve notice during the initial day of talks that they're ready to target some key contract areas for concessions. HEABC says they'll be seeking rollbacks in benefit levels and they want to eliminate all memorandums of understanding protecting superior benefits.

In addition, employers say they want changes to bumping and posting provisions, and hinted that they want to take over control of the key Occupational Health and Safety Agency for Health Care, which is now jointly run by government, unions and employers.

"HEU delegates to our Wage Policy Conference earlier this month were clear that 'no concession' contracts are the goal in this round of bargaining," says HEU secretary-business manager Judy Darcy.

"With government sitting on a huge surplus, and community health workers and resources stretched to the limit, it's time for a fair deal for our members and better services for their clients – and that means no concessions."

Darcy says that the community health sub-sector's multi-union bargaining association will also urge HEABC to achieve a fair settlement by the March 31 deadline set by the Campbell government for access to \$1 billion in special one-time-only funds that have been set aside for BC public sector workers.

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**1-800-909-4994 Toll Free**  
**604-456-7193 (Vancouver)**

**HEU web site:**  
**[www.heu.org](http://www.heu.org)**

