



Bargaining Bulletin

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

THE HEART OF HEALTH CARE

HEU to HEABC: Take your concessions package off the table

HEU's bargaining committee had a straight forward message for health employers at today's province-wide contract talks – stop the clock on privatization, take your package off the table and come back in 48 hours with something we can talk about.

Noting that 2500 pink slips have been issued since notice to bargain was given, the committee said it was time to put layoff notices on hold and begin building the trust needed for talks to be productive.

This is the first meeting since February 19 when the Health Employers Association of B.C. tabled more than 100 pages of concession demands. Those demands included wage rollbacks ranging from 35 cents an hour to as high as 12 per cent for many workers, reduced sick leave, a reassessment of all LTD claimants under stricter qualifying criteria, cutbacks in benefits and pay for workers injured on the job, vacations slashed by five to 15 days, and fewer benefits for part-time workers.

“These are demands that are so far out of the ballpark – and so meanspirited to the women and men who work in health care – that we've asked they be taken off the table,” says HEU secretary business manager Chris Allnutt.

“Health employers need to reconsider their sledgehammer approach to bargaining and come back with a proposal that shows some respect for their employees.”

Allnutt says the union anticipated a difficult round of bargaining. “But with this package, there's no question, health employers have gone too far.”

“They've terrorized our members without impunity for the past two years. Now, they think they can bully workers into surrendering decades of hard-won gains,” says Allnutt. “We're asking them to take a step back, be reasonable and make bargaining work.”

Contract talks began for 41,000 healthcare workers in the facilities subsector January 9.

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