



Bargaining Bulletin

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

THE HEART OF HEALTH CARE

HEABC to HEU: Contracting out to continue regardless of bargaining

HEU and other unions in the Facilities Bargaining Association resume negotiations with health employers Thursday, but the Health Employers Association of British Columbia (HEABC) has sent a clear signal that health employers don't understand the need to re-establish trust in collective bargaining says secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt.

Earlier this month, the union wrote HEABC vice-president Tony Collins inquiring about the employer's plans for contracting out, closures, mergers and other restructuring plans over the term of a renewed collective agreement. HEU had asked the employer to put privatization on hold and freeze all contracting out while provincial talks take place.

The unions had also asked the employer to make a public commitment to the process of freely negotiating a collective agreement.

But in a February 9 response to the union's

request, HEABC makes it clear that health employers have no intention of honouring these requests. With regard to contracting out, mergers and other forms of restructuring that have led to union job losses, wrote Tony Collins, "the FBA can anticipate that these types of initiatives will continue into the future", and that "it is likely that the scale of this activity will increase until employers and employees have a more affordable collective agreement that provides employers with a meaningful alternative to contracting out."

The HEABC spokesman also said that the potential for further closures in the facilities sector remained.

"This is not a helpful signal from employers as we try to engage in free and open collective bargaining and re-establish trust in the process," says Allnutt.

The full text of Tony Collins' letter is available on the HEU website.

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