



Bargaining Bulletin

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

THE HEART OF HEALTH CARE

COMMUNITY HEALTH

Vote "no" to community subsector tentative agreement says HEU Provincial executive, bargaining committee

HEU's Provincial Executive and Provincial Bargaining Committee are recommending that the union's 1,500 community health subsector members vote no to a tentative agreement that includes significant concessions and insufficient improvements on employment security.

The tentative deal reached with health employers early last week fails to adequately counteract the Campbell Liberals' contract-breaking Bill 29 and gives up equity adjustments - a key element of the 2001 contract in which comparability/standardization, or equity adjustments were gained.

"This tentative agreement falls short of protecting jobs or halting privatization in the sector and asks community caregivers to sacrifice an important and hard-won equity principle - comparability with the facilities subsector," says HEU's chief bargaining spokesperson Chris Allnutt.

The tentative deal extends the current agreement to 2006 with the following modifications:

- deletion of the 2001 comparability and standardization memorandum of agreement (was three per cent per year);
- postponement of Municipal Pension Plan enrolment until April 1, 2006 from January 1, 2004 (previous RRSP and pension plans will be reinstated);
- a wage reduction of 4.06 per cent (normal increments will continue);
- removal of a casual employee from the list if she or he is unavailable for work without a valid reason for six months;
- reduction of dental exam coverage to every nine months from every six months; and
- vacation retention for current employees but new employees will earn vacation at a reduced rate.

HOTLINE - 24-HOUR BARGAINING INFORMATION

sign up for e-mail @www.heu.org

**1-800-663-5813, ext. 1515 & 1516
739-1515 or 739-1516 (Vancouver)**

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Insufficient improvements to employment security provisions include:

- some disincentives to contracting out when the number affected exceeds 1,700 workers (1,100 full-time equivalents) out of the 13,000 workers (8,263 FTEs) in the sector;
- regional posting provisions that allow employees to apply for positions in health authorities and vice-versa;
- priority hiring, including ported seniority and benefits, for employees where contracts are retendered or where services are transferred to another collective agreement employer;
- access to the casual list while on recall; and
- restoration of bumping language on January 1, 2006.

“To accept this contract is too much to ask of members who deliver a wide range of valuable community-based health services such as home support or housing, vocational and social opportunities to people

with a mental illness,” says Allnutt. “Their work helps balance demands on acute and residential care and deserves to be recognized as a critical part of public health care.

“That’s why both HEU’s Provincial Executive and Provincial Bargaining Committee are recommending rejection of this deal.”

HEU represents approximately 1,500 out of the 13,000 community caregivers and is one of the nine unions in the sector. The B.C. Government and Service Employees’ Union is the largest union and is recommending that its members ratify the tentative community health agreement.

A ratification vote schedule for HEU community caregivers will be finalized shortly and communicated to members by posting information at work sites, recording it on the bargaining hotline and posting it on our website.

February 18, 2004

**This is Community Health
NOT Community Social Services;
NOT Facilities**