



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

NEWSLETTER

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Agreement protects members impacted by Lower Mainland Integration and Health Shared Services BC consolidation

On July 7, HEU and its partners in the Facilities Bargaining Association (FBA) met with health employers and arbitrator Vince Ready to resolve a number of issues related to the integration and consolidation of services through Lower Mainland Integration and Health Shared Services BC.

HEU and the FBA sought Ready's assistance after health employers disregarded key parts of the *Standard Template Transfer Agreement* and other provisions that had been negotiated as part of the 2010–2012 facilities subsector collective agreement.

These provisions are intended to protect the rights of employees transferring from one employer to another. The main issues for the union included:

- Failure to disclose accurate lists of affected employees.
- Treatment of employees returning from LTD.
- Failure to disclose lists of employees in “duty to accommodate” agreements.
- Failure to produce local agreements that affect members' working conditions and benefits.
- Failure to identify integrated positions and plans to deal with these positions.
- Treatment of service and benefit banks in a manner inconsistent with the collective agreement.
- Failure to provide a seamless transfer for employees returning to the sending employer.
- Failure to properly negotiate and respect transfer agreements.

After a late-night session with Ready, the unions and the employer continued negotiations with one another in the hope that an agreement could be reached.

As a result of these good faith efforts, an agreement was reached to amend the *Standard Template Transfer Agreement* and includes:

- Stronger language on disclosing information related to employees and positions transferring, including employees in “duty to accommodate” agreements, and members in integrated/divided positions.

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- Clear language on the rights for employees returning from LTD.
- New language ensuring employees returning to their sending employer will have a seamless transfer for the purposes of benefits, service and seniority.
- Commitment to follow agreements with the FBA even if only the employer negotiating the agreement signs it, and new language confirming employers will work in good faith to negotiate supplementary transfer agreements in addition to the *Standard Template Transfer Agreement* where there are unique or specific issues related to the particular transfer.
- Agreement to principles governing local union representation within the maze of consolidation and integration.

“We are pleased we were able to reach agreement with HEABC and health employers,” says HEU’s acting secretary-business manager Bonnie Pearson. “We hope this is a signal as to how health employers will approach transfers in the future.”

Lower Mainland Integration and the consolidation of services to Health Shared Services BC impacts members in areas like IMITS, switchboard, supply chain, technology services, accounting and payroll, diagnostic imaging, and health information management.

These issues also have an impact for members potentially affected by transfers in areas like pharmacy and lab in the future.

If you have any questions or would like a copy of the agreement, please contact your local shop steward and HEU servicing representative.

August 10, 2011