

Facilities Bargaining Association

Two-year contract ratified for health care workers in the facilities subsector

BURNABY, B.C. – Health care workers have voted 91 per cent in favour of a two-year contract that provides job security protections, a general wage increase, and maintains benefits.

Facilities Bargaining Association (FBA) spokesperson Bonnie Pearson, who is also the secretary-business manager of the Hospital Employees' Union, says members have approved a contract that brings security and stability to their workplaces.

Pearson says the newly ratified collective agreement achieved key bargaining priorities, which meet the needs of a very diverse membership.

Highlights include: across-the-board wage increases totaling three per cent, the continuation of health plan benefits, and a moratorium on layoffs due to contracting out for the life of the contract.

The agreement was reached on November 23 after nine months of challenging negotiations with the Health Employers Association of BC. Ratification votes were held across the province over the past three weeks.

“This was a particularly difficult round of negotiations due to government’s restrictive bargaining framework,” says Pearson. “We are especially pleased to have negotiated a moratorium on layoffs due to contracting out, which provides an important measure of job security for health care workers and by extension greater stability for the health care system.”

The collective agreement, set to expire March 31, 2014, covers more than 46,000 health care workers in publicly funded hospitals, long-term care facilities, emergency health services, health authority corporate offices and warehouses, and in other health settings across B.C.

Facilities subsector members work in such areas as: nursing; pharmacy; sterile processing; diagnostic testing; logistics and supplies; cleaning and dietary; patient records; trades and maintenance; accounting; information systems, and others.

Eleven unions are represented by the multi-union FBA, including HEU – which represents 70 per cent of the workers covered by the contract – B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union, the BC Nurses' Union, CUPE Local 873, the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 882/882H, and six other unions.

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