



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

NEWS RELEASE

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Contract talks to resume for more than 60,000 health care workers in B.C.

[Burnaby, B.C.] – Collective bargaining will resume on Thursday, August 25 between the nine-union Facilities Bargaining Association (FBA) and the Health Employers Association of BC (HEABC) for a new collective agreement covering more than 60,000 health care workers.

Negotiations were paused on Friday, August 12, to show support for the BCGEU strike action in the direct public service. The FBA has held more than 60 days of talks since February.

“We look forward to getting back to the table on Thursday to build on our very productive discussions on how to address the staffing pressures facing our members on the frontlines of the health care system,” says Meena Brisard, Hospital Employees’ Union secretary-business manager.

“Protecting health care workers’ wages against rising costs is the key bargaining issue so we’re hopeful that government and employers are prepared to improve their position.

“We need bold measures to support health care workers now and attract the health care workforce of tomorrow,” says Brisard.

Negotiations are set against the backdrop of a three-year pandemic that’s left health care workers exhausted and short-handed. Last year, health care workers reported in an HEU poll that workloads, mental health, family relationships and their sense of personal safety have been negatively impacted by the pandemic – with nearly one in three saying they’re more likely to quit health care within the next two years as a direct result of their experiences during COVID-19.

More than 90 per cent of FBA members are represented by the Hospital Employees’ Union (HEU). Health care workers covered by this agreement include nearly 300 job classifications in areas including patient care, health records, housekeeping and food services, labs and pharmacies, finance and administration, trades and maintenance, IT, and logistics and supply.

They work in hospitals and long-term care homes, clinics, supply warehouses, corporate offices and other settings. The most recent collective agreement expired on March 31, 2022.