



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

# NEWSLETTER

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## International Day of Pink celebrates diversity in workplaces, schools and communities – April 10

As a social justice union, HEU has a long history of defending workers' rights and advocating for social equality not just within the local labour movement, but also on an international scale.

That's why HEU is proud to support International Day of Pink and celebrate diversity in the workplace, schools and communities around the globe. It's a day to speak out against any form of bullying, harassment, discrimination, homophobia and transphobia.

"Our membership is increasingly diverse," says HEU secretary-business manager Bonnie Pearson. "And it's imperative that we continue to raise awareness and educate our members about their right to work in a respectful environment, free of harassment.

"Most workplaces have anti-discrimination policies in place, but our members report high incidents of on-the-job bullying," adds Pearson. "We urge our members to bring any harassment issues to their union shop steward or site representative."

In Canada, pink became a national symbol of anti-bullying after two Nova Scotia teenagers stood up for a classmate who was bullied at school for wearing a pink shirt. The high school students – David Shepherd and Travis Price – took up the cause, recruited their classmates, and organized a pink protest.

They bought and distributed 50 pink tank tops to male students, and they all wore them in a day of solidarity against bullying.

HEU lobbied with other unions to have workplace bullying and harassment included as a compensable mental health claim through WorkSafeBC. That led to the passage of *Bill 14* on May 31, 2012 changing the *Workers Compensation Act* to include: "a significant work-related stressor, including bullying or harassment, or a cumulative series of significant work-related stressors, arising out of and in the course of the worker's employment."

Stakeholders are collaborating with WorkSafeBC to produce an OH&S policy on workplace bullying and harassment along with resources for workers and employers.

For more information on International Day of Pink, visit <<http://www.dayofpink.org/en>>.

April 10, 2013

