



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

# NEWSLETTER

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## LPNs, care aides fill new roles resulting in improved care delivery

Innovations in the way B.C.'s health care system utilizes LPNs and care aides are being profiled in a new publication that comes out of HEU's joint policy work with government and health care decision-makers.

HEU's secretary-business manager Judy Darcy says that the direct involvement of HEU's LPNs and care aides in high-level policy discussions with health ministry, health authority and health employer representatives has led to better utilization of these patient care members in new roles.

"Our members can be extremely proud that their voices have been heard, and their front-line experience and knowledge has been recognized," says Darcy. "As a result of their input, our members are filling exciting new roles in every corner of the province."

*Promoting positive change: B.C.'s LPNs and Care Aides* profiles five examples of how the recommendations of the joint policy committee are being put into practice.

An experienced Victoria General Hospital LPN has a new role as a Practice Support LPN working one-on-one with more than 100 LPNs and RNs to coach them on preventing musculoskeletal injuries. She also mentors LPNs to use their full scope of practice in the neurosciences unit.

A new LPN specialty in psychiatry has been developed where LPNs can access additional post-basic education and work as part of the nursing team at the Hillside Acute Tertiary Psychiatric Centre in Kamloops.

More than 350 care aides and rehab assistants participated in one of nine Paid Education Program Days (PEP Days) in Providence Health Care – and they learned about a range of topics including medication delivery, infection control and communications. In the future, topics may include wound care and workload imbalance.

In Fraser Health, LPNs have had access to a workshop designed to help them mentor LPNs and other staff. The workshops are led by an LPN who is a Clinical Practice Consultant with Fraser Health.

Last month, the Northern Health Authority held its annual conference for care aides and community support workers and more than 150 staff attended. This education day provides an important opportunity for networking and education and exposes these staff to clinical practice guidelines.

The newsletter is the first of two that are being published to follow up on the 2008 report of the Joint Policy Committee *Effectively utilizing B.C.'s Licensed Practical Nurses and Care Aides*.

The Joint Policy Committee arose out of the 2006 round of bargaining. Members of HEU and other unions in the Facilities Bargaining Association participate directly in the committees' discussions. The committee also includes representatives of the Health Employers Association of B.C., the Ministry of Health Services, and health authorities.

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