



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

NEWSLETTER

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Funding for review of clerical and “page 209” benchmarks heads to arbitration next month

Arbitrator Vince Ready will hear from health unions and employers next month on a key issue that affects the amount of funding available for the reviews of clerical and “page 209” benchmarks.

The 2006-2010 Facilities collective agreement allocates three million dollars for a review of the clerical benchmark series review and two million for the review of a number of other benchmarks outlined on page 209 of the Facilities collective agreement.

The Hospital Employees' Union and other health unions are disputing the employers' position that the funds negotiated for any pay grid increases flowing from these reviews must also cover increases in the cost of wage sensitive benefits.

Wage sensitive benefits are those benefits that are linked to wage rates, for example, statutory deductions like CPP and EI.

The Health Employers Association of B.C. estimated costs of these benefits would significantly reduce the funds available to allocate to pay grid increases.

HEU and the other unions in the Facilities Bargaining Association say that the funds should apply to pay grid increases only and are pushing for a quick decision so that funds can be allocated to certain benchmarks.

The Clerical benchmark review (outlined on page 208 of the collective agreement) is on hold pending the outcome of next month's arbitration.

The joint union-employer review committee had been examining all 84 clerical benchmarks in the job family's 11 sub-categories starting in July 2006, but the completion of this work is stalled over the issue of wage sensitive benefits.

In the separate “page 209” benchmark review, the unions and HEABC have reviewed the benchmarks and made language changes to a significant number of these. Discussions on wage grids began earlier this year, but because HEABC has continually changed their position on wage grids and implementation, talks are stalled.

The hearing with Vince Ready takes place on July 27 and 28.

Keep in touch for further updates following the arbitration.

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