



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

# BARGAINING BULLETIN

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## Job security front and centre as bargaining resumes in Facilities subsector

Unions representing more than 40,000 health care workers in B.C. hospitals and long-term care facilities made job security and expanded employment opportunities their main focus as bargaining resumed for a new collective agreement with health employers on January 6.

Negotiations between the 10-member Facilities Bargaining Association (FBA) – representing health unions – and the Health Employers Association of B.C. (HEABC) continued through the weekend. The parties commenced negotiations in mid-December.

The FBA unions have identified job security, improved compensation for groups like LPNs, and protection of benefits as key objectives for this round of bargaining.

FBA spokesperson and Hospital Employees' Union secretary-business manager Judy Darcy says that health unions have responded to the difficult bargaining climate by putting forward proposals that would stabilize and improve the delivery of health care to British Columbians.

“Tough times are not an excuse for refusing to act,” says Darcy. “Now, more than ever, British Columbians want to know that we are working to stabilize health care delivery and that we are protecting decent jobs that are vital to the economic health of their communities.

“Seniors and their families deserve to know that we’re working to ensure continuity of care in nursing homes. And workers deserve to know that their skills and experience are valued – even in difficult economic times.”

Darcy says health unions tabled a number of proposals this past week that would ensure the public’s investment in skilled and experienced health care staff is protected in the future.

And she notes that classifications throughout the bargaining unit – from LPNs and care aides, to those working in logistics and purchasing, to those in payroll and health records, and many others – are at risk.

“An inflexible and uncooperative approach at the bargaining table from health employers and government will not serve the public interest,” says Darcy. “Employers must work with us to come up with solutions – not create more problems and instability within health care.”

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Page Two

Health workers covered by the talks work in more than 270 classifications in a number of areas in health care including nursing; trades and maintenance; diagnostic testing; logistics and supplies; dietary; patient records; and others.

Bargaining continues this week. The collective agreement expires March 31, 2010.

*January 11, 2010*

