



Bargaining Bulletin

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

THE HEART OF HEALTH CARE

Unions mark week one with solid list of contract proposals

HEU and its partners in the Facilities Bargaining Association marked week one of facilities bargaining with a series of concrete proposals on workload, job security and the changing roles and diverse skills of union members.

This week the union proposed targeted wage adjustments for a number of classifications and occupational families to address uncompetitive wage rates and increased training and responsibilities (see Bulletin #3).

Health employers acknowledged the existence of retention and recruitment challenges, but only for a very limited number of job categories.

“That’s an inadequate response to real crises erupting in many departments,” says Darcy.

The unions also tackled workload - a concern for all members but especially care aides who suffer from the highest injury rates - by tabling language that would give individual workers or groups of workers the right to trigger a review of workload or grieve workload issues.

Also on workload, the union tabled one proposal that would create a fair formula for distributing overtime hours -- and another that would give LPNs access to professional responsibility language in the collective agreement.

Employers have yet to respond to the workload proposals.

The FBA put job security on the agenda as well, proposing a restoration of pre-Bill 29 bumping and job security language, improved severance and a regional seniority list that includes health authority affiliates.

“Health employers’ response on job security issues is very disappointing,” says Darcy.

“How are we to achieve the security and stability of a new collective agreement in a timely fashion if health employers continue to hide behind Bill 29?”

“These are priority issues for our members and real barriers to delivering the best health care possible,” adds Darcy.

“Employers need to demonstrate some creativity rather than blindly holding to a restrictive government framework.”

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Hospital Employees' Union - 5000 North Fraser Way, Burnaby, B.C. V5J 5M3 - (604) 438-5000

The BC Health Services Division of the Canadian Union of Public Employees



For their part, health employers presented the union with information on rising health benefit costs and signaled their interest in addressing this issue.

They also tabled demands for changes to the temporary posting provision in the contract, as well as changes that would reduce their costs for injury-on-duty pay.

Bargaining resumes next week when the unions will address the need to recover ground lost since the 2004 wage rollback as well as introduce a number of other proposals to improve the collective agreement.

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