



Bargaining Bulletin

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

THE HEART OF HEALTH CARE

Changes for casuals working in community health sector as talks continue

As contract talks for 13,000 workers in the community health sector continue this week, there is agreement with employers on a package of important gains for casuals.

Late Wednesday night, representatives of the Health Employers Association of BC agreed to stop the practice of dropping home support casuals, who weren't available to work on three successive occasions, from the casual list.

And changes to availability language will now cover all casual employees working in the community health sector. Those workers who have not previously been required to provide availability to employers will be obligated to do so.

"Our community health bargaining committee representatives know that availability of casual workers is a critical issue for HEU members in this sector," says committee spokesperson Chris Dorais.

"While they supported the removal of punitive language that impacted home support workers, they struggled with the fact that the

new availability language will apply to all workers in the sector."

As well, all casuals in the sector working in long-term temporary assignments of six months or more shall accrue sick leave and vacation entitlements.

Today, the unions are waiting for HEABC's response on the crucial issue of employment security. Earlier in negotiations the union bargaining association tabled a proposal to extend some security and stability for front-line workers in the event of contracting out.

The proposal included voluntary departure/severance provisions modeled on BCGEU's public service agreement with government, and the application of existing labour code successorship provisions to the community health sector.

Earlier this week, there was broad agreement that an early intervention program to address worker injury or illness is needed but no details have been determined.

Bargaining is set to go through the weekend.

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