



Talks with HEABC on Benchmark Series Review begin next month

HEU and other unions meet with HEABC in December on the benchmark series review outlined in the Facilities Subsector collective agreement.

The terms of the review can be found in a letter of agreement on page 209 of the 2006-2010 collective agreement.

Initially, the parties will look at the Accounting and Orthopaedic Technologist benchmarks and move onto other benchmark classifications through the first half of 2008.

In the 2006 round of bargaining, HEU and its union bargaining partners negotiated \$2 million from health employers for rate adjustments resulting from the review of the benchmarks listed on page 209.

Any adjustments will be effective no earlier than April 1, 2007.

Both parties recognized the need to bring these benchmarks up-to-date.

Many health care jobs have changed in their complexity, training requirements and use of technology. The way work is organized has also changed in the face of staff shortages and greater centralization.

Statistics from HEABC show that there are approximately 1,282 FTE's matched to the benchmarks covered by the page 209 review.

"The \$2 million allocated to this exercise are a fraction of the resources required to address pay rate inequities, especially when we look at similar positions outside the bargaining unit or outside B.C.," says HEU secretary-business manager Judy Darcy.

"But the page 209 benchmark review process and funds are a start and we intend to make every effort to reach agreement with HEABC on updated benchmarks and pay rates through open and respectful talks."

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Sessions have been scheduled over the next eight months to deal with the various benchmark occupations as follows:

December 2007	Accountant 1, 2, Accounting Supervisor; Orthopaedic Technologist
January 2008	Rehabilitation Assistant Activity Worker 3 and 4
February	Ophthalmic Technicians Volunteer Coordinator 1 & 2
March	Renal Dialysis Technician 1, 2, & 3 Pathology Attendants 1, 2 & 3
April	Medical Records Technician
May	Social Services Assistant 1 & 2
June	Stores 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
July	ECG Assistant EEG Assistant Perfusionist Assistant

At each of the sessions, HEU representatives at the talks will be joined with workers from the benchmark occupations under discussion.

The union has asked HEABC to consult with managers in the affected areas before the various scheduled sessions so that the process can succeed at each step of the way.

Further updates will follow throughout the process.

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