



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

BARGAINING BULLETIN

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FBA bargaining to resume March 28

Health unions continue to be frustrated with B.C.'s health employers who are unable to engage in concrete negotiations for a new collective agreement for 43,000 health care workers.

Talks between the multi-union Facilities Bargaining Association (FBA) and the Health Employers Association of BC (HEABC) will resume March 28.

FBA spokesperson Bonnie Pearson, the secretary-business manager for the Hospital Employees' Union, says that the union negotiating committee has gone home today despite talks scheduled for this week.

"Health employers are having a hard time participating in these talks, in our view, because they are being micromanaged by government at every turn," says Pearson. "It became clear as a result of this internal approval process that they had little to nothing of substance to discuss.

"If we are to have a functional round of talks, health employers need to be empowered to bargain – or they need to bring the decision-makers to the table."

So far, health employers have focused their contract demands on administrative and housekeeping issues although some of the changes they are seeking would severely limit workers' ability to access additional work or take on new roles. They are also looking to substantially change parts of the grievance procedure and negatively impact members' ability to enforce the collective agreement in a meaningful and timely way.

In contrast, the FBA has tabled language in a number of key areas including health and safety, equity, flexible schedules, overtime allocation, and on improvements to casual call-in procedures.

The collective agreement covers a diverse health care team that includes workers in hospitals, nursing homes and diagnostic treatment centres as well as emergency health services and shared services such as logistics and supply operations.

More than 270 occupations are represented in the talks including care aides, licensed practical nurses, pharmacy technicians, OR booking clerks, medical transcriptionists, trades and maintenance workers, sterile supply technicians, pathology attendants, ophthalmic techs, housekeepers and many others.

HEU represents about 85 per cent of health care workers in the FBA. Another 14 per cent are represented by the Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 873, the B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union and International Union of Operating Engineers Local 882/882H. Eight other unions in the association represent one per cent of workers covered by the talks.

The current Facilities collective agreement expires March 31.

March 15, 2012

