



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

BARGAINING BULLETIN

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FBA unions to report out to members on status of talks for new collective agreement

Health care unions will be reviewing the status of negotiations for a new Facilities collective agreement with their memberships starting over the next couple of weeks.

The move comes after ten days of intense talks during which health employers tied even a modest wage increase to changes in benefits plans that could result in fewer benefits or higher costs to workers.

Though no future bargaining dates are scheduled, the multi-union Facilities Bargaining Association says it is available to resume talks if the Health Employers Association B.C. signals its willingness to negotiate on a number of issues that are still outstanding.

FBA spokesperson Bonnie Pearson says that both sides have now tabled their bargaining packages and now it's time for health unions to check in with members.

"We've been successful in convincing health employers to remove a number of their more troublesome demands from the table over the past week," says Pearson, who is also secretary-business manager for the Hospital Employees' Union.

"But at the same time, it's clear that HEABC's -- and government's -- bargaining agenda is focused on benefits. That's going to be an issue for members and that's why we're going to report out on the status of the talks."

In addition to their focus on members' benefits, HEABC is insisting on integrating collective agreement language covering the provincial ambulance service into the Facilities contract – a completely unnecessary roadblock in the negotiations.

Over the next few days, FBA unions will be arranging meetings with members to go over the details of the last eight months of talks. Please stay in touch with your union representatives or check your union website for details.

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.

About 46,000 workers in more than 270 job classifications are impacted by the talks, making it the largest single set of negotiations in the current round of public sector collective bargaining.

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