



Bargaining Bulletin

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

THE HEART OF HEALTH CARE

LRB to decide status of privatized health care work in the event of a strike

THE STATUS of contracted-out health care work, in the event of a strike or lock-out, was the subject of a Labour Relations Board hearing this week that will determine how contract employees will be included in essential services orders.

HEU's position – that food, laundry, security and housekeeping services should be reduced to essential service levels, as has traditionally been the case – was also endorsed by the B.C. Nurses' Union, the B.C. Government Employees' Union, and the Health Sciences Association.

The International Wood and Allied Workers union (Local 1-3567), however, lined up behind the Health Employers' Association of B.C., Sodexo, Aramark, Compass Group and Keefer Laundry, who want contracted health care employees to work at 100% service levels.

“Corporations and health employers' attempt to provide 100% levels during a

labour dispute through the back door of contracted-out work is unacceptable and further undermines free collective bargaining,” says HEU secretary business-manager Chris Allnutt.

“What's at stake here is protecting the fundamental right of a union to engage in effective strike action, whether or not that work is managed by a health care facility or a private company,” he added.

Allnutt says contract health care workers are already subjected to unfair treatment in B.C.'s health care facilities.

“It's shameful that health employers, corporations and the IWA would continue to refuse these workers their rightful status as health care staff with the same rights and protections as other health care workers affected by strike action.”

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