



# Bargaining Bulletin

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

THE HEART OF HEALTH CARE

## Tough negotiations ahead in paramedical sector

*Employer tables "substantial concessions"  
as opening proposals exchanged*

**B**ARGAINING BETWEEN the Paramedical Professional Bargaining Association and the Health Employers Association of B.C. resumed February 26 in Vancouver with both parties tabling their opening proposals.

"The employers' opening position sends a strong message to paramedical professionals that this is going to be a difficult set of negotiations," says Hospital Employees' Union secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt.

"As has been the experience in contract talks throughout the public sector, the employer has come to the table looking for substantial concessions. Health authorities are under enormous pressure from the Campbell government to manufacture savings out of already squeezed budgets," he says.

The unions' proposals focus on protecting and enhancing important elements in the collective agreement that address members' concerns about providing quality health care in a climate of staff shortages. The PPBA want to ensure that there is an expansion of opportunities for paramedical professionals who are displaced as a result of restructuring and lay-off.

Allnutt says that Gordon Campbell has made it clear that he expects public sector workers to carry the load of his failed economic policies.

"That bottom-line approach to health care management doesn't look at the patients or the committed paramedical professionals delivering the patient care as anything more than a ledger item. The truth is paramedical professionals are on the front lines of delivering the quality patient care

...over

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British Columbians expect and deserve,” says Allnutt.

The PPBA is committed to a productive and fruitful round of bargaining.

The two sides will spend a week reviewing each other’s opening proposals and are scheduled to resume negotiations March 4.

There are approximately 13,000 workers –

including drug and alcohol and vocational rehab counselors – in the paramedical sector represented by the Health Sciences Association, the BCGEU, CUPE-BC, the Professional Employees’ Association and the Hospital Employees’ Union.

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