



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

# NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **HEU announces new chief negotiator**

The Hospital Employees' Union today announced that veteran union negotiator Bonnie Pearson will succeed Judy Darcy as the union's secretary-business manager.

The appointment by the union's Provincial Executive is effective immediately. Darcy announced last week that she is resigning from her position to run as a candidate in the next provincial election.

Pearson has spent more than 30 years as a union representative and negotiator and has served as the assistant secretary-business manager at HEU since 2009.

The secretary-business manager is the chief negotiator and chief spokesperson for the union and acts in an executive director role within the union's management structure. Pearson assisted Darcy in negotiating major provincial agreements for health care workers in 2006 and 2010.

"I am really excited about taking on this new responsibility and working with our Provincial Executive and staff to move our members' interests forward," says Pearson.

"And I'm extremely proud to represent HEU members. They have built a progressive union that looks out for its members and advocates for health care and the other public services that we all hold dear.

"There's no doubt that like the rest of the public sector, we're going to face a challenging round of bargaining next year. But we've also spent a lot of time over the past several years building strength on the ground and developing a strong leadership team that will serve us well – and I intend to continue with that work."

Pearson's trade union service includes representing union members at the bargaining table and as an advocate on pay equity and pension matters.

She's served as a vice-president of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour and was also involved in implementing the Federal Employment Equity Program for grain workers in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Pearson was also a member of the Saskatchewan Public Service Commission for two years.

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A B.C. resident since 1993, Pearson worked at HEU for three years before moving to the College-Institute Educators' Association (now the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators) where she assisted in the 1998 negotiations and was the chief negotiator in the 2001 round of bargaining.

She also assisted in the consultations that led to joint trusteeship of the College Pension Plan, for which she was also a trustee. Pearson sat on the tri-partite Pension Benefits Advisory Committee during this period.

Pearson was appointed to the Vancouver-Richmond Health Board in 1999 and continued in that position until the BC Liberals restructured regional health authorities and replaced their boards in 2001.

From 2001 to 2006, Pearson worked for the Compensation Employees' Union, representing staff at the Workers' Compensation Board. She returned to HEU in 2006.

Pearson also announced that Jacquie de Aguayo will be the union's new assistant secretary-business manager.

De Aguayo has been the union's legal director since 2010. Previously, she spent eight years at the Public Service Alliance of Canada in Ottawa as both in-house legal counsel and as the coordinator of the union's advocacy services. She's also practised union-side labour law with a private firm in Ottawa.

HEU president Ken Robinson says: "Bonnie has been a key member of our management team for the past five years and she brings a lot of hands-on experience, good judgement and sound leadership skills to this job. This is great news for our members."

Robinson adds that Pearson and de Aguayo were appointed with the full support of the union's Provincial Executive.

Founded in 1944, HEU represents more than 43,000 workers in hospitals, long-term care facilities, assisted living, community services and First Nations health centres in both the public and private sector. HEU is an occupationally diverse union that includes both direct patient care and support roles.