



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

NEWSLETTER

PLEASE POST

Health employers to transfer members in Lower Mainland Health Information Management Services to Providence Health Care

Move comes as employers flip-flop on other high profile transfers

Health employers in the Lower Mainland provided the Facilities Bargaining Association (HEU and other unions in the sector) with formal notice January 11, 2011 of their intention to transfer members working in Health Information Management Services from Fraser Health Authority (FHA), Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), and Vancouver Coastal Health Authority (VCHA) to Providence Health Care (PHC).

Health employers also advised they will be looking at other related restructuring. But despite their claim, in a January 11 Q&A distributed to employees, the union has not been provided with details of these plans beyond what was included in the formal notice. The details included in the notice are summarized later in this newsletter.

The announcement on Health Information Management Services comes as health employers reversed their plans to transfer Pharmacy members to FHA and are now undoing the integration of Lower Mainland Human Resources after just one year.

Many HEU members have already been affected by transfers of service since the employer announced Lower Mainland Integration (LMI) in August 2009 and created the Shared Services Organization now known as Health Shared Services BC (HSSBC). These initiatives included:

- Human Resources – PHC, PHSA, and VCHA integrated this service in December 2009 and then announced in December 2010 they would be undoing this integration.
- Information Management and Information Technology Services (IMITS) transferred from VCHA to PHSA on July 8, 2010.
- Supply Chain transferred from FHA, IHA, VCHA, and VIHA to PHSA (HSSBC) on October 15, 2010.
- Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, and Payroll was transferred from PHC and VCHA to PHSA (HSSBC) on October 15, 2010.
- Technology Services transferred from FHA and VCHA to PHSA (HSSBC) on October 15, 2010. HSSBC moved to contract out Desktop Management Services (part of Technology Services) effective April 2011 to ISM Canada.

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- Facilities Maintenance and Operations – Lower Mainland health authorities made a decision they would not transfer members in this department.
- Pharmacy – Lower Mainland Health Authorities initially advised they would be transferring members to FHA and later advised they would not.

In every case where a LMI involved a transfer of HEU members, HEU has successfully negotiated agreements to protect the rights of affected HEU members. However, the inconsistent approach to restructuring and a lack of transparency continues to create confusion and anxiety for affected members.

Details of health employers' notice on Health Information Management Services

Health employers have provided the following details related to their notice for Health Information Management Services:

- The notice advises the intention is to transfer all employees to PHC with the exception of FHA's South Hub of Transcription Services and PHSA's Transcription Services within the Forensics unit.
- Health employers will be looking at other restructuring and reclassification within the service.
- Health employers intend to look at union jurisdiction and affiliation issues.
- Health employers will look at union inclusion or exclusion of management staff.
- Operations of Release of Information, Coding, and Records Management will be looked at.

Collective agreement and transfers

The current facilities collective agreement includes transfer provisions designed to protect members' rights during the transfer process.

- No interruption of pay or benefits as a result of transfer to another health-sector employer.
- Portability of service and related banks (like sick leave and vacation).
- Portability of seniority to new employer while maintaining seniority with previous employer for up to five years.
- Right to go on casual list with for employer and accumulate seniority for time worked.
- Access to the casual list with "receiving" employer for affected casuals.

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In addition, as part of the collective agreement, HEU (with its FBA partners) have developed a template transfer agreement with health employers dealing with matters including:

- Specific seniority issues
- Union committees, representation and leave
- Schedules
- Transportation allowances
- Red-circling
- Health and safety
- Casuals

This template agreement forms the basis of individual transfer agreements that will be put in place to cover members affected by the proposed transfer. Please contact your shop steward, local executive or union representative for further details.

Communicating changes to members

Reorganization of health services on this scale can cause a lot of disruption in the workplace as well as anxiety and uncertainty for members.

That's why the union is committed to making sure members are aware of the changes taking place in a timely manner.

The union will be meeting with health employers to hear more details of the employers' intended changes and negotiate an agreement to protect members' rights.

Whenever possible, the union will give advance notice of these changes to HEU local leaders so that they can provide useful and timely information to concerned members.

January 12, 2011