



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

NEWSLETTER

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LPNs and immunizations: Minister urged to help break regulatory logjam

Health care unions have written B.C.'s new health minister, Mike de Jong, asking for his assistance in fully implementing a provincial regulation that would allow LPNs to play a bigger role in providing immunizations.

The regulation governing LPNs practice under the *Health Professions Act* was amended last November to allow LPNs to independently provide immunizations within appropriate limits.

Unfortunately, the health ministry and the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of B.C. have not been able to agree to the Standards, Limits and Conditions (SLCs) that must be in place in order for the amended regulation to have any widespread impact.

As it stands, LPNs are limited to independently providing immunizations for a very limited number of diseases like flu and pneumonia.

But there are no SLCs in place that would facilitate LPNs' participation in school-based immunization programs and other immunization programs.

Hospital Employees' Union secretary-business manager Judy Darcy says that public health care delivery will suffer as a result.

"LPNs in other jurisdictions are providing this service independently within certain limits. In B.C., LPNs played an important role under a special agreement in providing H1N1 immunizations," says Darcy.

"But the lack of progress in establishing the necessary SLCs runs counter to the goal of effectively utilizing these nursing professionals to the full extent of their training.

"We are hopeful that the minister will support efforts to resolve the logjam that is holding us all back."

HEU wrote the letter with two other unions that represent most LPNs that work in community health – the B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union and the United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1518.

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