



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

# NEWSLETTER

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## HEU secures agreements to support pharmacy technicians

*Agreements include financial support and job conversions*

HEU has concluded two agreements to support pharmacy technicians pursuing regulation with the College of Pharmacists.

The agreements include seniority-based conditional conversion opportunities for members to convert their position to a regulated pharmacy technician provided they finish the bridging program.

Members are also eligible for financial support from the [FBA Education Fund](#), and may receive up to \$2,400 towards module and exam costs.

HEU's acting secretary business-manager Bonnie Pearson says the deals will provide more certainty and support for pharmacy techs dealing with the new regulatory framework for their profession.

"We've been working hard through the summer to put in place a plan that will assist our members who want to take on the additional training required to become a regulated pharmacy tech."

The two agreements signed so far cover pharmacy technician members in the Interior Health Authority and the Lower Mainland Pharmacy Services (Fraser Health, Vancouver Coastal, Providence Health Care, and Children's and Women's Hospital).

These agreements provide 250 conditional conversion opportunities throughout these regions and will be awarded later this month through an expression of interest from the employer.

In addition, even those pharmacy technician members working in the regions covered by the agreements who do not receive a conditional conversion opportunity but who complete the bridging program by November 2013, will be directly converted to a regulated pharmacy technician.

All members are eligible to apply to the [FBA Education Fund](#) for financial support for courses and exams taken up to April 30, 2012. If interest exceeds funds available, funding will first go to those approved for conditional conversion opportunities and who apply by October 28, 2011.

HEU is continuing funding and job conversion discussions with the health authorities not yet covered by the new deals.

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This includes the Northern Health Authority, Vancouver Island Health Authority, and rest of the Provincial Health Services Authority (for those members not covered by Lower Mainland integration).

### **Highlights of the agreements**

Please refer to the agreements for full details, including the procedure for expressing interest in conditional conversion opportunities.

Below are the main points of the agreements.

- Conditional conversion opportunities will be available in September 2011 for members to apply for their job to convert to a regulated position once they become regulated by the College.
- Members must pre-register with the College of Pharmacists to apply.
- Conditional conversion opportunities are available to full-time and part-time employees working at the site for which they are applying for conversion.
- Members must complete the upgrading and register with the College by November 2013 for their position to convert to a regulated pharmacy technician.
- Seniority will determine who receives conditional conversion opportunities if more members apply than there are opportunities available.
- Direct position conversions are also available for other members who become regulated by the College, up to November 2013.

The 250 conditional conversion opportunities do not necessarily represent all of the regulated pharmacy technician positions that will eventually be used by the employers covered under these agreements. They are the number of positions the employers will commit to at this time.

Conditional conversion opportunities are not part of a job posting process, meaning that no one will bid on anyone else's job through this process.

The new classification benchmark for the regulated pharmacy technician and the new wage rate will be determined after a classification hearing to be held at the end of September 2011. The new pharmacy supervisor wage rate will be negotiated after those matters are resolved.

HEU also discussed with employers other forms of support, such as flexibility around scheduling at exam time, free textbooks, and employer-supported study groups and online chat rooms.

You should speak with your shop steward or servicing representative if you have any questions.

*September 9, 2011*