



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

NEWSLETTER

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Support team kicks off union's series of pre-bargaining conferences

More than 50 HEU support workers from across the province gathered September 13 and 14 at the union's Provincial Office to talk about the valuable contribution they make to the health care team, and identify a short list of bargaining priorities specific to their occupational job family.

Judy Darcy, who recently resigned as secretary-business manager to pursue an NDP seat in the next provincial election, welcomed support representatives to the conference. She thanked HEU members for their dedication, commitment and support during her time as the union's chief negotiator and spokesperson over the past six years, particularly as she led the union through two tough rounds of public sector bargaining.



Darcy introduced conference attendees to her successor Bonnie Pearson, who has worked at HEU as a coordinator of servicing and most recently, assistant secretary-business manager.



"I couldn't be more excited to introduce your new secretary-business manager Bonnie Pearson. She's one of the most experienced, highly respected negotiators in this province and in this country in both the public and private sectors," said Darcy. "Bonnie is incredibly hard-working, very smart, capable and strategic. She's a dedicated trade unionist and is very committed to our members. We've been joined at the hip through two rounds of bargaining and on settlement negotiations for the Supreme Court decision. And she comes to you with the full confidence of your elected Provincial Executive."

Pearson then laid the groundwork for the two-day conference and later gave a bargaining address highlighting the challenges the union has faced with health care restructuring, privatization, and having the BC Liberals still in power.

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“We need to make sure that we have built up public support for our bargaining objectives and do whatever we can to ensure that public sector unions stick together through what will be a very tough round of bargaining,” said Pearson. “That’s why it’s so important for our union to make sure that when we go to the bargaining table, we go with friends.”

During the conference, representatives broke out into small groups by region and/or occupation as well as participated in large plenary discussions.

Members in attendance included housekeepers, laundry workers, food service workers, dietary aides, protection services, distribution aides/attendants, transport attendants, warehouse and stores attendants and receivers, and area supplies attendants.



After much discussion, support representatives streamlined their bargaining priorities.



Following the conference, those identified priorities will be submitted by the Provincial Executive to the Facilities Bargaining Conference in November.

And members are encouraged to talk to colleagues at their locals to generate support for those bargaining demands.

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