



HEU extends pharmacy technician deal to BC Cancer members

HEU has signed another agreement to support pharmacy technicians pursuing regulation with the College of Pharmacists.

The new agreement covers BC Cancer Agency Pharmacy Technicians. Similar agreements were signed in August for 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). HEU is continuing funding and job conversion discussions with the health authorities not yet covered.

HEU's 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.

The new agreement includes 28 seniority-based conditional conversion opportunities for BC Cancer Agency 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. Funding is in place through April 30, 2012, and pharmacy technicians will remain eligible for funding past that date presuming the fund is successfully renewed in bargaining.

In addition, even those BC Cancer Agency pharmacy technician members 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. If interest exceeds funds available, FBA Education funding will go first to those approved for conditional conversion opportunities.

Highlights of the agreement

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

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Below are the main points of the agreement:

- Conditional conversion opportunities will be available in October 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 not part of a job posting process, meaning that no one will bid on anyone else's job through this process.
- 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 28 conditional conversion opportunities do not necessarily represent all of the regulated pharmacy technician positions that will eventually be used by the BC Cancer Agency. This is the number of positions the employer will commit to at this time.

The new classification benchmark for the regulated pharmacy technician and the new wage rate will be determined after a classification hearing.

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

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