



## Unity key to collective agreement improvements

### *Pre-bargaining occupational conferences set the tone for November's Facilities Bargaining Conference*

HEU is the most diverse union in health care with more than 270 job classifications within the facilities sector.

But as participants at the union's pre-bargaining conferences discovered over the last three weeks, HEU members are united in their optimism – and determination – despite facing a tough bargaining environment in 2012.

More than 350 union members were selected by their peers from around the province to attend one of the five conferences. Each conference included members from a specific occupational family within the facilities sector.

Participants worked together to short list bargaining priorities which will be taken to the union's Facilities Bargaining Conference in late November along with bargaining resolutions submitted by union locals.

Secretary-business manager Bonnie Pearson says conference participants demonstrated the remarkable unity and discipline that is the hallmark of HEU.

“Our members chose their representatives to these conferences very well,” says Pearson. “These workplace leaders understand that we will need to build unity within our own membership as well as solidarity with our allies in order to achieve our goals – better working and caring conditions throughout health care.”

All five conferences achieved consensus on the need for a general wage increase and protection of members' benefits. In addition, each occupational conference settled on a short list of priorities for their specific job family like employment security or improved access to education.

“Throughout these conferences, our members spoke passionately about how their working conditions impacted their ability to provide quality patient and resident care,” says Pearson.

“But they also spoke about how hard it is to deliver that care in the face of ongoing program cuts, short staffing, privatization and restructuring.



“It’s crystal clear to our members that collective agreement improvements cannot be funded by making further cuts to front-line care or to the services that support this care,” adds Pearson.

HEU’s Facilities Bargaining Conference will be held November 20 – 22.

*October 6, 2011*

*August 11, 2011*