



HEU extends pharmacy tech deal to Vancouver Island Health Authority

HEU has signed another agreement, this time for Vancouver Island pharmacy technicians, to support those members pursuing regulation with the College of Pharmacists.

Similar agreements have recently been signed with the BC Cancer Agency Pharmacy Technicians, 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 still in discussion with the Northern Health Authority.

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

The new agreement includes 24 seniority-based conditional conversion opportunities for pharmacy tech members at ten different VIHA sites to convert their position to a regulated pharmacy technician provided they finish the bridging program.

Members are 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.

The 24 conditional conversion opportunities do not necessarily represent all of the regulated pharmacy technician positions that will eventually be used by VIHA. This is the number of positions the employer will commit to at this time. The deal allows VIHA to directly convert additional pharmacy technician members. All FBA members pursuing are eligible to apply for FBA education funding, however, if interest exceeds funds available, the funding will go first to those approved for conditional conversion opportunities.

Highlights of the agreement

Please refer to the [agreement](#) on the website for full details. Below are the main points of the agreement:

- Conditional conversion opportunities will be available in November 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.

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- Seniority will determine who receives conditional conversion opportunities if more members apply than there are opportunities available.
- 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.

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.