



## Union recognizes International Stand UP to Bullying Day – November 18

Rarely a month goes by where there isn't a national headline about a teen suicide, a bullying incident, or a hate crime. The media is doing its part to raise awareness about the devastating impact of bullying at school and cyber-bullying. And as a social justice trade union, the Hospital Employees' Union is addressing an equally serious problem – workplace harassment and bullying.

During this fall's pre-bargaining occupational conference series, the union conducted a workplace bullying survey with conference attendees. The number of HEU members who reported being bullied or witnessing bullying on the job was alarming – 83 to 94 per cent.

The highest number came from HEU members in the patient care technical job family, followed by patient care and clerical.

“Unfortunately, it's not surprising that 93 per cent of the clerical team surveyed disclosed increasing incidents of bullying,” said HEU secretary-business manager Bonnie Pearson. “They're often on the frontlines as the first point of contact for patients and visitors. And those working behind-the-scenes handling phone calls are vulnerable to verbal abuse because it's easy for the public to be rude to someone who's invisible on the other end of the telephone. This is unacceptable. Our members deserve to be treated with respect, and the union will do everything we can to enforce their rights.”

That's why the union's clerical subcommittee has taken on anti-bullying as a campaign for 2012. You may notice their anti-bullying posters around your workplace. And earlier this year, HEU's equity caucuses produced a pink anti-bullying T-shirt with the slogan “It isn't big to make others feel small.”

By law, every employee has the right to a safe work environment, free of harassment. And HEU is committed to continue this work in 2012 to help eradicate workplace bullying.

On November 18, we ask you to recognize **International Stand UP to Bullying Day** to help raise the profile of this growing problem. Speak out against bullying. Wear pink, the commonly recognized colour of anti-bullying. Ask your supervisor for a copy of your work site's anti-bullying or respectful workplace policies. Talk to your co-workers about the issue, and report bullying incidents to your local occupational health and safety committee.

*November 18, 2011*

