



HEALTH CARE BARGAINING 2012

BULLETIN NO. 1 – MAY 2012

Bargaining has begun

On May 23rd, the Provincial Health Care Council (PHCC) Bargaining Committee met with employer representatives from the Regional Health Authorities and Terry Kindrat of the Labour Relations Secretariat. The Bargaining Committee was accompanied by CUPE Regional Director John Lepine, CUPE Researcher Elizabeth Blackwood, CUPE Health Care Coordinator and lead negotiator Nicole Campbell and CUPE National Representative Allen Bleich.

It is uncommon for the Regional Director to appear at the bargaining table; however this is an extraordinary round of bargaining. Therefore the Bargaining Committee felt that it was important for the employer to know that this round of bargaining has the attention of CUPE's national officers. "As Canada's largest national union and the major health care union in Manitoba, CUPE is well financed and is prepared to bring whatever resources we can to the table to ensure that we achieve real, tangible improvements for our members," Lepine told the employer representatives.

Lead negotiator Nicole Campbell reiterated CUPE's commitment to securing a good collective agreement for Manitoba's health care workers that is supportive of the work CUPE members do. "Every day, CUPE members perform tasks that are integral components to providing quality care for our loved ones," said Campbell. "Often this work is undervalued and far too often CUPE members are subjected to disrespect and violence at the workplace. We'll be fighting for a contract that reflects respect and acknowledges the value of their work, regardless of what might become of the RHA amalgamations."

CUPE Researcher Elizabeth Blackwood gave a presentation on behalf of the CUPE Provincial Health Care Council in support of determining a fair and reasonable wage rate increase for CUPE members. The intensive report hammered home the point that a wage freeze is not an agreeable option given that, among other things:

- A) the cost of living in Manitoba is increasing, leading to an erosion in labour earnings and household spending power;
- B) CUPE health care sector worker wages are paid lower than other health care professional wages, so a wage freeze will have a greater negative impact on our membership by putting them in a vulnerable economic position; and

C) the Province of Manitoba should not be using public sector wage freezes to balance its budget when the NDP government has undertaken significant tax cutting initiatives over the years.

To read this report in full, please visit the www.cupe.mb.ca website.

The Bargaining Committee has been informed that further bargaining dates have been set for the end of August 2012.

As is often the case during bargaining, the rumour mill is hard at work. Your Bargaining Committee will provide you with information as soon as it is received, so please visit www.cupe.mb.ca often to get accurate information you can trust.

**Your Provincial Health Care Council
and Bargaining Committee is:**

Val Sobiak (Chair), Gwen Bennett, Debbie Boissonneault,
Raymond Burgess, Marion Butterfield, Barbara Greengrass,
Lori Hiscock, Judy Lavallée, Yvon Leclerc, Ric McAlpine,
Roxanne Naismith, Marie Nixon, John Reynolds,
Marian Sawyer, Sharon Thorgilsson

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