

Bargaining Update

COMMUNITY HEALTH



Community health employer's initial wage proposal deeply disappointing

Bargaining talks continue between the Health Employers Association of BC (HEABC) and the Community Bargaining Association (CBA) to renew a collective agreement covering more than 21,000 workers in the community health subsector from eight unions across the province, including about 2,300 HEU members.

HEABC recently tabled its initial wage proposal that falls far short of members' needs. The community health subsector requires a significant investment to recruit and retain skilled and experienced workers, and address the staffing crisis.

The bargaining team expected monetary negotiations to be challenging, and encourages members to stand together in unity to achieve important improvements. In recent weeks, the parties addressed a number of key areas, including overtime, harassment, and portability of seniority.

Several community health members came to the bargaining table to share personal stories from their workplaces. These compelling, first-person accounts made it impossible for the employer to ignore the issues faced on a daily basis, and underscored the deteriorating state of the community health subsector.

Stories included members having to sometimes choose between caring for their children or their clients because of forced overtime due to short-staffing.

And others spoke out about portability issues – where some workers lost a decade or more of seniority when applying for a new position – even with the same employer.

The common theme is that workers in the community health subsector have been overworked, underpaid and disrespected for too long. There's still a lot of work to achieve a fair contract. Talks resume in April.

The B.C. General Employees' Union (BCGEU) is the lead union at the CBA table.

To stay connected and receive bargaining updates, members are encouraged to update their contact information on HEU's website at <<https://www.heu.org/change-contact-information>>.

Bargaining bulletins are posted on the HEU website at <<https://www.heu.org/collective-agreements/community-health>>.

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