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Health science professionals table wage increase proposal

After more than six months of talks, the Health Science Professionals Bargaining Association (HSBPA) today tabled a wage proposal in contract discussions with the Health Employers' Association of BC (HEABC).

The proposal is for 2% wage increases effective April 1, 2012 and April 1, 2013.

"The wage proposal reflects the pattern of wage increases achieved in public sector collective agreements which are rolling in throughout the rest of the public sector. We are satisfied we have put together a fair and reasonable collective agreement package that government must accept," said HSA President Reid Johnson. HSA is the lead union at the bargaining table. Other unions represented at the table are: CUPE, BCGEU, HEU, and PEA.

HSPBA Chief Negotiator Jeanne Meyers said the wage proposal completes the unions' package of proposals.

"Other highlights of our package include the implementation of an employee wellness plan, improved education leave, and proposals related to workload. The wellness plan includes strategies for improving overall health for members, preventing injury, and providing a healthy work/life balance. It ensures health science professionals have the support they need, including an enhanced disability management program that reduces the time lost to illness and injury," she said.

Meyers said there are still proposals that require discussion in negotiations, and said these issues must be dealt with expeditiously. Those issues include:



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- Insufficient off-duty hours
- Workload
- Access to education leave
- Definitions of union stewards
- Anti-bullying and anti-harassment language
- Transportation allowance
- Reimbursement for employee expenses

HEABC is scheduled to respond to the proposal tomorrow.

“We have been at this for months. The time has come to get on with it,” Johnson said.

“Our bargaining committee is satisfied we have tabled a framework agreement the employer must take seriously. If we do not get indications from HEABC they are prepared to move toward a settlement, we will have to consider the options our members have to get the government to settle this contract in a timely manner,” he said.