



B.C. health services group calls off job action

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B.C. health science professionals have called off rotating strikes planned for this week after the government tabled a proposal just after midnight Saturday.

The Health Science Professionals Bargaining Association said the offer adds up to a general wage increase of 1.4 per cent over two years, and may include wage rollbacks.

The government called the proposal "fair and consistent" with other settlements in the health care sector. It said the bargaining association has called off planned job action in order to consult with its members.

However, the B.C. Government Employees' Union and the Health Science Association of B.C. - two unions in the six that make up the bargaining group - said the proposal is meant to provoke members into escalating job action so the government can impose a contract. The association is calling off job action in order to prevent escalation, they said.

Last week, hospital pharmacists and diagnostic imaging technicians cut services back to essential ones only.

The bargaining group represents 16,000 lab and medical imaging technologists, pharmacists, physiotherapists, respiratory therapists and public health inspectors.

Its previous contract expired March 31. The sides have been trying to negotiate a settlement since February.

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