



# Paramedical professionals commence strike vote

November 15, 1998

More than 9,000 paramedical professionals represented by the Health Sciences Association of BC will take a strike vote November 16-19 to back the union's efforts for a fair collective agreement.

HSA is the lead union in the Paramedical Professional Bargaining Association which represents approximately 10,000 health care professionals including lab technologists, x-ray technologists, pharmacists, physiotherapists, child development workers, social workers and dietitians.

The other unions in the association - BCGEU, CUPE, HEU, UFCW and PEA - will hold their own strike votes. Results of the votes will be released later this month.

"Our bargaining team hoped to achieve a fair and reasonable contract without taking a strike vote," said HSA negotiator Rick Lampshire. "Unfortunately, the employer has made it clear that they are not prepared to negotiate a fair and equitable agreement."

Lampshire says the bargaining association decided to conduct a strike vote after the Health Employer's Association of BC arrived at the bargaining table on October 15 and announced that they had no mandate to address any of the issues still on the table. HEABC also refused to withdraw its major concession demands that would take away benefits negotiated during previous rounds of bargaining.

HEABC's last position contained concession demands that would gut HSA's classifications system and allow employers to unilaterally reassign employees and alter hours of work.

The bargaining association wants to protect existing benefits and make improvements in the areas of provincial seniority, compensation for on-call and long-term disability.

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