

BULLETIN

Health science professionals table proposals aimed at protecting quality public health care

July 8, 2010

Bargaining for a new contract for health science professionals continued this week in Richmond, with the Health Science Professionals Bargaining Association (HSPBA) tabling a number of proposals aimed at protecting quality public health care.

-British Columbians depend on a quality public health care system for their good health. It is incumbent upon all parties at the bargaining table to get creative about how we can work together to protect and improve our system," said Maureen Headley, HSPBA chief negotiator and HSAs Executive Director of Labour Relations and Legal Services.

HSPBA has proposed a joint committee to reduce patient wait times for diagnostic services.

-The longer patients have to wait for diagnosis, the increased risk they will have for more extended and acute needs for treatment and recovery. We need to address the shortages of diagnostic and other specialists on the health care team, as well as streamline systems to ensure better access to more timely tests," Headley said.

The joint committee would explore key issues that create the delays, including: booking systems, effective use of facilities and equipment, supply of the specialized staff, and the supply and condition of the sophisticated technology required.

The unions have also proposed a joint committee to address the workload issues that act as deterrents to recruitment. The committee would make recommendations to make the work of health science professionals more efficient and effective. Issues to be explored include providing appropriate leadership and caseloads for health science professionals, maximizing health science professionals scope of practice, and reducing their administrative tasks to ensure their focus is on diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of patients.

Finally, the unions have proposed that best practices findings of a pilot project examining solutions for prevention of musculoskeletal in diagnostic imaging ... specifically ultrasound, where the injury rate is estimated at 90 per cent of all ultrasonographers ... be implemented upon completion of the project.

The pilot project is a partnership between HSA, St. Josephs Hospital, Nanaimo General Hospital, BC Ultrasound Society, CAN-med Healthcare and WorkSafe BC. HSA and WorkSafe BC have provided funding for the project.

Bargaining continues in August.

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