



Registered Psychiatric Nurses: Update on bargaining, several agreements reached

March 30, 2012

After a month of talks, nurses have made several gains from issues arising out of the 2009 contract extension and from employer cost savings from disability management.

As of April 1, 2012, the waiting period for Long Term Disability eligibility will be reduced from five months to four months. For members waiting for LTD who have no source of employment income, their premiums for medical, extended health, dental, group life and accidental death and disability benefits will be paid by the bargaining association, funded by monies provided under the Provincial Collective Agreement.

A total of 12 new union disability representative positions, including one provincial union disability coordinator, will be created to work with health authority disability professionals to promote the Enhanced Disability Management Program (EDMP), coordinate disability management best practices, and support members through the EDMP process. The co-management of the EDMP by way of the disability representative and coordinator roles will be funded via allocated disability management program savings.

The Retraining/Education Partnership Fund will be continued at a cost of \$1.2 million. The fund will continue to be used to support the retraining/educational needs of nurses ... including Registered Psychiatric Nurses -- who are transitioning into new roles or positions, in particular difficult to fill positions, to minimize job loss or the disruption caused by displacements, or another other retraining/educational needs as mutually agreed by the parties.

The Prevention and Assistance Fund will be continued at a cost of \$1 million. The NBA will administer the fund, which helps prevent employees from being off work or helps them return to work earlier, including paying the costs of the NBAs Licensing, Education Advocacy and Practice Program (LEAP).

A new joint Occupational Health, Safety and Violence Prevention Committee will be created to administer and implement health and safety and violence prevention initiatives in the health sector. The committee will be funded with \$1.5 million from the disability program cost savings.

Educational funding will be provided for nurses who need assistance to pass their provincial licensing exams and improve their communications skills.

Outstanding issues to be resolved shortly include improvements in classification, job description and job filling procedures and a new arbitration system process.

HSAs Registered Psychiatric Nurses are represented by RPN & Lions Gate Hospital Chief Steward Val Barker and Senior Labour Relations Officer Pat Blomme.

More than 1000 Registered Psychiatric Nurses are covered by the Provincial Nurses Collective Agreement. The BC Nurses Union is the lead union of the Nurses Bargaining Association. The collective agreement expires in March 2012.

To ensure smooth communication during bargaining, please make sure your contact details are up to date:

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