

BULLETIN

Speaking up for HSA

July 1, 2004

The Report: July / August 2004 vol.25 num.4

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ecognizing the significant impact that government decisions have on members' working conditions, HSA's 2003 convention passed a resolution adding the function of lobbying to the mandate of HSA's political action committee (PAC).

HSA's Board of Directors subsequently approved a PAC recommendation that the Committee carry out this mandate, in part, by providing training and support to a group of members who would meet with their MLAs on issues of importance to HSA which are significantly affected by government decisions.

A small group of these members, referred to as constituency liaisons, began this work approximately a year ago. Several of them have met with their MLAs to discuss the issue of shortages among health science professionals, and to suggest steps that the provincial government could take to address this problem.

The constituency liaisons used the issue as a way to educate their MLAs about HSA, the type of work that HSA members perform, and importance of that work to the delivery of health care and community social services.

On June 21, HSA held a workshop for a new group of constituency liaisons. These members discussed the roles and responsibilities of constituency liaisons, and their previous experiences meeting with MLAs on various topics.

The workshop provided tips for obtaining a meeting with an MLA, and for getting the most out of these meetings. Workshop participants reviewed information on the issue of shortages among health science professionals and steps that the provincial government could take to address these shortages, and then practiced conducting a meeting on these topics with a "mock" MLA.

Our new constituency liaisons came away from this workshop feeling confident that they will be able to hold an effective meeting with their MLAs that will get results.

Liaisons plan to meet with their MLAs over the summer, when MLAs are likely to be at home in their constituencies. The Political Action Committee is confident this is an effective way to represent HSA's interests, and educate MLAs about the importance of the work our members perform. 

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