

BULLETIN

## Delegates look forward to busy year ahead

June 1, 2000

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Over 250 delegates attended this years HSA Convention, held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Vancouver on March 31 and April 1. Delegates welcomed guests from around the province and across the country to their 29th Annual Convention.

HSA President Cindy Stewart's speech to delegates reflected this years convention theme: HSA members make a difference. Her speech celebrated the important difference that HSA members make every day at work, in the union, and in our communities.

"As you know, HSA members have been making a difference for almost 30 years," Stewart said. "It seems only fitting that as we kick off a new millennium, we take time to celebrate that and to focus on the ways in which we have changed our workplaces, our communities, and the lives of the individuals around us."

Stewart commended HSA members for their contributions at work. "You make a difference through the passion and dedication that you demonstrate at work," she said. "Let's face it, few of you are in this for the money. You're there because you care about the system and you care about your patients and clients. That is why many HSA members have taken an active role in lobbying for improvements to the way services are delivered and we have fought against changes that could seriously jeopardize standards of care."

Stewart turned the delegates attention to posters of the 10 delegates profiled during the convention, and gave example of where HSA members have influenced events around them. "Please know that these posters are a tribute to all of you," she said. "They are meant to reflect the incredible diversity of our membership and to create a better understanding of who we are and what we care about."

During convention, delegates debated and passed over 60 resolutions, including one calling for the creation of a committee to look at chapter structure and delegate entitlement. In response to the significant draw-down on the Bargaining / Organizing Fund as a result of changes in bargaining structures and duration, delegates approved the transfer of \$500,000 from the defense fund to the general operating fund.

Delegates also voted in favour of constitutional changes that will now see delegates to the paramedical professional bargaining proposal conference being elected from each region. Additionally, delegates approved a campaign calling for a comprehensive rehabilitation and therapy strategy for BC.

A number of resolutions called upon HSA to lobby the government on a range of issues, including:

- a province-wide, comprehensive rehabilitation strategy
- program management
- lay-offs at the Surrey Association for Early Childhood Education
- the proposed closure of Cascade Residence at Burnaby Hospital
- recruitment and retention of health professionals
- the World Trade Organization
- Employment Insurance for adoptive parents
- maternity leave
- returning Early Intervention Therapists and Child Development Centres to the Ministry of Health from the Ministry of Children and Families
- expanding the full range of paramedical professionals in long term care staffing guidelines
- promotion of various paramedical professionals
- maintenance of public, non-profit outpatient services and programs
- universal access to public health care BC Pharmacare
- erosion of services of children with special needs
- extended care bed levels
- national child care program
- local alcohol and drug treatment centres

In addition, delegates passed resolutions that highlighted the need for social action around the world, including the restoration of human rights to the women and girls of Afghanistan, ending child poverty, and endorsing the Canadian Federation of Students Access 2000 campaign.

To conclude the convention, Cindy Stewart extended her thanks to Region IV Director Faith Uchida, who retired from the Board of Directors after five years of service. Thanks also went to Muriel Hoy to acknowledge her work both during and in preparation for convention.

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