



Votes show RPNs sticking with HSA

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83% of HSA RPNs reject raid campaign to date

Registered Psychiatric Nurses at Surrey Memorial Hospital and Abbotsford Regional Hospital have voted to stick with HSA despite an aggressive and well-funded raid campaign by the BC Nurses' Union and the Union of Psychiatric Nurses.

The results in Surrey and Abbotsford are consistent with dozens of other votes held at worksites around the province since the raid began in October. The BCNU/UPN raid has targeted 1052 registered psychiatric nurses who currently belong to HSA. Votes held to date show that 872 of these RPNs – over 80% -- have rejected the raid. Further voting will determine the membership of another 56 HSA members over the next few weeks.

"We are grateful for this show of faith by our RPN members," said Val Avery, president of HSA. "The BCNU and UPN have exhausted considerable efforts to win them over, and it is gratifying to see that RPNs value their long-standing history with HSA. We will not let them down."

"We now call on BCNU and UPN to stop this wasteful raid, work with us to promote the RPNs that are essential to the modern health care system, and bring union benefits and protections to health care professionals who don't already have them."

RPNs were one of the founding professions of HSA over four decades ago, and over the years HSA has fought to advance the profession, sometimes against BCNU, who on a number of occasions has attempted to limit career options for RPNs.

"Not long ago BCNU fought to keep RPN bargaining proposals off the negotiating table within the Nurses Bargaining Association", explained Avery. "It was a blatant attempt to eliminate concerns important to RPNs, and HSA fought back, winning the right for RPNs to have their priorities heard in bargaining. At the workplace, BCNU fought to eliminate RPN job postings -- arguing that any nurse could fill psychiatric nurse jobs. HSA successfully fought this bullying tactic, and secured the right for RPNs to preserve specialized job postings."

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