

BULLETIN

Monday, September 26, 2022

CBA Bargaining Update: Employer now pushing for concessions in bargaining

For most of the last two weeks the HSA, along with seven other constituent unions of the CBA, has been at the bargaining table with the Health Employers' Association of BC (HEABC) working towards a tentative agreement.

We had hoped to have good news about progress but, unfortunately, we are not satisfied with where negotiations stand at this time.

The employer has resisted virtually all non-monetary proposals that would bridge the gap between ourselves and our colleagues who work in the Facilities sector. As an example, not only did the employer come to the table with no plan to address recruitment and retention, they've actually resisted many of our proposals and ideas to make improvements in this area.

In addition, the employer's monetary offer does not address the three biggest disparities in our agreement in terms of wage rates, shift premiums, and vacation. In fact, their core monetary offer is actually less than what was offered to the Facilities Bargaining Association (FBA).

To be clear, we believe workers in the FBA deserve every penny they have in their agreement, we simply want equal pay, premiums, and vacation for workers in the CBA. But the only message we are getting from the employer is that they disagree.

The employer is also refusing to properly maintain the benefit trust that provides members in community health with extended health, extended dental, and long-term disability. This trust was implemented to achieve a cost effective yet equal level of benefits as the trusts covering other health care workers. And, although we have made clear that the trust requires an immediate infusion of money along with increased and ongoing contributions by the employer to avoid benefit reductions, the employer has not offered any additional monies. Instead, they expect CBA members to pay for maintaining the benefit trust from the money we would otherwise use to increase other parts of the agreement such as premium increases, vacation increases, and wage increases. In other words, concessions.

While progress has not been what we hoped, there is some good news to report. During the last two weeks we have achieved language that:

- Covers the distribution of overtime that we hope will begin to bring transparency and fairness to overtime opportunities.
- Allows for full mobility with Health Authorities. However, these alone will not begin to address recruitment and retention.

The bottom line is the employer wants to offer us a deal that would see us fall further behind at a time when health care workers in the community have not only weathered a pandemic but continue to face the opioid crisis and chronic understaffing.

Your committee is committed to fighting back, to closing the gap, and to ensuring you get the deal you deserve.

It's more important than ever that HSA has up-to-date contact information for all Community Health members – particularly in the event that we cannot reach an agreement with HEABC and have to take a strike vote. Use the following link to update your information and encourage your colleagues to do the same:

<https://www.hsabc.org/contact/member-contact-update-form>