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Health science professionals vote to ratify three-year collective agreement

Health science professionals working in hospitals and communities throughout the province have voted to accept a new collective agreement that recognizes the value of health science professionals on multi-disciplinary health care teams.

With a vote of 82 per cent in favour of the agreement, union members covered by the multi-union Health Science Professionals Bargaining Association (HSPBA) collective agreement have accepted a three-year contract that meets important objectives. The agreement includes competitive wages, a classification system that reflects the contributions of a diverse group of specialized members of the health care team, strategies to address workload and recruitment and retention, and a commitment to improving health and safety on the job.

Information and vote meetings were conducted from January 7 to February 8, 2019. HSPBA is a multi-union bargaining association led by the Health Sciences Association of BC (HSA). Health science professionals include more than 100 distinct specialties, working across BC in hospitals, cancer centres, community clinics, and other settings where they deliver the diagnostic, clinical, and rehabilitation services British Columbians depend on for their physical and mental health.

“Our bargaining committee set out to stop the deterioration of the health science professionals contract, and to start on a course to ensure that the expertise, knowledge, and services health science professionals bring to the modern health care team are recognized and valued. This solid vote of support shows that health science professionals believe their bargaining committee delivered,” said HSA President Val Avery.

Jeanne Meyers, the unions’ chief negotiator, said that for the first time in almost 20 years the union was able to achieve significant gains with a government mandate that allowed for free collective bargaining, unlike the previous concessionary government mandates that resulted in health science professionals falling behind their peers across the country.

“With this contract, members will benefit from a general wage increase of two per cent a year for every health science professional, no concessions to extended health care benefits and pensions, the establishment of a continuing professional development fund, and processes to address an antiquated classification system that doesn’t reflect the work of the modern health care team,” Meyers said.



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“I want to thank members for their support of their bargaining committee, and to thank our bargaining committee, local stewards throughout the province, and staff for their hard work negotiating and ratifying a collective agreement that moves all health science professionals forward,” Avery said.

HSPBA represents 19,000 members in five unions: HSA, BC Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU), Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Professional Employees' Association (PEA), and Hospital Employees' Union (HEU).