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HEABC encouraged to speed up pace to achieve fair settlement

Talks for a new contract for 13,000 community health care workers won't resume until next week to allow negotiators for the Health Employers Association of B.C. to review the unions' bargaining demands after the two sides exchanged proposals yesterday afternoon.

Key bargaining issues for community health workers include:

- wages and wage protection;
- job security;
- making up for previous rollbacks and cuts implemented by the provincial government;
- hours of work and scheduling;
- benefits; and
- health and safety.

The delay in getting meaningful bargaining underway is already causing some concern.

Union negotiators say the Campbell government has created a timetable for this round of bargaining, and if negotiations are to be constructive and creative to maximize all opportunities to achieve the best contracts possible, then a settlement must be reached by March 31.

The union bargaining committee is encouraging HEABC to speed up the pace of talks when their negotiators return to the table next week.

HSA represents 600 members in the community health sector. Other members unions in the bargaining association are: BCGEU, UFCW 1518, HEU CUPE and PEA. Other smaller unions involved in the sector are represented in the talks by CAW.