



Nurses' Bargaining Association policy discussion underway

January 24, 2006

In the lead up to provincial bargaining, policy discussions have begun with representatives from all health authorities plus Providence Health Care, Ministry of Health, Health Employers' Association of BC and the Nurses Bargaining Association (BC Nurses Union, Health Sciences Association and Union of Psychiatric Nurses). Participants include BCNU Council members representing nurses in each Health Authority and Providence as well as representation of HSA and UPN.

Similar to 2004, the aim of the policy discussions is for the parties to come together to share information and concerns in a more informal forum than found at the bargaining table. Three key areas for discussion have been retention, recruitment and occupational health and safety.

The approximately 40 participants have broken into three groups to discuss a wide variety of topics under these three key headings. Plenary sessions are chaired by Deputy Minister of Health, Dr. Penny Ballem, with Vancouver Coastal Health CEO, Ida Goodreau chairing in Dr. Ballems absence. Taking the lead for the NBA are BCNU President, Debra McPherson and BCNU Director of Negotiations, Gary Fane.

Talks have been positive and the NBA is looking forward to further discussion beginning January 30, 2006. Discussion dates have also been set for the weeks of February 13 and 20.

Collective bargaining will commence March 6, 2006 following the BCNU Provincial Bargaining Strategy Conference and Convention. Bargaining dates have been set throughout March.

As was the case in 2004 policy discussions, communication will be between the participants and their members with no media activity.

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