



Details of Nurses Bargaining Association tentative agreement

April 3, 2006

The Nurses' Bargaining Association has reached a tentative agreement with the Health Employers' Association on a new contract that provides significant gains for nurses in key areas of workload and compensation.

The NBA is recommending acceptance of the agreement and will be taking it out to the members for ratification.

Workload

The contract contains a major commitment by the provincial government and health authorities to measure and mitigate nurses workloads through the development of workload indicators and staffing plans. The agreement says "patient safety and positive patient outcomes are dependent upon having appropriate staffing plans which provide reasonable workloads for nurses."

Representatives from the Nurses' Bargaining Association will have key roles along with senior government and health authority officials on key provincial and local committees in developing and implementing staffing plans. To respond to immediate pressing workload concerns, the strategy includes the use of a Strategic Workload analysis Team (SWAT) in each health authority, including an NBA representative, to recommend and help implement solutions with immediate impact.

Wages

The contract provides wage increases totaling 14.2 per cent over four years (15.1 per cent compounded):

April 1, 2006 - 3.0 percent

April 1, 2007 - 3.5 percent (possible allocation of 1 per cent to the pension plan to protect inflation protection and group benefits accounts for future retired nurses, if the pension corporation agrees)

April 1, 2008 - 3.5 percent

April 1, 2009 ... 4.2 percent

Premiums

The agreement would double the premiums for night shifts and weekend shifts:

Night shift premium - \$3.50/hour effective immediately (now \$1.75)

Weekend shift - \$2.00 hour effective immediately (now \$1.00)

On-Call premium - April 1, 2006 \$3.00/hour for first 72 hours on-call in calendar month, thereafter \$4.25/hour (moving to \$3.25/hour April 1, 2007, \$3.50/hour April 1, 2008 and \$3.75/hour April 1, 2009 for the first 72 hours in a calendar month , thereafter \$4.25.

Mileage Allowance - increases to 50 cents/kilometer effective immediately (from 46 cents)

Out of office vehicle premium - Nurses who use their own vehicle to deliver community-based services shall receive an out of office vehicle premium of \$50/month

The proposed contract also includes:

- One-time signing bonus of \$3150 per full time FTE, pro-rated for part-time and casual
- Full indexing of Long Term Disability benefits for recipients of the Supplementary Monthly Benefit (pre-1998 recipients)
- Expansion of application of the isolation allowance
- Province-wide seniority
- Improved grievance procedure
- A program to reduce and eliminate violence in the workplace
- Casuals now allowed to use hours worked at all worksites to determine increments
- A premium for nurses working in areas identified by the Ministry of Health and the health authorities as having the most acute combination of vacancies and overtime use (OR/PAR, ER, ICU/CCU with permanently assigned staff)
- Increased flexibility in the use of special leave

Also in the package are significant allocations to various programs to improve nurses' practice environments which were developed as a result of nursing policy discussions between the NBA and the Ministry of Health and health authorities before bargaining began. The programs include:

- Restoration of front-line nursing leadership by educating DC2s and DC3s for leadership roles
- Funds for skill-building and nursing education
- On-going funding of the Occupational Health and Safety Agency for Health Care
- A fund to prevent workplace violence
- A program to provide internships for new hires
- A fund for nursing research
- A fund to promote responsive shift scheduling

Further information about the tentative agreement, as well as details on ratification will be made available later this week.

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