



BULLETIN

## Lack of Staff Number One Issue in HSAA Survey

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Ottawa (November 27, 2006) -- A recent survey of 12,000 members of the Health Sciences Association of Alberta (HSAA/NUPGE) identifies workload and lack of staff as the number one issue. HSAA is a union that represents more than 14,000 professional, technical, support and ambulance workers in Alberta's health care system.

"We asked our members what it would take to create a quality work environment. Most say the hiring of more staff to reduce workload is what's needed," said HSAA president Elisabeth Ballermann.

"This is a wake up call for health employers in Alberta. If employers want to deal with recruitment and retention of health care workers, they need to improve the work environment."

The second most important issue was the need for support of continuing professional development. All regulated professionals are required by their professional colleges to meet significant continuing educational requirements. HSAA has been saying for many years that employers must share this responsibility by providing adequate time and financial support to enable their employees to keep up to date.

"Our members tell us they want a better balance between work and family life. This means more flexibility to job share with their peers and ensuring that special leave/personal days are easier to use," Ballermann added.

One in five HSAA members plan to retire in the next five years. Of those, 20% say they would consider delaying their retirement if improvements were made to the work environment.

"This survey of allied health employees is the first of its kind in Canada. We are meeting with employers to advocate for joint efforts to improve the work environment. HSAA is committed to working with employers at the bargaining table, but also between contracts to address identified needs. We expect this will have huge benefits for our members, the employers and therefore Albertans," Ballermann concluded.

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