

BULLETIN

## Pharmacists' wage rollback rescinded

March 6, 2012

Talks at the Health Science Professionals bargaining table today opened with an announcement from the Health Employers Association of BC that the plan to roll back the temporary market adjustment for pharmacists has been rescinded.

HSA President Reid Johnson applauded the efforts of hospital pharmacists across the province who spoke out against the 9 to 14 per cent wage rollback planned for April 1, 2012 announced January 6.

-The almost 1,200 letters sent through the [pharmacistsmatter.ca](http://pharmacistsmatter.ca) website, along with the efforts of pharmacists who met with MLAs, local health authorities, and who told their stories in the media exerted the pressure we needed for HEABC to reverse its plan for the unilateral wage rollback," Johnson said.

-This is the first sign we've seen that HEABC has been given the green light to be at the bargaining table to negotiate," Johnson said.

When the wage rollback was announced, pharmacists warned that hospitals across BC have been suffering critical recruitment and retention problems in their pharmacy departments. In recognition of these difficulties, HEABC agreed in 2006 to a market wage adjustment to stem the flow of pharmacists away from BC hospitals. Even with the adjustment, most BC hospital pharmacies are still understaffed. Ongoing hospital vacancies remain unfilled for years. As a result, hospital pharmacists are overworked. Those who remain are still in the health system because of their dedication to patients and the passion for their profession.

The market adjustment will be maintained for pharmacists until a new collective agreement is in place.

-This is good news for pharmacists, and clears the way for productive discussion," said HSPBA chief negotiator Jeanne Meyers.

Bargaining continues this week.

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