

ALBERTA UNION OF PROVINCIAL EMPLOYEES

# BARGAINING UPDATE

MAY 20, 2021

## ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES (AHS)

LOCALS: 041, 043, 044, 045 & 046

### NURSING CARE

## IT'S TIME FOR AHS TO STOP HIDING BEHIND THE PANDEMIC AND GET BACK TO THE TABLE

In early March, your negotiating team declined the employer's offer to extend the Memorandum of Agreement to suspend bargaining beyond March 31, 2021 and have been trying, without success, to get to the bargaining table ever since.

AHS Nursing Care members know just as well as anyone that the stress of working on the frontlines as COVID-19 has wreaked havoc throughout our worksites. You have been eyewitnesses to the pain and lasting damage that so many Albertans are enduring. It is an insult to you that AHS negotiators can find time to develop plans to privatize and contract-out the jobs of our brothers and sisters in General Support Services but can't find the time to schedule bargaining dates with us.

We had bargaining meetings scheduled for May 19 and 20, 2021. On May 13, 2021, the employer advised the union that AHS had unilaterally decided to cancel the bargaining meetings because the Employer "needed to focus on the pandemic response."

Health care unions in Saskatchewan ratified collective agreements in January of this year. If the health authorities in that province managed to get their act together and negotiate in the midst of a pandemic, it's not clear to us why Alberta Health Services can't do the same.

Your AHS Nursing Care Negotiating Team is made of members who are working hard on the actual front lines of this crisis, unlike the AHS negotiators who are in their offices devising ways to decrease your wages, benefits, and pensions.

Don't forget, their incoming bargaining proposal seeks concessions in the collective agreement that will make your working conditions even more unsustainable than they've been

these past several years, well before any of us had ever heard of COVID-19.

You have worked through the past 14 months in the most horrendous circumstances providing the quality care that Albertans have depended upon to get them through the worst health crisis we've seen in a generation. Many of you have witnessed and experienced so much over this time, all while putting yourselves and your families at risk. AHS wants to reward you for that service by making you work even harder for far less. They just want to do it quietly after the pandemic ends, when they hope the public isn't paying attention.

Enough is enough.

AUPE has filed a Bad Faith Bargaining complaint with Alberta's Labour Relations Board (LRB) seeking an order forcing the employer to return to bargaining and schedule meetings for early June, and that they cease and desist from unilaterally cancelling scheduled meetings in the future.

The LRB accepted the Union's complaint, and the employer must file a written response before June 2nd.

Remember, your collective agreement remains in full force and effect. If you have any questions about your collective agreement or are experiencing any issues at work, please contact your worksite steward. You can also contact your Membership Services Officer by calling AUPE at 1-800-232-7284.

If you have any questions about this bargaining update, please contact a member of your negotiating team.

*(See page 2 for contact information)*



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