

# ALBERTA UNION OF PROVINCIAL EMPLOYEES

# BARGAINING UPDATE

DECEMBER 20, 2021

## ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES (AHS)

LOCALS: 041, 043, 044, 045 & 046

### NURSING CARE

## PROGRESS ON NON-MONETARY ITEMS; WE'RE STANDING FIRM AGAINST CONCESSIONS

Your negotiating team met with the Employer on Nov. 26 and Dec. 15, where we continued working through non-monetary items. One of the Employer's priorities involves a proposal involving recruitment that would vastly reduce the number of vacant positions that would need to be posted. While there are some benefits to this proposal that we agree with, such as selecting qualified candidates from within the work site in order of seniority, there remain some important elements that we have yet to come to terms with, although we are making progress.

### **Erosion of the public health care system by stealth?**

Your negotiating team is acutely aware of the very real threat of further privatization by stealth through the "Alberta Surgical Initiative" announced earlier this year by Alberta Health and Alberta Health Services. This initiative will see public resources used to educate and train Registered Nurses (RNs) and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) in public facilities only to have them end up working in privately owned and operated Chartered Surgical Facilities (CSFS).

While the Employer and the government has suggested this plan would be temporary in order to reduce surgical backlogs, we have no reason to believe them. Similarly, while the current CSFs only perform procedures of minor acuity levels, we have no reason to believe that this will always be the case.

With these private operators currently in negotiations with Jason Kenney's government, there is a very real possibility that these chartered facilities will expand their capacity to perform procedures with higher acuity levels through expanded certification by the Alberta College of Physicians and Surgeons. As the result will be the further erosion of the public health care system, with current workload and recruitment challenges exacerbated even further, we will continue to be vigilant and encourage you to do the same.

### **We Will Not Accept Concessions**

Your negotiating team made it clear to the Employer that our patience is growing thin as one of the last public sector bargaining units to still face significant concessions in front of us on the bargaining table. We want all concessions removed, including the Employer's attack on Orthopedic Technicians through a targeted wage rollback.

While we will not accept any concessions, under any conditions, we remain mindful that this small group within our membership needs to be strongly represented at the bargaining table, and that is what we are doing and will continue to do. 'An injury to one is an injury to all' is not just a slogan.

We are optimistic that we will finalize negotiations on the non-monetary proposals when we meet again with the Employer on Jan. 17 and 19, 2022.

If you have any questions about this bargaining update, please reach out to a member of your negotiating team. We'll update you again after our meetings in January. In the meantime, please accept our very best wishes that you and yours enjoy as peaceful a holiday season as you are able.

In solidarity,

*(See page 2 for contact information)*



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