



United Nurses of Alberta

News Bulletin



*UNA Vice-President
Bev Dick receives the
Canadian Federation of
Nurses' Unions Bread and
Roses Award at the CFNU
Biennium in St. John's.
More information on Page 13*



PROVINCIAL VOTE
on the Collective Agreement
Wednesday, July 11th, 2007
Details inside

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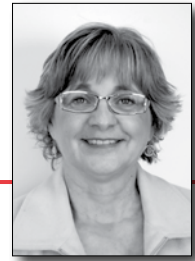
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Message from the 1st Vice-President

Bev Dick



Over to the members for your decision

You may well be wondering why I am writing in this space, which usually is President Heather Smith's column. It is with sadness that I have to inform you that Heather Smith had a death in the family. Understandably, she will be taking some time off.

Nearly 125 UNA members went to St. John's for the Canadian Federation of Nurses' Unions biannual convention earlier in June. It was incredibly energizing to meet with so many nurses from right across the country. We are certainly not the only nurses in this country facing difficult conditions. Sharing common experiences and common issues with so many other nurses is empowering. Personally, it gave me a strong sense of what we can accomplish working together. It's a great energy to bring back to our negotiation process.

This issue of the NewsBulletin was rushed out to get you more detailed information about the mediator's recommendations and the draft agreement that you will be voting on July 11th. Inside you will find a Question and Answer section that gives a good overview of information about the most important parts of these recommendations. There is also a more detailed summary of the changes this proposal would make to our provincial collective agreement. Even more detail, which we do not have space for here, is available on the UNA website, on our UNA*Net system and through your Local Executive members.

As we send this to press, the other negotiating tables for the Alberta Cancer Board, the Good Samaritan Society, CareWest in Calgary, Capital Care in Edmonton and several other long-term care organizations are continuing to meet. The Negotiating Committee will be pushing to get the same terms offered to these nurses as well.

Every round of negotiations seems to be dramatically different from every other round, and this time it is again. We have voted on mediator's recommendations before. But we have always had a recommendation from our Negotiating Committee. This time is different. Our Committee represented us very well, and did as much as they could. In the end, they did not reach an agreement with the employers and the mediator's recommendations fall short of what they believe many members expectations are. Having gone as far with negotiations as they believe possible, they are bringing the recommendations to us, the members, for a decision.

So it is up to you to decide and I encourage you to inform yourself thoroughly on the recommendations, take a look at what's inside this NewsBulletin and, on July 11th, go vote. 🍷

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Questions & Answers

Why isn't the Negotiating Committee recommending the offer?

Neither the Employer's Committee nor the UNA Negotiating Committee is recommending acceptance or rejection.

"The members will make their own judgments on whether this is acceptable," said UNA Director of Labour Relations, David Harrigan. "It would certainly be a competitive agreement, the best provincial nursing agreement in the country," he says. "But it may fall short of what many members expected. The members have to decide."

What are the important monetary parts of this proposal?

Salaries would go up by 5% each year of the three-year agreement. In addition, nurses who have 20 or more calendar years registered with any nursing licensing body will get another 2% increase as of April 1, 2007.

The contract will raise a senior RN/RPN's top hourly wage from \$36.67 to \$43.30 over three years. Both top rate and start rate nurses would have the highest hourly rates in Canada.

There is also a COLA protection in the third year, so if cost of living rises beyond 5% members will receive a cash payout based on the increase in the cost of living that is over 5%.

There is also the Semi-Annual Market Lump Sum which will be paid on pay period following October 1, based on hours worked April 1 to September 30 and after April 1, based on hours worked October 1 to March 31. The yearly sum is \$1500 in 2007, \$1625 in 2008 and \$1750 in 2009. It will be pro-rated for part-time and casual Employees.

There are also increases in shift and weekend premiums, on-call, in-charge, and transportation kilometreage. The night shift premium, for example, will increase from the current \$2 an hour, to \$5 an hour by April 1, 2009.

There are also increases in supplementary benefits. Please see the Summary enclosed or the full Mediator's Recommendations for more details.

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The chart uses the all items basket Consumer Price Index. The yearly numbers show the increase for just that year. The totals at the bottom of the chart represent the cumulative change over ten years, not the sum of the annual changes. As a result the bottom line is NOT the sum of the years.

To gauge how UNA salaries are keeping pace with inflation, subtract the cost increase from the salary increase. For example, in Alberta, UNA salaries have risen more than inflation by 34.04% since 1997 (65.09%-31.05%).

Consumer Price Index and UNA Salary Growth, 1997-2007

Year Ending In April of	Calgary	Edmonton	Alberta	Canada	Salary Increase (Top Increment)
1997	2.36%	2.28%	2.46%	1.81%	3.3%
1998	1.66%	1.12%	1.39%	1.22%	3.4%
1999	1.82%	1.29%	1.55%	1.02%	3.0%
2000	2.94%	2.81%	2.87%	2.20%	3.0%
2001	3.64%	3.00%	3.23%	2.87%	12.2%
2002	2.34%	2.23%	2.37%	2.09%	13.0%
2003	4.74%	4.78%	4.87%	3.08%	3.5%
2004	1.87%	2.72%	2.28%	1.82%	3.0%
2005	1.91%	1.64%	1.77%	2.20%	3.0%
2006	2.78%	2.53%	2.80%	2.31%	3.0%
2007	5.26%	3.36%	4.34%	1.79%	5.0%*
Increase From 1997 to 2007 (Figures different from column totals due to compounding)	32.96%	28.53%	31.05%	22.61%	65.09% *Increase for 2007 does not include lump sums or 2% long service increase

Note: Annual average calculated based on the average monthly CPI for all items from May to April of the previous year.

UNA sponsors Rainbow Society stories on Global TV

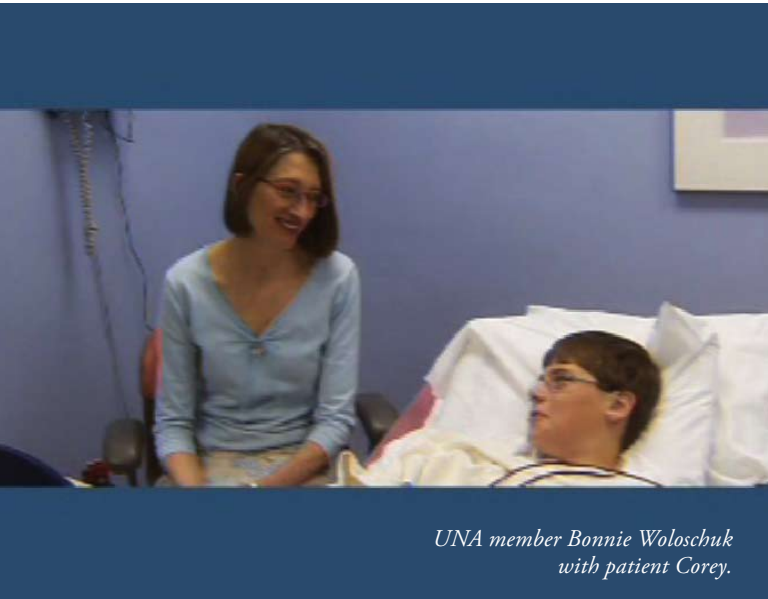
United Nurses of Alberta is sponsoring short vignette TV spots highlighting the Rainbow Society's work with kids and their families, on Global TV Alberta stations. The short one-minute spots and even shorter 30-second spots, quickly tell the story of one child and family that has benefited from the Rainbow Society program.



The Rainbow Society helps make wishes come true for the families of children with chronic or terminal illnesses. The Staff Nurses Association sponsored the Society for many years and Local #301 has partnered to put on the Rainbow Gala for many years. Now UNA is assisting the organization provincially with these TV vignettes that show how it helps families.

One of the spots features a boy, Corey, who has a problem with extremely high cholesterol and must have his blood filtered every two weeks. His research nurse, Bonnie, referred him to the Rainbow Society. Bonnie is also featured in the vignette. The Rainbow Society sent Corey and his family to Disney World to make his wish come true.

Global TV is co-sponsoring the short TV presentations, which will be going on throughout the year. 🍷



UNA member Bonnie Woloschuk with patient Corey.

The UNA delegation was high profile in red and white jackets during the Alberta Federation of Labour march to have Alberta's resources benefit Albertans!



Gil McGowan, President of the Alberta Federation of Labour chats with UNA President Heather Smith and Vice-President Bev Dick, during the May Day march held in conjunction with the Alberta Federation of Labour Convention in Calgary.

- continued from page 3

Will the contract help reduce overtime?

Only finding enough nurses will reduce the need for overtime, but the proposed agreement would allow nurses to say no. "Should the Employee believe that the Employer is requesting the Employee to work more than a reasonable amount of overtime, then the Employee may decline to work the additional overtime, except in an emergency, without being subject to disciplinary action."

Competitive salaries, premiums and benefits will help attract and retain nurses. The innovative and flexible positions and schedules can also encourage nurses to stay. In another new provision, the Employer must now include in the roles and responsibilities document the authority or process for charge nurses to augment staff.

What about the other tables?

The recommendations are for all Employees currently covered by the UNA/Multi Employer Collective Agreement. Bethany Nursing Home Camrose, Rosehaven and St. Michael's Long Term Care Lethbridge are also covered by these recommendations as they agreed to participate in the main table.

The provincial Negotiating Committee is, at press time, meeting with other separate "tables" including:

- Alberta Cancer Board
- Bethany Care Calgary
- Bethany Care Cochrane
- Bethany Care Collegesside
- Carewest Calgary
- Capital Care Edmonton, Youville Home St. Albert, St. Joseph's Hospital Edmonton
- The Good Samaritan Society (including Stony Plain, Southridge, Pembina Village, Millwoods Centre, Dr. Gerald Zetter Care Centre and Southgate Centre).
- St. Michael's Long-term Care Edmonton
- Millwoods Shepherd's Care

These agreements are negotiated separately but it is the Negotiating Committee's objective to achieve the same terms.

How do I vote and is the vote binding?

Only UNA members can vote, and you vote at your Local. The Local will set up polling stations and post voting hours. You will have to present your UNA membership card to vote.

The vote will be binding. If a majority of members and a majority of Locals vote to accept the mediator's recommendations, they will form the new collective agreement. The Employers also must ratify and both parties are to notify the mediator by 12:00 July 13th.


Will this contract help reduce the shortage and improve working conditions?

UNA has been making public statements to make it clear that any collective agreement alone will NOT resolve the crisis of the shortage of nurses and health professionals. UNA will continue to pressure the provincial government to educate more nurses and attract more to the province.

There are, however, several innovative measures that may help with retention and improve conditions. Some examples in the proposal are the Pre-retirement FTE Reduction Option, the Weekend Worker Option, the Flexible Part-time Employee, and Benefit-Eligible Casual Positions. Please see the Summary of Changes on the following pages.

The agreement would also create a Provincial Joint Staffing Task Force (Union and Employer reps) to review the issues of staffing and workload that may make recommendations to the government. The Task Force may review research, conduct new research, and review nurse/patient ratios, staffing plans, and more.

What happens if nurses vote down the proposal?

This is not a job action vote. If the proposal is defeated however, further action beyond negotiations may be necessary. Director of Labour Relations David Harrigan points out that: "It is the sincere belief of the Negotiating Committee that the mediator's recommendation is the best that can be achieved without job action. Members should not be under the impression that a strong "no" vote would cause the employers to amend their position." 

Summary of the Mediator's Recommendations

The following is a summary of the major components of the mediator's recommendations and earlier negotiated terms for a new Provincial Collective Agreement. More information, including the full recommendations and the draft revised agreement, is available on the website, www.una.ab.ca, on the UNA*Net email and conferencing system, and from Local Executive members.

ARTICLE 1 - Term of the Collective Agreement

- 3 year term
- The Employer and the Union will exercise their rights in a manner which is professional, fair and reasonable

ARTICLE 7 - Hours of Work and Scheduling Provisions

- If an Employee reports for work as scheduled and is requested by the Employer to leave and less than four hours remain in the scheduled shift, the Employee shall be paid for the remaining hours of the scheduled shift. This does not apply in situations where the start time of the scheduled shift has been changed
- Employees able to exchange portions of shifts
- Where a shift exchange involves a designated day of rest, day of rest deemed to be exchanged

ARTICLE 8 - Overtime

- Following working a shift, an Employee who then works in excess of four hours overtime shall be provided with access to a meal and snacks at no cost
- Employer may request an Employee to work a reasonable amount of overtime. If Employee believes requested overtime is unreasonable amount, then Employee may decline, except in emergency conditions, without being subject to discipline. An emergency is a situation that calls for immediate action. The Employer must take reasonable steps to avoid an emergency prior to requiring overtime.
- Employee working OT immediately following a shift, or called back to work, to get 8 consecutive hours off duty in 12 hour period preceding the Employee's next shift. Where less than 8 consecutive hours, at the Employee's request, Employee not required to report for duty until received 8 consecutive hours off duty without loss of earnings. Employee to advise supervisor

ARTICLE 9 - On-Call Duty/Call Back

- Increase to \$3.30/hour for regular workday (effective date of ratification)
- Increase to \$4.50/hour for days of rest and Named Holidays (effective date of ratification)
- Employee working OT immediately following a shift, or called back to work, to get 8 consecutive hours off duty in 12 hour period preceding the Employee's next shift. Where less than 8 consecutive hours, at Employee's request, Employee not required to report for duty until received 8 consecutive hours off duty without loss of earnings. Employee to advise supervisor

ARTICLE 10 - Transportation

- Increase business use insurance to maximum of \$500 annually (Current cap is \$260)
- 44¢/km or government of Alberta rates, whichever is greater (effective date of ratification)

ARTICLE 12 - Seniority

- Seniority to apply for selection of available "lines" in same unit or within the same program and site. Cannot change from standard workday to extended work day or vice versa except when there is a vacant "line"
- An Employee does not have to voluntarily terminate employment with the previous employer to port seniority

ARTICLE 14 - Promotions, Transfers & Vacancies

- All notices of vacancy shall include the unit (if applicable) and program. (This ensures that unit is now considered part of your position)
- Temporary Employees shall have unlimited ability to apply on other temporary position(s) within the same unit or program. If the temporary position

is on another unit or program and commences before the term of their current temporary position expires then the immediate supervisor must agree

- Trial period to exclude any theoretical component required by the Employer
- During the trial period the Employee may request reinstatement to their former position
- In instances where a regular Employee accepts a regular or temporary managerial position which is outside the scope of this Agreement the resultant vacancy shall be posted as a temporary position, not exceeding 12 months. During this 12 month period, the former Employee may be reinstated into their former position. The Union shall be notified whenever this clause is applied.

ARTICLE 15 - Layoff and Recall

- Provide Employees with 72 hours to exercise displacement options
- An Employee shall not be entitled to displace an Employee in a higher rated classification
- Recall to other UNA bargaining units for Employers participating in the UNA/Multi Employer collective agreement within the same geographical health region where the Employee's site is located. Can refuse recall to a site of another Employer but lose recall rights to that site

ARTICLE 16 - Responsibility Allowance, Temporary Assignments and in Charge

- Increase responsibility allowance and charge pay to \$2.00/hour
- Document regarding roles and responsibilities of a person designated in charge to include the authority or process for augmenting staff

ARTICLE 17 - Vacations with Pay

- Enable payout of vacation time exceeding four weeks at written request of Employee
- Supplementary vacation-additional 5 days at 40 and 45 years of continuous service (in addition to current supplementary vacation)

ARTICLE 18 - Named Holidays

- August Civic Holiday and Christmas Day paid at 2X

ARTICLE 19 - Sick Leave

- Employees may be required to submit satisfactory proof to the Employer of any illness, non

occupational accident or quarantine **when circumstances make it reasonable to do so** (This will prevent the Employer from arbitrarily asking staff to submit a Dr's note for absences)

- Clarify vacation may be rescheduled when illness started prior to vacation.
- Upon request the Employer shall advise an Employee of her or his accrued sick leave credits. (delete quarterly)
- Where a Regular or Temporary Employee has accumulated a sick leave bank and subsequently transfers to a casual position, the Employee's sick leave bank shall be frozen as at the time of transfer to the casual position. The Casual Employee shall not have access to the frozen sick leave bank.
- Where a Casual Employee transfers to a regular or temporary position with the same Employer, such Employee shall have his or her frozen sick leave bank reinstated, and shall be eligible to access such sick leave.
- An Employee who terminates their employment and within six months of termination, obtains a casual position shall be entitled to port their sick leave bank to the new employer. The Employee's sick leave bank shall be frozen.

ARTICLE 21 - Prepaid Health Benefits

Effective October 1, 2007

- Add coverage to Supplementary Health Care Plan:
- Laser eye surgery added to vision care
- Medications prescribed by any qualified practitioner
- Vaccines-Hep A and Hep B
- Hearing aids \$3000/5years
- Coverage for Psychologists \$100/visit (maximum 20 visits)
- 100% Direct Bill diabetic supplies
- 100% coverage for insulin pump every 5 years
- Surgical stocking/support hose – two pairs/year
- Foot Orthotics \$500/2 years
- Chiropractic benefits – pay prior to reaching provincial maximum
- Lowest Cost Alternative Medication coverage, unless otherwise specified
- 100% coverage for respiratory equipment (including CPAP machines and supplies)
- Blue Cross Usual and Customary Fee guide
- Extensive dental services to include implants and appliances(appliances to include mouth guards for therapeutic use)

- Orthodontic Dental-Increase maximum to \$3000/lifetime including coverage for adults
- 60 day open enrolment period from October 1, 2007 to November 30, 2007 for Employees who had previously opted out to enroll in the Plan

ARTICLE 22 - Leaves of Absence

- If a request for leave of absence is denied, the Employer must advise the Employee in writing of the reasons for the denial.
- Military Leave: An Employee who is required by military authorities to attend training or perform military services shall be granted leave without pay.
- Employees may be required to submit to the Employer satisfactory proof demonstrating the need for special leave or terminal care leave when circumstances make it reasonable to do so (In the current collective agreement the Employer can require Employees to submit satisfactory proof. This change in language would mean that the Employer can require it only if it is reasonable)
- Leave for Public Affairs – to run in election and if elected leave of absence for maximum of 4 years

ARTICLE 26 - Educational Allowances

- Language added to clarify when of out of country Baccalaureate Degrees recognized

ARTICLE 28 - Shift Differential and Weekend Premium

Evening Premium

- Date of ratification \$2.25/hr
- April 1/08 \$2.50/hr
- April 1/09 \$2.75/hr

Nights Premium

- Date of ratification \$3.50/hr
- April 1/08 \$4.25/hr
- April 1/09 \$5.00/hr

Weekend Premium:

- Date of ratification \$2.25/hour
- April 1/09 \$2.75
- April 1/09 \$3.25/hr

ARTICLE 29 - Pension Plan

- RRSP-Employees 72 and older to receive an additional 2% of regular earnings (Employees 72 and older are not permitted to contribute into RRSP)

ARTICLE 30 - Part-Time, Temporary and Casual Employees

- Hours lost due to a Named Holiday must be rescheduled if the Employee requests
- Casual Employees entitled to overtime worked in excess of 147.25 hours (exclusive of daily overtime hours) averaged over a four week period starting point established as the first day of the first pay period following 90 days from the date of ratification of this Collective Agreement

ARTICLE 32A AND 33 - Grievance Procedure and Arbitration

- Article 32A and Article 33 Letter of Understanding 2 year trial period for dispute/resolution process to simplify the process and resolve grievances in a more efficient and timely manner. At the conclusion of the trial period, parties may agree to extend, adopt or amend the trial period process.

ARTICLE 34 - Occupational Health and Safety

- The parties recognize the need for a safe and healthy workplace. The Employer shall be responsible for providing safe and healthy working conditions. The Employer and the Employees will take all reasonable steps to eliminate, reduce or minimize all workplace hazards.
- Employer shall not deny access to conduct safety inspections
- Should an issue not be resolved by the committee, the issue shall be referred to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). A resolution meeting between the Union and the CEO, or his or her designate(s), shall take place within 21 calendar days of the issue being referred to the CEO. The CEO or designate(s) shall reply in writing to the Union within 7 calendar days of the resolution meeting. (This step would be prior to presenting to the governing board.)

- The Employer shall conduct ongoing hazard assessments, including those for a pandemic, disaster or emergency response. Such assessments shall review:
 - engineering controls,
 - administrative policies, procedures and compliance
 - appropriate personal protective devices and other equipment.
 - share information with and obtain input from the Occupational Health and Safety Committee pertaining to all hazard assessments.
- Letter of Understanding – Employer to provide OH&S Committee copies of hazard assessments, administrative policies and procedures regarding use of latex supplies and equipment, personal protective devices, “safety engineered” needles and other medical sharps devices
- Prior to introducing a shift that begins or ends between the hours of 2400 and 0600 hours, Employer to consult with the Union

ARTICLE 36 - Professional Responsibility

- Issues not resolved by Professional Responsibility Committee referred to CEO; resolution meetings between Union and CEO to take place within 21 calendar days and CEO to reply within 7 calendar days of resolution meeting (This step would be prior to presenting to the governing Board.)
- Committee to examine concerns of Employees or the Employer

ARTICLE 43 - Subsistence

- Increase reimbursement maximums for meals as follows:
 - Breakfast \$8.80
 - Lunch \$11.10
 - Supper \$19.85
- Increase Per Diem allowance to \$7.05 for each 24 hour period away from home
- Increase Accommodation reimbursement where no receipt is produced to \$19.30 (Note: These are current Government rates)

SALARY APPENDIX:

- April 1/07 5%
- April 1/08 5%
- April 1/09 5% or COLA, whichever is greater

LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING

RE: COLA Lump Sum

- SemiAnnual COLA Adjustment 2009: If the Alberta Cost of Living for 2008 exceeds 5% then an additional lump sum payment will be paid October/09 and April/10, based on hours worked. Hours worked includes leaves of absence for Union business, other leaves of one month or less, time on sick leave with pay, absences on WCB and education leave up to 24 months.(eg. if COLA is 7% then the COLA Adjustment Payment would be an additional 2%)

LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING RE: Market Condition Lump Sum Payment

- 2007-2008 year: \$1500 paid semi-annually (\$750 paid October/07 and \$750 paid April/08)
- 2008-2009 year: \$1625 paid semi-annually (\$812.50 paid October/08 and \$812.50 paid April/09)
- 2009-2010 year: \$1750 paid semi-annually (\$875 paid October/09 and \$875 paid April/10)
- Pro rated for Part-time and Casual Employees based on hours worked, Hours worked includes leaves of absence for Union business, other leaves of one month or less, time on sick leave with pay, absences on WCB and education leave up to 24 months. Employees commencing/terminating employment eligible for portion of time worked. Does not apply to nursing students employed as undergraduates.

LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING RE: Retention and Recruitment Initiatives

- Long Service Retention Payment: Effective April 1, 2007, 2% shall be added to the basic rate of pay for all Employees who have 20 or more calendar years of licensed nursing practice.

Retirement Preparation Program (New)

- To enhance experienced nurse retention by enabling them to reduce a portion of their clinical work, dedicating that portion to mutually agreed leadership assignments, projects or research. For Employees who are eligible for an unreduced pension or an Employee who has a combined age and years of nursing employment of 77. The Employer shall not unreasonably refuse such a request.

Pre-retirement FTE Reduction Option (New)

- For Employees eligible for an unreduced pension or with a combined age and years of nursing employment of 80, enable reduction of FTE with pension contributions continued at pre-retirement FTE. (Reduction of FTE by no more than .2 and no lower than .6 FTE for no longer than 2.5 years)

Weekend Worker Option (New)

- To enable Employees to work every weekend (approximately .8 FTE) while being paid as full-time for regular and extended workday Employees

Extraordinary Temporary Employees:

- For specific job between 12 and 24 months (was between 3 and 12 months).

New Unique Employment Pilot Programs to Support Recruitment and Retention:

Flexible Part-time Employee:

- At least 50% of an Employee's FTE to be scheduled according to the Collective Agreement, with the remaining to be scheduled on a flexible basis, solely on the Employee's preference, to cover available shifts.

Seasonal Part-time Employee

- To encourage retention of Employees who do not want to work the entire year to allow them to work during a portion of the year, while providing earnings either during the worked portion or spread over the year, and Employee benefits continue over the full year.

Benefit-Eligible Casual Positions:

- Provide Casual Employees with a guaranteed FTE and benefits in return for a commitment to work a minimum number of shifts scheduled at the Employee's preference (at least 0.4 FTE).

LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING RE: Staffing and Workload Initiative

- Creation of a Provincial Joint Staffing Task Force (Union and Employer reps) to review the issues of staffing and workload and make recommendations to address these issues. The Task Force may review current research, conduct or support additional research, identify potential pilot projects and consult with other groups doing similar work. This may include, but is not limited to, a review of nurse/patient ratios, staffing plans, workload measurement systems, scopes of practice, health workplaces and inter-disciplinary teams. The Task Force may also consider and make recommendations to the Provincial Government regarding workforce planning matters.

LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING RE: Scheduling

In Article 7 (Hours of Work) of the collective agreement there is a requirement that schedules provide for at least two consecutive days off. In a recent arbitration, the decision was that this meant "48 hours" rather than two calendar days. This Letter of Understanding repairs potential damage from that arbitration.

For the purposes of Article 7: Hours of Work and Scheduling Provisions, the parties agree to the following:

1. Article 7.02(a) shall apply as written, but does not obligate the Employer to any specific labeling system. However, for Employees working night shifts, at no time shall an Employee be scheduled to work more than one hour on a day considered to be a scheduled day of rest.
2. For the purposes of Article 7.02(g)(ii) "two consecutive days of rest" shall mean:

For Employees moving from day shift to day shift – two complete calendar days off, ensuring a minimum of 63.75 hours off duty.

For Employees moving from day shift to evening shift – two complete calendar days off, ensuring a minimum of 71.75 hours off duty.

For Employees moving from day shift to night shift – one complete calendar day off, one day where no more than one hour is worked ensuring a minimum of 55.75 hours off duty.

For Employees moving from evening shift to day shift – two complete calendar days, ensuring a minimum of 55.75 hours off duty.

For Employees moving from evening shift to evening shift – two complete calendar days, ensuring a minimum of 63.75 hours off duty.

For Employees moving from evening shift to night shift one complete calendar day off, one day where no more than one hour is worked, ensuring a minimum of 47.75 hours off duty.

For Employees moving from night shift to day shift – two complete calendar days off, ensuring a minimum of 71.75 hours off duty.

For Employees moving from night shift to evening shift – two complete calendar days, ensuring a minimum of 79.75 hours off duty.

For Employees moving from night shift to night shift – one complete calendar day off, one day where no more than one hour is worked, ensuring a minimum of 63.75 hours off duty.

3. "Week" shall mean seven consecutive days commencing at 0000h, on a day determined by the Employer. The first day of the week shall be noted on the schedule and may be changed by providing 12 weeks' notice. 🍷

Caution using **FACEBOOK** or computer communications

Nurse disciplined for violating privacy on Facebook

There can be serious hazards in using modern digital communication channels as some nurses have recently discovered.

The rapid growth of computer-based communication, email, messaging and sites like mySpace, Facebook and YouTube opens up many channels to communicate with friends, co-workers and family. But it is very different from using the telephone and can become public and embarrassing very quickly.

The gray area of computer postings: public or private?

For many people email, messaging and even blogging or sites like Facebook is normal personal communication, like using the telephone. But there is an important difference because it is a gray area and not completely private. Even email or messaging, which normally might be considered private, can be printed off, or forwarded and become very public. Employees must exercise caution and careful judgment in what can become public communications.

- 1. Do NOT use the work computer for personal communication.** Most Employers have policies that specifically prohibit personal use of workplace computers, including web browsing, personal email, or messaging.
- 2. Respect confidentiality: computers can be very public.** Privacy is highly important in health care and should never be violated. Computer communications are especially sensitive because of the potential for wide distribution.
- 3. Public criticism or slander of your workplace or employer can be grounds for discipline.** Every employee has a duty of fidelity to their employer and that includes not publicly defaming your workplace. Facebook or mySpace postings about a workplace can become public very quickly.

Using your home computer is no different. Posting information about patients or about your workplace can be very risky.

There have already been cases in Canada of students disciplined for using private computers to post information about their schools or teachers on Facebook that they considered to be private, but became public.

Nurse disciplined for Facebook posting

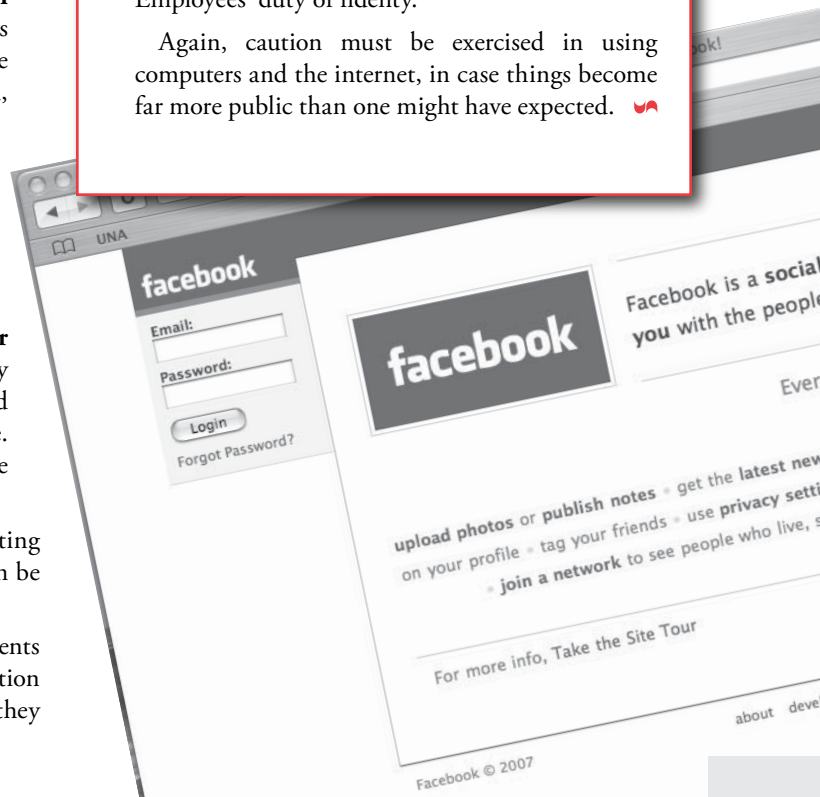
In a recent case, a nurse was hit with significant discipline for posting a message on Facebook. The Employer quickly became aware of the posting and the nurse was disciplined. In this case there were also questions of violating patient privacy, and using the Employer's computer system. ❗

Web pictures of stunts also a problem

Other nurses have posted photos of playful stunts, clearly taken in their workplace, that also have become very public and known to the Employer. "Letting off steam" will happen in any workplace, and people will always show others those pictures. The problem again comes with the highly public nature of the internet, where pictures can travel around the world instantly.

The Employer can reasonably point out that stunt photos or postings can hurt the reputation of a facility and can be seen as a breach of the Employees' duty of fidelity.

Again, caution must be exercised in using computers and the internet, in case things become far more public than one might have expected. ❗



Supreme Court decision stops governments from trampling union rights

Governments can not use laws to unilaterally rip up union contracts the Supreme Court of Canada said in its headline-grabbing ruling it released June 8. Three BC unions challenged the provincial government's 2002 law that effectively cancelled collective agreements and resulted in mass layoffs of health workers. Thousands of workers, mainly housekeeping and service staff, lost their jobs which the government turned over to for-profit businesses.

The Supreme Court ruling, which has been in process since the Court first agreed to hear the case in 2005, came as a welcome surprise to the Health Employees, BC Government and BC Nurses' Union which took the case to the highest court.

In a 6-1 decision, the court over-ruled parts of BC's Bill 29. The court said that law infringed on the union members' right and said it interfered with contract process "either by disregarding past processes of collective bargaining, by pre-emptively undermining future processes of collective bargaining, or both."

The ruling will also affect working people in Alberta where the government's notorious anti-labour laws have long been controversial. The Alberta government provided huge

Canadian Natural Resources Ltd oilsands project special labour rules that several Alberta unions are challenging in court. Canadian Natural Resources was in the news recently when two Chinese foreign workers were killed, and others injured in a construction accident.

The ruling could also have possibly prevented Bill 27, which rewrote labour laws in Alberta's health sector in 2003.

"This is a huge victory in that governments, not just in B.C. but particularly in Alberta, have a tendency to view collective agreements as something that is not particularly important and can be run roughshod over," UNA's Director of Labour Relations David Harrigan told the Edmonton Journal. "It provides a lot of comfort, certainly to unionized workers."

The Supreme Court ruling gives the BC government 12 months to renegotiate contracts with the 38,000-member Health Employees Union and other union workers which had been affected. Layoffs and privatization in long-term care have been on-going and 650 more people were slated to lose their jobs this year. Some of the unionized employees who were laid off were offered their jobs back, at far lower pay and benefit rates, by the private companies that won contracts. 🍷

Heather Smith honoured with

Speaker after speaker referred to Tommy Douglas' vision for our public health system at the S.O.S. Medicare conference held in Regina early in May. Shirley Douglas, Tommy's daughter, has always been involved with advocating for public health care and at the conference she gave out four "Spirit of Tommy Douglas Awards" that, she explained the Douglas family gives to people who have effectively advocated for medicare.

Roy Romanow and former New England Journal of Medicine editor Dr. Arnold Relman were two of the recipients, then she moved on to the award for Heather Smith.

"This is a woman – she can't do it single handedly it took all the people in the union and all the people in Alberta that she brought together into the Alberta Health Coalition. Those people single handedly defeated Bill 11, defeated Ralph Klein and today have some of the finest public clinics – when I went there to speak I will never forget and there is nowhere else in Canada this could happen that 10,000 people were gathered in Edmonton to fight to save health care."

"In recognition of her spirit, commitment and integrity and the pursuit of what Tommy Douglas dreamed of for this nation, universal health care, health care for all not just a privileged few. The family of Tommy Douglas salutes her determined struggle to protect a heritage that our country holds dear – courage my friends it's not too late to make a better world." 🍷

UNA nurses attended the national S.O.S. Medicare conference in Regina early in May and posed in their Tommy Douglas T-shirts. Tommy's quote on the back of the shirt: "Courage, my friends, it is not too late to make a better world!"



Bev Dick given CFNU Bread and Roses Award



The Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions gave UNA Vice-President Bev Dick its highest honour with the Bread and Roses Award. Over 700 nurses at the national Biennium rose in a standing ovation for Bev at the meeting in St. John's on June 7. An overwhelmed Bev, who had no idea the huge recognition was coming, went to the podium to valiantly pull off a brief thank you speech.

Presenting the Award, Linda Silas talked about Bev's long-time work as a Local President, as an activist, as Vice-President of UNA and, since UNA joined the national federation, on the CFNU Board.

Bread and Roses Awards are presented at each CFNU Biennium to acknowledge nurses who have made great contributions to unionized nursing in Canada. 🌹

Spirit of Tommy Douglas Award



The S.O.S Medicare conference brought together many prominent Canadian medicare activists, including the four women pictured here: CFNU's Linda Silas, Monique Begin, (federal health minister who brought in the Canada Health Act), Shirley Douglas (national medicare activist and Tommy's daughter) and Kathleen Connors, former CFNU President and now chair of the Canadian Health Coalition. In her remarks to the conference, Begin recalled the pressure from organized nurses unions as a critical force for solidifying Canadian medicare.



Nursing News

Nurses' action gets improvements in Ponoka outpatient unit

Persistent efforts of nurses at the Ponoka Health Centre finally got them the increased staffing and renovations they needed in their outpatient unit.

Heidi Lawton, who was President of Local #31 up until recently, said it took some time, but the nurses are very pleased with the improvements they've realized. The nurses posted "Victory!" across the top of their bulletin board where they posted the renovation design.

Heidi Lawton said the nurses had real concerns about the confidentiality of information passed on to doctors, the nurses' safety across the desk, the high volume and acuity of patients the small outpatient unit was handling. The nurses filed Professional Responsibility and Occupational Health and Safety complaints.

"The volume was almost double, and we had no space for the greatly increased number of patients," she said.

Confidentiality was also a big concern. "Somebody's child could die in the trauma room, and the whole town might know before the family could be told, because it was so exposed."

"It's so important to keep bringing up these issues at the monthly PRC [Professional Responsibility Committee] meetings," Heidi said. "It's brought up and minuted every time,



that's how they ended up being in big trouble, because we had persisted at each meeting."

Often there was only one RN and an LPN in the outpatient area. LPN's are not allowed to triage and they were handling over 50 patients a shift. The RN was not able to follow triage guidelines and provide treatment to all these patients.

"We needed two RNs on for the increase in number of patients," Heidi said.

After over a year, Heidi contacted her LRO, Jeff Jesse who wrote the CEO of the Region John Vogelzang. The resulting meeting with the David Thompson Health Region management surprised the local hospital managers.

The management had painted two red lines on the floor of the outpatient area, but they weren't, of course, paid any attention to, and couldn't really help the volume problem, Heidi said.

After the Region became concerned, it took a very short period of time before the hospital had two RNs assigned to the unit and the renovation plan was drawn up.

"PRC and OH&S works," Heidi said. "The renovation is now almost complete and it's beautiful, it went from five rooms to ten rooms and much improved confidentiality at the nursing stage and a separate triage area." 🍷

Local #115 put into interim trusteeship

The UNA Provincial Executive Board decided to put Local #115 at the Foothills hospital in Calgary into interim trusteeship at a special meeting held on June 18th. The Board is also authorizing the appointment of an investigator to look into the concerns raised about the Local. The Board expected to have a report within 30 days, although it can be extended if necessary. In a telephone broadcast to Local #115 members, the Board said, "This action has been taken because of concerns raised at the Local Executive level as well as from members, regarding the functioning of the Local."

The Board appointed four trustees to take over running of the Local: Karen Craik, provincial Secretary-Treasurer, and provincial Executive Board members, Tanice Olson, Local #1, Blanche Hitchcow, Local #308, Theresa Caldwell from Local #301. 🍷

U of A nurse given OR nursing award

Neretta Cummings from the University of Alberta Hospital, Local #301 was recently given the first ever Muriel Shewchuk Award of Excellence by the Operating Room Nurses Association of Canada. Neretta's colleagues nominated her because, they said: "She influences, inspires and energizes all around her. She is caring, has a positive attitude and demonstrates and promotes advocacy for her patients and colleagues. She believes in coaching, mentoring and teaching new staff as she understands that they are our future practitioners and leaders." After working in management and administration for fifteen years, Neretta returned to the operating room as a hands-on clinical staff nurse. A graduate of the Guelph School of Nursing in 1956, she has been in the profession for 50 years. 🍷



BELOW: CFNU President Linda Silas (left) and Heather Smith (2nd from right) bumped into a reunion of nurses who had graduated years ago from the nursing school at the Calgary General Hospital. The ladies were in fine form for the Calgary reunion and had traveled from across the continent to carry on with their old friends.





CFNU Secretary-Treasurer Pauline Worsfold and UNA Vice-President Bev Dick went to Sacramento for the California Nurses' Association premiere presentation of Michael Moore's new film SiCKO!

Bev Dick representing Alberta nurses in U.S. fight for universal health care

UNA Vice-President Bev Dick traveled to the Sacramento, to help nurses there launch Michael Moore's new documentary film SiCKO! The California Nurses' Association hosted a national effort to bring single-payer health care to the forefront. On Tuesday, June 12th, they held a landmark event in Sacramento, which included a legislative briefing, a rally, and a special premiere of Michael Moore's new documentary on America's health care crisis, titled SiCKO! Bev Dick told Americans how strongly Canadian nurses support a public system that provides care on the basis of need, not wealth. Moore's film is a harsh indictment of America's medical insurance industry and makes the inevitable comparisons with Canada's universal system. 🍷

CFNU poll shows Canadians want more nurses to help reduce wait times

The results of a new poll show that Canadians overwhelming (90%) agree with hiring more nurses to reduce waiting times to receive medical or surgical attention.

These are some the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) that also found a nearly overwhelming majority of Canadians (84%) trust information that comes from organizations representing nurses, more than the 77% who trust information from organizations representing doctors.

The poll, carried out from May 29 to May 31, 2007 found that trust in nurses and doctors was significantly more than the two thirds (64%) who trust healthcare information coming from chief executives of hospitals and other health authorities, and the (60%) who are inclined to trust information from the provincial minister of health, 57% from the federal minister of health (57%) and editorial writers and commentators (51%). 🍷

Canadian Nurses want pandemic protection

CFNU delegates passed a strong resolution about pandemic planning and the protection of health staff. Delegates unanimously supported entrenching the "precautionary principle" in public health planning in order to ensure the safety of health care workers and the public. CFNU and its member organizations will be lobbying for amendments to build in the "precautionary principle" as a core element of the Canadian Pandemic Influenza Plan and of provincial plans.

The principle was not in play during the SARS outbreak in Toronto where two nurses and 42 others died. Justice Archie Campbell's final report on that outbreak found that nurses had been supplied with inadequate protection, particularly masks. 🍷

UNA to award five 1st year Nursing Scholarships this year

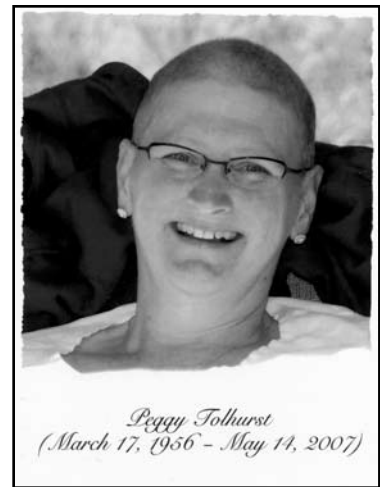
UNA will award five Nursing Scholarships this year. The scholarships help encourage young people to join the profession. They assist students in their first year of an accredited nursing program in Alberta. The Scholarships are \$750.00 each.

The students must be related to UNA member in good standing, complete a short essay and submit an endorsement by an unrelated individual to be eligible for the award.

The application form and further information are available on UNA's website www.una.ab.ca.

Completed applications must be received at the UNA Provincial Office no later than 4:30 pm, October 15, 2007. The awards will be announced in January 2008. 🍷

IN MEMORIAM



Peggy Tolhurst

Peggy Tolhurst past-President of Local #79 passed away on Monday May 14. Peggy was President of the Local from December 1999 until October 2005 when she had to step down due to illness. Peggy was renowned for her willingness to speak her mind forthrightly at the AGM and other UNA events. Throughout her life she was a strong advocate for women's rights and for union solidarity. 🍷

Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions Biennium June 5-8 St. John's

Newfoundland Premier
Danny Williams said
nurses feel undervalued
and he would change
that. Williams here
was at the head table
with Debbie Forward
(President of the NLNU),
Pauline Worsfold
(Secretary-Treasurer of
CFNU) and Linda Silas
(President of CFNU)



Nurses MUST
be protected in
the event of any
pandemic, the
Biennium was told.
Here delegates put
on the N-95 masks
that are required.



CFNU unveiled a special banner, Together we will make it happen!
that is composed of hundreds of smaller photos of nurses from
across Canada and larger images of two Calgary nurses.



Robin Hoban from Grande Prairie
stopped to say hello to Schooner
a Newfoundland dog who helped
open the conference.