

UNASTAT

UNITED NURSES OF ALBERTA NEWS UPDATE FOR MEMBERS

UNA seeks to bring LPNs into direct nursing care bargaining units

UNA is asking the Labour Relations Board to rule that nurses should NOT be artificially divided

■ After many requests from Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs), UNA has made a number of applications to the Alberta Labour Relations Board seeking to bring LPNs into the same bargaining units as Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses. UNA has decided to take this significant step with the support of UNA Locals and members.

UNA has made the applications for determination for the LPNs at Extencicare Holyrood, Good Samaritan Centre Millwoods, Millwoods Shepherds Care, Red Deer Nursing Home, and Mannville Health Centre. If the Labour Relations Board accepts the applications, UNA will represent these LPNs and would negotiate salary and collective agreements for the LPNs.

The LPNs would have not exactly the same contract as RNs, or exactly the same wages. Like most collective agreements, UNA's contracts include different classifications for different nursing roles. But once in the same bargaining unit, LPNs, RNs and RPNs would all be bargaining together.

"All across this province LPNs and RNs work closely side-by-side doing very similar

work. Yet we are forced to bargain our contracts separately, and get very different terms and provisions. It is time to recognize the united role nurses play in providing care to Albertans" says Heather Smith.

AUPE pushes for province-wide bargaining units

■ The Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE) has applied to the Labour Relations Board to have province-wide bargaining units as soon as possible. AUPE maintains that the Alberta Health Services Board (AHSB) is the single employer for all Health Region employees and the bargaining units should reflect this.

A province-wide, "Direct Nursing Care" bargaining unit would bring many changes, not the least of which would be that nurses could apply as internal candidates on any Health Region job in the province. This change has no direct bearing on whether LPNs are in the Direct Nursing Care bargaining unit.

AUPE's application is also asking that all of the non-unionized health region sites, such as Rimbey, would become unionized in the single bargaining unit. AUPE is also asking that Alberta Cancer Board, Capital Care and Carewest be deemed also to be with the same employer, the AHSB, and be included in the same bargaining unit.

UNA will be an interested party in the application and very likely will be presenting at the Labour Relations Board hearing.



UNA Board member takes on Stephen Harper

■ Once again UNA member Holly Heffernan is running against Stephen Harper in the Calgary West constituency. Congratulations to Holly on her campaign!

Nurses' votes count! Watch UNA website

- Check out UNA's website for nursing perspectives on the federal election campaign. A new video on the site features UNA member nurses talking about the threat to public health care and what nurses can do about it.

Watch the new two-minute video clip and election information at: www.una.ab.ca.

Three hours off for voting on October 14

- The law requires all employers to ensure that employees have three consecutive hours off to go to the poll on election day. The UNA-HBA Services Joint Committee has issued a statement that clarifies this. Most shifts worked on October 14, 2008 will provide employees with three consecutive hours away from work in order to vote without having to take any time off work.

However, some shifts will require that employees receive time off to vote. For example, employees working a 12 hour extended day shift on election day will require some time off work, the timing of which will be at the employer's discretion.

Polling stations in the Mountain time zone will be open from 0730 to 1930 hours

Parkland Institute: Long-term care affordable

- Alberta's aging baby boomers will not make public health care unaffordable or unsustainable says a new report released by the University of Alberta's Parkland Institute.

Sustainable Healthcare for Seniors: Keeping it Public points out that maintaining current health

services in light of an aging population will only cost an additional 1.32 percent per year above inflation and adjustments for population growth.

Given Alberta's average GDP growth of 4.2 % per year, per capita over the last decade, the report points out that maintaining current levels of service is well within the range of what the province can afford, and would not put excessive strain on the province's budget or bottom line.

"But that is not enough," says report author, finance economist Greg Flanagan. "There are serious shortfalls and gaps in the health services offered to Alberta's seniors today. It is not enough to maintain the status quo; the report also shows that the provincial government can easily afford to improve the public services and healthcare currently available to seniors, and that it should do so quickly."

Greg Flanagan will be speaking at 8 public forums around the province on the future of seniors care.

UNA is one of several organizations sponsoring this important series of events.

Seniors deserve better! Eight public forums on how we treat our elders.

- Report author Greg Flanagan is speaking with David Eggen from Friends of Medicare at eight public forums around Alberta. The public meetings have been organized by Public Interest Alberta, Friends of Medicare and are sponsored by UNA and a number of senior's organizations.

Everyone is welcome at these public events:

Medicine Hat - 7 PM September 22
Medicine Hat Public Library, Theatre

Lethbridge - 7:30 September 23
Lethbridge College
Fredericks Lecture Theatre (CE1365)

Calgary - 7:30 September 24
Unitarian Church (Venue and address TBC)

Red Deer - 7:30 September 25
Red Deer and District Museum,
Steward Room

Edmonton - 7:30 September 29
Stanley Milner Library, Edmonton Room

Lloydminster - 7:30 September 30
Legacy Centre (5101- 46 St.)

Hinton - 7:30 October 1
Royal Canadian Legion

Grande Prairie - 7:30 October 2
Spencer Room, Grande Prairie Public
Library (9910- 99 Ave)

Friends of Medicare protest private clinic opening in Calgary

- Friends of Medicare is inviting anyone who is concerned about the erosion of our Public Health system to attend a protest at the opening of the Copeman private health clinic in Calgary on Monday, September 22.

Press conference: 10:00 am

Tivoli Room, Danish Canadian Club
727 – 11 Avenue SW, Calgary

March to Copeman clinic: 10:40 am
5th Street & 12th Avenue

The clinic site is 1.5 blocks from the Danish Canadian Club. We encourage participants to bring signs, banners, and in particular pots or pans to bang on. We will make a lot of noise to get Copeman's (and Calgary's and Canada's) attention. We will stage a short demonstration at the Copeman site (5th Street & 12th Avenue).
