

UNASTAT

UNITED NURSES OF ALBERTA NEWS UPDATE FOR MEMBERS

NEW WAGE RATES FOR NURSES, APRIL 1

■ Check your payroll records because April 1 nurses salaries go up by 3 per cent! Last year nurses voted to extend the provincial agreement until March 31, 2007, which included the 3 per cent boost across all pay levels. The extension and increases are for most UNA collective agreements, including the provincial agreement, the Alberta Cancer Board and most long-term care employers. The new provincial rates are up on the UNA website, under the Bargaining heading at: www.una.ab.ca/subpages/salaries.shtml.

NURSES AT THREE NEW UNA LOCALS GET FIRST AGREEMENT

■ Registered Nurses at Local #235 South Terrace Continuing Care Centre and Local #401 MacKenzie Towne Care Centre have both ratified their first collective agreement with their employer, Central Care Corporation.

Also, nurses at Extencicare Vulcan have just settled their first contract. The nurses will have the standard Extencicare agreement with certain phase-in dates, with the contract extension to July 31, 2007, and a 3% salary increase on August 1, 2006.

UNA TELLS HEALTH MINISTER IRIS EVANS NOT TO TAKE COSTLY "THIRD WAY"

■ UNA President Heather Smith told Health Minister Iris Evans that the "third way" plan for more private insurance and for-profit health care would be a costly one for Albertans during a "consultation" meeting at the Legislature on Tuesday, March 28.

SALARY APPENDIX

Registered Nurse
Registered Psychiatric Nurse

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
April 1 2005	27.12	28.17	29.21	30.25	31.31	32.33	33.38	34.38	35.60
April 1 2006	27.93	29.02	30.09	31.16	32.25	33.30	34.38	35.41	36.67

Heather Smith said that the best control on health care costs is to "expand the medicare umbrella" and provide public coverage of more health services, pharmacare, dentistry, long-term care and home care.

Heather Smith also showed the Health Minister a short video "Pirates of the Health Care-ibbean" which takes a comic look at the callousness of the health insurance industry in the U.S. The video can be seen on the internet at: www.consumerwatchdog.org/healthcare/healthcarepirates/

"THIRD WAY" CONTROVERSY FACTOR IN LOW SUPPORT FOR PREMIER

■ Strong public opposition to the government's "third way" plan was a factor in the low support for Premier Klein in the Progressive Conservative convention vote in Calgary on March 31. The Premier's announcement that he was dragging out his departure further, by offering a letter of resignation some time in September, raised concerns for some that the "third way" plan was still on the agenda even after the low vote.

MEDICARE "CATS" PROWL THE PROVINCE

■ The Friends of Medicare campaign against health care privatization went into full swing in March with the Citizen Action Teams, or CATS working to lobby MLAs in every constituency around the province. CAT coordinator Cara More was working with people to gather petition signatures and most importantly to directly contact their Member of the Legislative Assembly.

Reach Cara at petition@keepmedicarepublic.ca or by calling 1-888-633-1311.

UNA'S JOINT CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF NURSING LAUNCHED

■ UNA and the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses have launched their joint centennial project, Celebrating 100 Years of Nursing on the Prairies. The multimedia project has hundreds of stories, pictures and videos of nursing in Alberta and Saskatchewan on a website and an accompanying DVD. The DVD is not yet in distribution but the website – with some great stories – is up at www.100yearsofnursing.ca. The centennial project was supported by a special grant from Canadian Heritage.

REPRESENT UNA AT IMPORTANT MEETINGS

- The UNA Provincial Executive Board recently voted to sponsor members as delegates to a number of important events. Representatives will be chosen through a draw. Members interested in going should mail, fax or e-mail their interest in the applicable draw by the date and time included in this notice to Sherry Shewchuk at the Provincial Office. Be sure to indicate the event(s) you are interested in, and your name and phone number.

Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL) Membership Forum

12 members funded to attend, May 12 & 13, 2006 in Edmonton.

Deadline: 1600 hours on Thursday April 13, 2006

World Congress for Psychiatric Nurses

2 members funded to attend. Members must hold CRPNA registration May 11-13 in Calgary.

Deadline: 1600 hours on Thursday April 13, 2006

Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) Biennium

2 members funded to attend. Members must hold CARNA registration. June 18-21 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Deadline: 1600 hours on Friday April 28, 2006

BC NURSES SIGN 4 YEAR CONTRACT RUNNING TO 2010

- The BC provincial government gave its public sector unions a deadline; reach a new agreement by the end of March. And they added an incentive, a signing bonus of over \$3,000 per full-time employee, if they can do it. The British Columbia Nurses Union reached a new contract March 31 and will get a one-time signing bonus of \$3150 per full time FTE, pro-rated for part-time and casual.

The new four-year contract –running until Olympics year 2010– provides wage increases totaling 14.2 per cent over the four years. The wages are going up 3% in the first year, 3.5% in the second and third years and 4.5% in the fourth year.

As well the night shift premium is going up from \$1.75 an hour to \$3.50 an hour effective immediately. The weekend shift is rising from \$1.00 an hour to \$2.00 an hour, also immediately.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

While I was working as a pediatric nurse, I had the difficult assignment of giving immunization shots to children. One day I entered the examining room to give four-year-old Lizzie her shot.

“NO! NO! NO!” she screamed.

“Lizzie,” her mother scolded. “That’s not polite behavior.”

At that, the girl yelled even louder, “NO, THANK YOU! NO, THANK YOU!”

There is also a substantial increase in the on-call rates which are going up April 1, 2006 to \$3.00 an hour for first 72 hours on-call in calendar month, and thereafter \$4.25 an hour. The on call rates go up further, moving to \$3.25 an hour April 1, 2007, \$3.50 an hour April 1, 2008 and \$3.75 an hour April 1, 2009 for the first 72 hours in a calendar month, thereafter \$4.25.

A GREAT SUMMER FUN PLAN: AFL KIDS’ CAMP

- The Alberta Federation of Labour is once again running its five-day camp for union kids ages 8-15 at Goldeye Lake near Nordegg. Besides the wonderful outdoor pursuits, like canoeing, hiking horseback riding and swimming, the camp has an educational focus on trade unionism. The deadline to register is Friday June 2 for the camp which takes place August 7-11. The Registration fee is \$325.

UNA will be paying the registration for two children of UNA members to the camp. Interested parents should see the form in the next Newsbulletin. UNA will also be sponsoring two children from other Alberta Federation of Labour affiliated families.

CFNU OFFERS IDEAS TO IMPROVE HEALTH CARE

- In a letter to the editor published in Alberta newspapers, Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions President Linda Silas offered solutions to improve quality and reduce costs without privatizing further health care funding or delivery:

- Expand the medicare umbrella to include a national pharmacare program to control drug costs. Pharmaceuticals are the fastest-growing component of the health-care system, with expenditures in Canada increasing by almost \$1 billion annually. The national pharmaceutical strategy will have major implications for the sustainability of medicare. Canada’s prescription drug costs are 30 per cent higher than the OECD average. We could get a lot more for less in regards to drug treatment if a national pharmacare program was put in place.
- Increase access to primary health care and community-based care. This would reduce wait times in emergency rooms and reduce costs.
- Eliminate the determinants of poor health such as poverty, inadequate housing and water quality. Short-term pain for long-term gain.
- Shorten wait times by making better use of health-care workers, through multidisciplinary approaches, dedicated operating rooms and patient case managers.

One hundred and thirty-thousand nurses across the country join others in demanding clear national leadership to uphold the Canada Health Act —legislation that ensures our public health system works for the public interest.

HSAA GOES FOR VOTE OF EDMONTON LAB SERVICES

- The Health Sciences Association of Alberta (HSAA) has cleared the first hurdle to represent employees at Dynacare Kasper Medical Laboratories (DKML). HSAA has presented the Alberta Labour Relations Board (ALRB) with more than the required number of petitions from DKML hospital labs, collection sites, and the base lab in downtown Edmonton.

During the next couple of weeks, the ALRB will produce a report on HSAA’s application. Once this process is complete, the Board will decide when a vote will be held.

HSAA represents more than 70% of laboratory technologists in Alberta, including more than 1,100 lab employees who work for Calgary Laboratory Services. HSAA’s organizing drive began in early February.