

United Nurses of Alberta
NewsBulletin

UNA Members: At your side and on your side...

UNA marks Nursing Week
with advertising campaign Page 13



Enclosed:
2013 Negotiations Survey

At left, Community Health Nurse Jean Blackstock, a member of UNA Local 211, in a photo used in one of UNA's online Nursing Week advertisements. She is shown with Jaclyn Coates, an RN on maternity leave from Local 95, and Declan



Published by the United Nurses of Alberta five times a year for our members

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Bargaining in 2013 What do you say?

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This is an important NewsBulletin for all members and Locals who participate in UNA's Provincial Negotiations because it contains your 2013 Negotiations Survey.

This is your opportunity to provide input as we start the process of preparing proposals for negotiations that will begin early next year.

I urge you to encourage your colleagues to complete the questionnaire and return it to your Local President. Your suggestions will assist your Local Executive in preparing Local proposals.

At a Local meeting you will have the opportunity to determine which proposals are forwarded for consideration by delegates during our Provincial Demand Setting Meeting in November.

The strength of UNA's bargaining process is rooted in membership participation. What issues do you want addressed? What are your expectations for changes and improvements in the Collective Agreement?

Each round of negotiations is unique. Economic factors, the political environment and membership expectations all factor into the decisions the Negotiating Committee makes. Some factors are obviously beyond our control, but having a clear understanding of what our members want to achieve provides the guidance that has built our past successes in bargaining.

The annual survey of our members has just been completed. We do not have the results as this NewsBulletin goes to press, but I thank the 1,500 members who responded and provided feedback about their workplaces.

This year we added additional questions about workplace abuse, specifically bullying and intimidation. Fifteen years ago we negotiated "zero tolerance" of abuse. Ten years ago we launched the Staff Abuse Prevention and Management program. Even without the survey results, I know our expectations for meaningful cultural change have not been realized. But because Alberta Health Services has indicated a willingness to work with UNA on new initiatives, hopefully we see the accountability, follow-through and follow-up necessary to achieve the vision of 15 years ago.

Now that the April 23 provincial election is over, we are grateful for the government's commitment through the campaign to maintaining a publicly funded and publicly delivered health care system. We hope the premier will remember the support for a true public health care system among the many nurses, other health care workers and progressive Albertans who contributed to the election results.

Nursing Week 2012 will be over by the time you read this article, but the advertising campaign that commenced around Nursing Week will continue into June. In addition to radio messages, billboard and newspaper ads will appear across the province. Our message reminds Albertans that as efforts continue to improve access and delivery of health services, United Nurses of Alberta is at their side and on their side.

In solidarity,

Heather Smith
President, UNA

UNA helps engage members in election issues

By Dave Cournoyer
UNA Communications Staff

During the recent provincial election, UNA engaged the public and political candidates on health care issues important to nurses.

A telephone town hall, held jointly with the Health Sciences Association of Alberta, was considered a great success as more than 50,000 members of both unions from across the province were invited to join the call.

Similar to a radio broadcast, the telephone town hall gave participants an opportunity to listen and pose questions to the parties represented that evening. Human Services Minister Dave Hancock, Liberal Leader Dr. Raj Sherman, NDP Leader Brian Mason, Wildrose MLA Heather Forsyth, and Alberta Party candidate Neil Mather answered health care related questions on behalf of their parties.

All-candidates forums in Calgary and Edmonton drew members of UNA and the general public to hear what their political candidates had to say about the future of health care.

A town hall forum on health care in Calgary was organized by members of UNA Local 115 executive and moderated by Mount Royal University professor Duane Bratt. With five political party candidates in attendance, the Local 115 forum drew a large crowd and was widely reported in the media.

In the final week of the campaign, UNA hosted an all-candidates forum on health care issues at the University of Alberta, which attracted a crowd interested in hearing from representatives of the five main political parties, including Health & Wellness Minister Fred Horne and Liberal Party leader Dr. Raj Sherman. ♡



Participants in two of UNA's pre-election candidates' forums. Above in Edmonton: Second VP Jane Sustrik; Jeff Funnell, Alberta Party; Raj Sherman, Liberal; Lori Sigurdson, NDP; Peter Rodd, Wildrose; First VP Bev Dick; Moderator Mack Male; Fred Horne, PC.

Below in Calgary: Collin Anderson, NDP; Manmeet Bhullar, PC; David Swann, Liberal; Cory Mack, Alberta Party; Heather Forsyth, Wildrose; Moderator Duane Bratt.



Telephone town hall worked like a radio call in show

At one point, close to 13,000 members of UNA and the Health Sciences Association of Alberta were on the line for the two unions' pre-election "telephone town hall" April 10.

"It was a unique opportunity for UNA members to learn about where the parties stood on health care issues," said UNA President Heather Smith, who with HSA President Elisabeth Ballermann acted as the event's host.

The event was structured like a radio call-in show, with broadcast personality Shauna Young moderating. Representatives of all parties made pitches and answered questions.



UNA marks Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured on the Job



First VP Bev Dick, President Heather Smith and Second VP Jane Sustrik at the dedication of the Broken Families Obelisk in Grant Notley Park on April 28.

Some of the participants in the ceremony, including EDLC President Brian Henderson, right, and NDP MLA Rachel Notley, next to him.



UNA members marked the Day of Mourning for Workers Killed and Injured on the job by taking part in the Edmonton and District Labour Council's unveiling and dedication of the Broken Families Obelisk in Grant Notley Park on April 28.

UNA President Heather Smith said at the time that the Day of Mourning should remind us all of the fundamental role unions play safeguarding the health and wellbeing of all workers.

“Last year 128 Alberta workers are known to have died because of workplace injuries or disease,” Smith said. “Thankfully, we know of no UNA member that died last year because of work-related causes, but we know that injuries in the nursing profession remain unacceptably high and UNA remains committed to seeing them reduced.

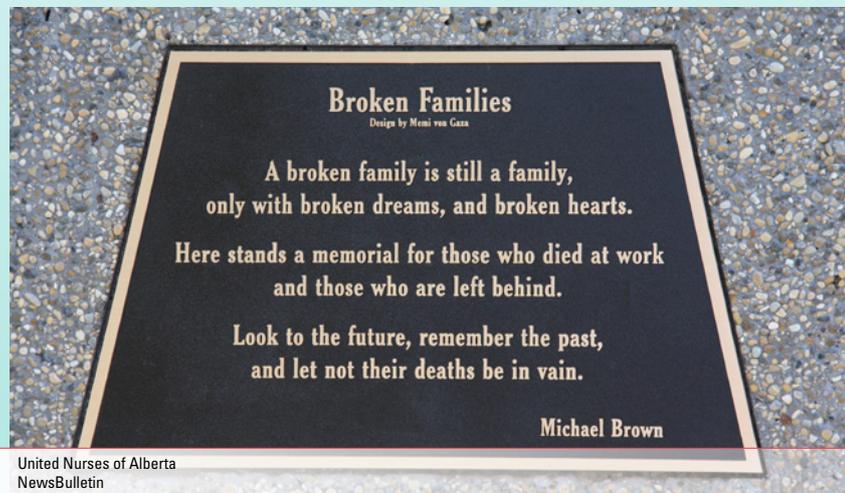
“But year after year, statistics show that injuries and deaths occur at a lower rate at worksites where employees are represented by a union. That is why unions fight for the rights of working people and why UNA makes workplace health and safety a major area of emphasis.”

Albertans need to remember that because of the unpredictable nature of the work, nursing is in fact a more dangerous profession than many—with a higher rate of injury, for example, than the mining industry.

Smith also noted that UNA is determined to work with Alberta Health Services and other employers to reduce and eventually eliminate workplace bullying and abuse. “It’s been 15 years since we first negotiated zero tolerance of workplace abuse in our collective agreements and it’s time we take this policy forward to create workplaces that a truly free of abuse and bullying.”

The United Nations recognized the International Day of Mourning in 1996, partly as a result of efforts by Canadian and Alberta labour organizations to have Canada’s Day of Mourning marked worldwide.

The obelisk is located in Edmonton’s Grant Notley Park, 11603 – 100th Avenue.



NEGS
2013

2012-2013 bargaining schedule takes shape

Even as we consider the implications of the results of April 23 provincial election, members of the United Nurses of Alberta must begin to prepare for the 2012 round of bargaining with Alberta Health Services.

The process will start in June, with the election of Local bargaining committees, followed by the submission of Locals' bargaining proposals by Sept. 14 and the review of Local proposals between Sept. 24 and 28.

After the Oct. 23-25 Annual General Meeting, a Provincial Demand-Setting Meeting is scheduled for Nov. 27-29, at which Local delegates will vote on the ongoing proposals for negotiations.

A membership vote to ratify the proposal package is scheduled for January 2013, with formal negotiations with the employer expected to begin in February 2013.

UNA views collective bargaining as one of its key jobs and is proud of the fact it has been able over the years to greatly improve salaries, benefits and work-place conditions for all members. UNA has more than quintupled the wages of Alberta nurses since it was founded. In 1977, a new nurse earned only \$6.28 an hour!

UNA's policy is that its members set the union's bargaining priorities and its members always get to ratify the results.

UNA's negotiating committees, the people who actually meet with the employer's representatives at the bargaining

table, are made up of working members of the union, elected by their co-workers to represent them.

No UNA agreement takes effect before the members whose working lives it governs have the opportunity to discuss and ratify it in a democratic vote. Province-wide agreements like the contract with Alberta Health Services must be subject to a vote of all affected members, and must be passed by a majority of both members and locals. 

No UNA agreement takes effect before the members whose working lives it governs have the opportunity to discuss and ratify it in a democratic vote.

Remembering Lois Taylor

1952 — 2012

Lois Taylor is remembered for her smile and cheerful personality. During our provincial delegate meetings hundreds of members were greeted by Lois each morning as they stood in line for registration. Lois was a long time activist and advocate. As a South Central District Representative since 2004, Lois was a valued voice at the Executive Board and a passionate representative of her Locals.

From President of Local 34 Didsbury to South Central District Representative, Lois was a fierce defender of members and a dedicated patient advocate. Lois was always at their side and on their side.

by Heather Smith, President, UNA

Lois Taylor





Sisters Britney Saik and Jaclyn Saik, first-year nursing students at Grant MacEwan University receive their UNA scholarships from President Heather Smith. They were joined by their mother Dawn Saik, a member of UNA Local 301 (University of Alberta Hospital).



UNA Second Vice-President Jane Sustrik presents a first year nursing scholarship to Grant MacEwan University student Heather Nelson. Heather was joined by her mother, Donna Nelson, President of Local 136, Barrhead Healthcare Centre



UNA Secretary-Treasurer Karen Craik presents a scholarship to Mount Royal University nursing student Kim Karambowich. Kim was joined by her mother Maryann Rabusic-Wiedener, a member of UNA Local 115 (Foothills Medical Centre).

Calgary UNA members' spouses, dependents eligible for CDLC scholarships

Dependents and spouses of UNA members who work in the Calgary area may be eligible to apply for two \$1,500 scholarships offered by the Calgary and District Labour Council.

The Sean Gillen Memorial Scholarships are available to dependents under 26 years of age and spouses of members of unions affiliated with the

CDLC. Applicants are required to submit a 2,500-word essay on "what unions mean to me," "the history of the labour movement in Alberta," or "the future of the labour movement in Alberta."

The scholarships are available for education or training from a recognized educational institution in Alberta.

For more information on the scholarships, including more information on eligible institutions, email admin@thecdcl.ca or visit www.thecdcl.ca/.



The deadline for applications is June 1, 2012.

The recipients of the UNA Scholarships are:

Kaitlin Meyer

*BScN program
University of Alberta*

Kimberly Karambowich

*BScN program
Mount Royal University*

Jaclyn Saik

*BScN program
Grant MacEwan University*

Adam Szol

*BScN program
Mount Royal University*

Heather Nelson

*Psychiatric Nursing Program
Grant MacEwan University*

Britney Saik

*BScN program
Grant MacEwan University*

The recipients of the CFNU Scholarships (Alberta) are:

Haley Bjarnason

*BScN program
University of Alberta*

Jocelyn Leenstrau

*BScN program
Red Deer College*

Recipients of the scholarship had to be enrolled in their first year of full-time studies in an accredited nursing program in Alberta.

Kaitlin Meyer, a first-year nursing student at the University of Alberta, receives her UNA scholarship from President Heather Smith. Kaitlin was joined by her mother, Donna Meyer, President of UNA Local 304 (Stony Plain Community Health).

UNA Secretary-Treasurer Karen Craik presented student Adam Szol with a UNA First-Year Nursing Scholarship. Adam was joined by his mother Irene Szol, a member of UNA Local 1 (Peter Lougheed Centre).

Haley Bjarnason, a first-year nursing student at the University of Alberta, receives her UNA scholarship from President Heather Smith. Haley was joined by her mother, Debbie Bjarnason, President of UNA Local 79 (Grey Nuns Community Hospital/Edmonton General Continuing Care Centre).

Eight first-year nursing students receive UNA scholarships

Eight first-year nursing students have been awarded scholarships from United Nurses of Alberta and the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions.

Students accepted into nursing programs at Grant MacEwan University, Mount Royal University, Red Deer College, University of Alberta, and University of Calgary were recipients of the 2011 scholarship.

Recipients of the scholarship had to be enrolled in their first year of full-time studies in an accredited nursing program in Alberta, planning to remain registered in the program and related to a UNA member in good standing. They also had to write a short essay answering the question, "How does the UNA impact nursing work life?"

UNA congratulates the scholarship recipients and wishes them good luck in their first year of nursing studies. 🍀



Mini workshops provide OH&S training opportunities for members

By Janice Peterson, Education Officer

If you are interested in booking a mini-workshop please contact Jeremy Rittwage at 780-425-1025 or 1-800-252-9394.

As part of UNA's commitment to ensuring healthy and safe workplaces for members, your union's Education Department is now offering a series of short "mini-workshops" on occupational health and safety topics.

The mini-workshops are offered in addition to UNA's full-day education workshops. They range in time commitment from half a day to one- and two-hour sessions offered at Local meetings to lunch hour meetings. Mini-workshops can also be arranged on the worksite with employer approval.

UNA covers the cost of materials and instructor time for the workshops, as well

as and travel costs for participants. Your Local is responsible for any room rental, catering or wage replacement costs.

UNA's Education Officers can design a mini-workshop about any workplace-related area of concern that will meet your specific needs. We will customize a workshop for your local on any subject of interest to fit your needs. The following are some of the mini-workshops UNA has offered in the past:

- Dealing with Abuse
- Bullying
- Working Alone
- Psychological Hazards
- OH&S Incident Reporting and the OH&S Process
- Basic Rights under Occupation Health and Safety Legislation
- Hazard Assessment and Control
- Duty to Accommodate
- Addictions
- Generational Diversity
- Shift Schedules
- Professional Responsibility Process and Reporting
- Contract Interpretation
- Interviews
- WCB Basic Rights
- Computer Skills

Dewey Funk joins UNA as OH&S Officer

UNA welcomes veteran union officer and staff member Dewey Funk, who has joined Provincial Office staff as Educational Officer specializing in Occupational Health and Safety issues.

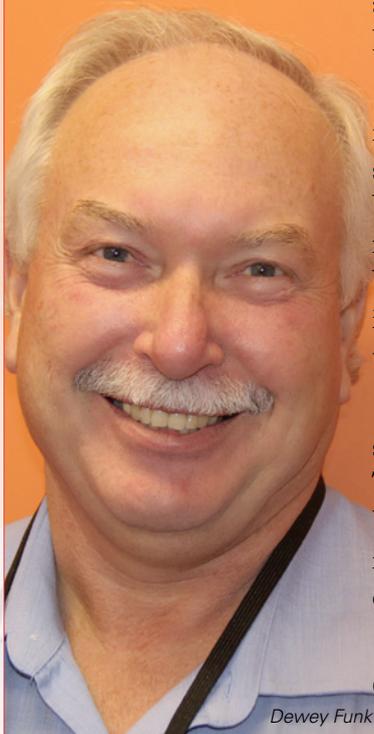
Funk replaces former Occupational Health and Safety Officer Janice Peterson, who has transferred to a position as a Education Officer, also at the UNA Provincial Office in Edmonton.

Before joining UNA, Funk served for more than eight years as a Membership Services Officer with the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees, and for five years as a union organizer for the United Steelworkers of America working throughout Western Canada and the Northwest Territories.

Before taking employment as a union staff member, Funk served as President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary and Vice-President of USWA Local 5575, representing employees of a steel fabrication plant in southwest Edmonton.

Funk attended the Labour College of Canada in 2000. 🍷

Dewey Funk





Why United Way?

Plenty of reasons when it comes to kids and youth

United Ways across Canada are focusing their community investment strategies on three pillars, one being All That Kids Can Be.

We all know that to become successful, independent adults, children and youth need a good start in life. They also benefit from recreational activities, mentor relationships with adult role models and opportunities to discover and develop their talents and interests.

So this pillar has a strong focus on supporting early childhood literacy and development, plus helping kids stay in school until graduation – and out of trouble.

Remember, almost 25 per cent of youth crime occurs between 3 and 6 p.m., a time when many youth are without activities or supervision?

United Way has partnered with all levels of government, business, human service organizations and community members to identify, address and alleviate the barriers children and youth face from cradle to career.

United Way lobbied the province for changes to the Education Act, calling an increase on the age cap for public funding of high school to 21, and of a mandatory attendance age of 17 – changes that had been included in the Education Act before the provincial election.

At present, an estimated 9,000 young people drop out of high school each year in Alberta. The high school graduation rate is 72.6 per cent, much lower than the Canadian average of 75 per cent. For Aboriginal youth, the rate is a shocking 34 per cent.

United Way Calgary investments include:

- **UpStart:** Champions for Children and Youth: Creates and implements supports for children and youth to successfully transition to independent adults. UpStart also leads the Aboriginal Youth and Education Strategy to help Aboriginal students stay and succeed in school.
- **Vulnerable Youth Strategy:** A collaborative effort with community service providers to improve peer, family and adult social supports for youth, 15 - 24.
- **CARE Strategy:** Works with immigrant serving agencies and communities to help immigrant children and youth reach their potential.

United Way also supports numerous programs at local agencies under All That Kids Can Be, including the Boys and Girls Clubs of Airdrie and Calgary, Between Friends Club, YMCA and Children's Cottage. 

Did you know? ...

By Holly Heffernan



We all know that to become successful, independent adults, children and youth need a good start in life.

United Way Facts:

- A \$25 donation can supply bus tickets for one youth to get to and from school for one week, supply a nutritious after-school snack for 30 immigrant youth or let one youth with a disability attend a week of ICAN camp.
- \$120 can buy one elementary school startup package, including shoes, pack, calculator and more for one child, education for one youth for one year or two months of school supplies.
- Just a dollar a day, \$365 per year, buys one week of summer day camp for three children or youths, weekly counselling for one youth for a year, or two weeks of one-on-one support, mentorship and advocacy for a youth in crisis.

www.calgaryunitedway.org

'March of Unions' and old-fashioned picnic mark AFL Centenary in Lethbridge

By Winston Gereluk, Alberta Labour History Institute



An active group in Lethbridge created an AFL Centennial Celebration in the city where the Alberta Federation of Labour was founded in 1912.

It all began at the 1911 convention of the United Mineworkers of America (UMWA) District 18 which resolved to launch a provincial labour organization. They invited all trade unions that existed in Alberta at the time, as well as the recently formed United Farmers of Alberta (UFA), to send delegates to the founding convention of the Alberta Federation of Labour in Lethbridge on July 14 and 15, 1912.

According to the story in the Lethbridge Herald, the 34 delegates at that convention resolved to support each other, because they knew that they "could rely on nobody else." Sadly, efforts at farm-labour unity soon collapsed under

the weight of contradictory objectives of the two parties, and the farmers did not continue as members. However, the bonds forged at that convention helped the UFA win the 1921 provincial election, after which it passed some of the most progressive labour legislation in Canada's history.

Lethbridge celebrations began on Friday, May 4, with a 'Troublemakers' concert by Maria Dunn and her troupe.

May 5 started with a Parade of Unions from City Hall to Galt Gardens. Your union or community organization is invited to join in. The parade was followed by an introduction of the Presidents Opening Games, in which union presidents kicked off the day by participating in old-fashioned children's games such as three-legged races. 🍷

100 Years of standing up for your rights

This year, we're celebrating the Centennial of the Alberta Federation of Labour.

100 years ago, a small group of railway workers, miners, farmers, typographers and tradespeople met in Lethbridge, Alberta, to unite their organizations in the struggle for better wages, working conditions and political reform.

In 2012, the organization they formed, the Alberta Federation of Labour, will celebrate a century of leadership in Alberta's labour movement by drawing attention to the many benefits trade unions have brought to all working people.

Anniversary events are being planned in communities across the Province, with a huge Celebration of Labour in Fort Edmonton Park on Saturday, June 16.



Join us!

For more information, visit us at www.afl.org and click on Project 2012, under About Us.



School children join a May Day demonstration to honour workers during the Great Depression in the 1930s.

UNA members invited to attend AFL's centennial celebration

UNA members, members of other unions and friends of the labour movement from throughout Alberta are invited to join the centennial celebration of the Alberta Federation of Labour on June 16 at Fort Edmonton Park.

Through May and June the AFL has organized concerts and events in Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Calgary, Drumheller, Olds, Red Deer, Hinton, Grande Prairie, Athabasca and Fort McMurray. There will also be a Calgary labour history walking tour in May and a concert in Crowsnest Pass in September.

The 2012 centennial celebrations are scheduled to wrap up with a Labour History Conference organized by the Alberta Labour History Institute, June 13 to 15 in Edmonton, a Homecoming Reunion Dinner on the evening of June 15 for all past and present members of the AFL executive and staff, and the Celebration in the Park at Fort Edmonton on June 16.

More than 3,000 people are expected at the Fort Edmonton celebration of struggle and solidarity – and UNA members are encouraged to take part in the event, which will include food and drink, presentations and musical concerts by Maria Dunn, Lionel Rault and others. UNA members who present their membership card will be given free admission for themselves and their families. 🍷

For more information on this celebration, visit the AFL's website at www.afl.org



Joint communication clarifies issues related to time used in Multi-Employer Agreement

A new joint communication from United Nurses of Alberta and Alberta Health Services and clarifies several issues related to treatment of time used under the Multi-Employer/UNA Collective Agreement.

The communication, with specific versions directed to AHS employees and Covenant health employees, deals in detail with the treatment of time used under Articles 22.06 [b] (Education Leave), 22.08 (Special Leave) and 35.03 Professional Development Days.

The aim of the communication is to resolve differences in practices and interpretations in different locations including the treatment of time used based on a “day,” an “incident” and “hours taken.” 🍷

To read the joint communication visit UNA's website – www.una.ab.ca



UNA members symbolically expand the medicare umbrella at the Beyond Acute Care conference

Beyond Acute Care



Keynote speaker Ralph Nader

Concerned Albertans had the opportunity to hear renowned consumer advocate and former American presidential candidate Ralph Nader, Council of Canadians National chairperson Maude Barlow, and many other experts on the politics and policy of health care for seniors and the disabled at the Beyond Acute Care conference.

More than 500 people participated in the two-day conference, which took place on February 24 and 25 at Edmonton's Crowne Plaza Chateau Lacombe. Beyond Acute Care: Covering Seniors and the Disabled with the Medicare Umbrella, was sponsored by several organizations, including UNA, determined to protect, enhance and extend Canada's and Alberta's fair and efficient system of public

administered, publicly funded and publicly operated system of Medicare.

Speaking via video conference, after severe weather cancelled his flight from the eastern United States, Nader praised Canada's public health care system warned conference participants against introducing more for-profit seniors care.

"Corporatization treats health care as a commodity and full Medicare treats health care as a public good, or a right," Nader said. "There's a real problem here when the face value of the corporate entity is an obligation to maximize value for shareholders and increase sales and profits."

"It's a perverse incentive that has no place in health care," concluded Nader.

Notable speakers at the conference included Eleanor Smith, president of the United Kingdom's largest public sector union UNISON, Michael McBane, director of the Canadian Health Coalition, and Toby Edelman, Senior Policy Attorney with the Center for Medicare Advocacy in Washington D.C.

1st Vice President Bev Dick, UNISON President Eleanor Smith, and UNA President Heather Smith



UNA marks Nursing Week **May 6 to 13**

UNA marked Nursing Week this year by doing what we do all year 'round – serving our patients and advocating to protect and enhance Alberta's public health system.

“Nursing Week is an excellent time for Albertans to think about nurses, a group of medical professionals who care deeply about the wellbeing of people in care and their families,” said UNA President Heather Smith.

She noted that this year – before, during and after Nursing Week – UNA members will notice outdoor and radio advertising celebrating the contributions made by the 25,000 Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses who are represented by UNA.

UNA will continue to press for seniors' care to be recognized as part of a well-run public health care system, she said. “Seniors deserve a fair, comfortable and healthy retirement regardless of their income level, and UNA will work to ensure long-term care is considered part of the health care system.”

Nursing Week is held each year during the week that contains May 12, the birthday of Florence Nightingale, 1820-1910, the celebrated English nurse and statistician known as “the Lady with the Lamp.” She is widely considered the founder of modern nursing. 🍷



Caution advised in social media postings

Employers of UNA members are increasingly acting as if health care employees should not be talking about work at all on social media sites.

UNA is aware of and is preparing to respond to several examples of employers taking disciplinary action against members who have posted general remarks about their work or left comments on others' work-related postings, including postings on groups with restricted memberships.

UNA does not share the view of some employers that health care employees

do not have the right to make general comments about their work, or to express agreement with others who have made such comments, and we will be pressing employers and regulatory bodies to develop clear and reasonable standards for employees who post comments and other material on social media sites on their own time.

In the mean time, however, UNA members are advised to be cautious with social media postings and to assume that they can and will be read by managers, even when posted in closed groups. 🍷



Alberta Health Services amends some LAPP policies

By Richard West, Labour Relations Officer

AHS has directed that there will be no delays in access to LAPP for newly hired employees in pension-eligible positions.

Alberta Health Services has introduced consistent province-wide pension policies regarding pension eligibility during probationary periods, access to pensions while working in temporary and pension-optional positions, transitional provisions and pensionable service.

The changes took effect on April 1, 2012, and consolidate varying policies related to the Local Authorities Pension Plan (LAPP) that existed in the old Regional Health Authorities before that date.

Probationary Periods

AHS has directed that there will be no delays in access to LAPP for newly hired employees in pension-eligible positions.

LAPP rules permit employers to exclude employees from joining the LAPP in their first year of employment in a pension-eligible position, and some Alberta health region employers had chosen to do so in the past.

For employees in regions that have invoked this pension probationary period in the past, the new standard will allow employees to participate if they were regularly working no less than 14 and less than 30 hours per week on average, or if they were working in an LAPP mandatory participation position of 30 hours per week average or more.

Employees who were being held out of the plan in a probationary period before April 1, 2012, in the former Chinook and Palliser health regions will be required to commence LAPP participation in July 2012 if they are employed in positions of

30 hours per week average or more. Those in part-time positions ranging from no less than 14 to less than 30 hours per week will be given the option of commencing participation in LAPP. This change will be effective for employees of the former Calgary Health Region effective September 2012.

Article 29.03 of the United Nurses of Alberta Collective Agreement facilitates the purchase of that first year of LAPP pension for those employees who were held out of the LAPP in a probationary period. During their first five years of employment, the employer must pay a portion of the first year of service if the employee agrees to pay hers.

Temporary employees

AHS also directed that all temporary employees in their positions for six months or more who work 30 or more hours per week after April 1, 2012, will be eligible to participate in LAPP.

Ending active participation

AHS has determined that once an employee is participating in LAPP while working in a pension-mandatory position (an average of 30 hours or more per week) or in a pension-optional position (an average of 14 to 30 hours per week), the employee must continue in the LAPP until she or he retires, is terminated or transfers to a position that is not eligible for a pension (less than an average of 14 hours per week or casual).

Transitional provisions

In the past, the former Calgary and Capital health regions, as well as some other regions on an ad hoc basis, allowed employees to access their LAPP pension if they are 55 years of age or older and have transferred from an LAPP-mandatory position (an average of 30 hours per week or more) to an LAPP-optional position (an average of 14-30 hours per week).

The new AHS standard policy, however, will no longer allow employees to access LAPP in that manner.

Under the new policy, employees who are 55 and over would have to move to a position that is not LAPP eligible (less than 14 hours per week or casual) in order to cease their active membership in the LAPP and access their LAPP pension.

AHS will provide a transition period for former employees of the former Calgary and Capital health regions who are in this situation. During the transition period, employees in these former regions may continue to access the option. To achieve the reduction in hours, employees can request a reduction of hours to move from an average of 30 or more hours per week to a position of less than 30 hours per week on average. Employees can also qualify by applying to fill vacancies that would allow them to trigger a pension decision under the old rules.

Note that the transition must have been completed prior to Dec. 16, 2012, for employees to qualify for the transitional provisions. Employees in the former Calgary and Capital health regions where the old rule applied, and on an ad hoc basis in the remaining regions, who wish to access this provision need to contact their UNA Labour Relations Officer or an AHS Benefits Representative for more details.

Pensionable service

AHS has also clarified what it considers to be pensionable service and what it does not. Pensionable service is now considered to include:

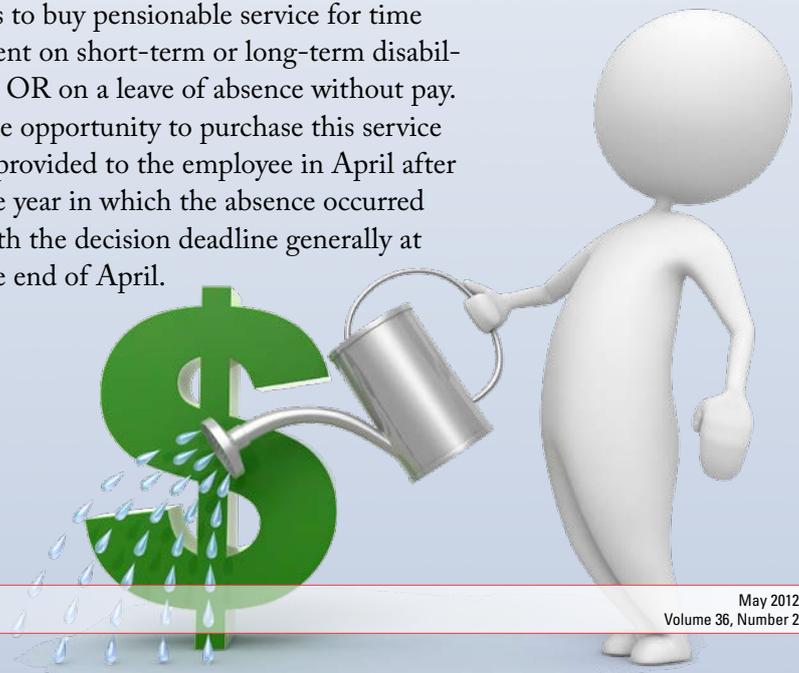
- Time worked and paid at base salary
- Education allowances paid at base salary
- Paid leaves (vacation, named holidays, overtime taken as time off in lieu, bereavement, personal leave, education leave, professional development days, jury duty, etc.)
- Paid sick time
- Payment during the “valid health-related absence” of a maternity leave when receiving the equivalent of 100 per cent of employee income
- WCB payments

Pensionable service is not considered to include:

- Pay in lieu of statutory holidays
- Additional premium for shifts or overtime
- Short-term or long-term disability
- Leaves of absence without pay

However, there is an option for employees to buy pensionable service for time spent on short-term or long-term disability OR on a leave of absence without pay. The opportunity to purchase this service is provided to the employee in April after the year in which the absence occurred with the decision deadline generally at the end of April.

The transition must have been completed prior to Dec. 16, 2012, for employees to qualify for the transitional provisions.



AT YOUR SIDE ON YOUR SIDE



Alberta's nurses are dedicated to your health and the health of your family. We advocate for a properly staffed and supported public health care system, so that we can always provide the care you need, when you need it.

 **United Nurses of Alberta**

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From UNA's advertising campaign for Nursing week and Beyond. Look for the billboards and ads in 130 Newspapers province wide.

