

BULLETIN



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Public Service Contract Being Voted On

By the time this Bulletin reaches most worksites, we will have completed voting on the new 12th Master and Component Agreement for nurses in the Public Service. Although this two year contract was cost neutral, we did achieve some important gains at the bargaining table that should improve the work environment of our members over the course of time.

As well, this agreement has led to the formation of several ad hoc committees that will be meeting shortly after the contract is ratified. These include a committee that will be responsible for reviewing the discrimination policies, procedures and practices of the individual worksites to ensure that they are in compliance with current jurisprudence and practices. In particular, this committee will be looking at the assumptions that result in determining whether a certain job or work unit requires a specific gender and determining if such restrictions are appropriate. The Committee shall also develop an information pamphlet that describes the duty to accommodate and the obligations that this creates for the Employer, Unions and individuals.

Another such Committee is a Labour Adjustment Committee which will be responsible for overseeing the devolution of Riverview and MCFD. Its primary purpose will be to ensure that timely and accurate information is disseminated to impacted members and to maximize the opportunities available to them. The Committee will also ensure that members have input in how the devolution process takes place.

Finally, a Committee will meet to look at developing a fair leave approval procedure at Forensic Psychiatric Hospital. Over the course of time, there have been various difficulties faced by our members there as they try to get time off. This is largely due to shortages of staff but there have also been other perceived inequities. This Committee will try to develop a procedure that will ensure that staff have opportunities to take earned time off.

New Contract Reached with CLBC

As mentioned in a previous Bulletin, the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) has been going through a major reorganization. One of the impacts of this is the carving off of the Community Living portion of their mandate into a separate Authority. This came into effect in early July with the enactment of the Community Living Authority Act which created Community Living B.C. (CLBC).

The only members impacted by this change are those working at the Provincial Assessment Centre for Community Living (PACCL) which used to be known as Willow Clinic. The new operation has been transferred out of the Public Service and into Community Social Services where the new accredited bargaining agent will be the Community Social Services Employers' Association (CSSEA).

We immediately sat down with the new employer to discuss the terms by which the jobs would be transferred to CLBC as well as to negotiate a collective agreement. Essentially, we negotiated an agreement that is exactly the same as the Public Service contract only it is extended to end on March 31, 2009. Any changes negotiated into the Public Service contract over that period of time, would automatically be incorporated into the new CLBC contract.

As well, we have been given a guarantee that no lay-offs will occur to regular employees until at least after March 31, 2007. This promise was made in order to provide our members with assurances of employment since they would be the only nurses in this new Authority. As well as this, they have incorporated language that entertains the provision of Early Retirement/Voluntary Departure (ERIP/VDP) to nurses should further significant reorganization or devolution occur. Finally, we negotiated the standard transfer agreement provisions which allow our members to carry their seniority, service time and benefits into the new organization.

Once this agreement was concluded, members at PACCL were offered positions with the new Authority and advised of their other options. We are pleased to see that, with the exception of one member who has decided to stay in the Public Service, all of the nurses have moved into the new jurisdiction. We now have a third collective agreement.

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