



United Nurses of Alberta

Local 115

Foothills Medical Centre & Satellites

August
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Issue 46

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Message from the Secretary

(August 2009)

To say that these are uncertain times would be a giant understatement. Not a day goes by without more conflicting news about the "economic crisis". One minute the news reports say it is over and the next it is worsening. As in the 1990's the approach is to cut back on public services. In Alberta, it is health care and, nurses in particular, that are targeted.

As nurses, we are continually receiving contradictory messages, there is no hiring freeze, but the postings have disappeared, there will be no cutbacks but some positions are being deleted. One day, the government recognizes a shortage of over 1500 nurses in Alberta and the next day, they state that we have "too many R.N.'s". Even managers do not know if, or where, they will be working next week.

Job security is now a major concern for members, particularly new staff and undergraduate nurses. New grads are concerned they may be forced to relocate to other provinces or to the U.S. in order to secure employment. The employer and the government are repeating the mistakes of the 1990's, which resulted in the loss of an entire generation of nurses in Alberta. With many nurses reaching retirement, and a projected shortage of over 6000 nurses, we cannot afford to lose yet another large group of highly educated and committed new members.

Nurses, who are often the sole support for their families, feel pressured to allow their rights to be eroded, at a time when it is most important that we stand together. When we allow our X days to be changed on short notice, so the manager does not pay overtime or when we give up other hard won rights under the Collective Agreement, we all lose. These erosions may have far reaching implications during our upcoming negotiations.

Communication is most important when we are uncertain as to what is really happening. It is only with accurate information that we can work together and resist the undermining of our professional standing, as we are

Inside This Issue

Message from the Secretary	1-2
Local 115 General Meeting	1
Fishing for facts on the Nursing Shortage?	1
Photos	2
Nurses put on pressure on health cuts	3
Health budget projects whopping \$1 billion deficit	3
MLA Boutilier tossed from caucus for calling for more Long-term care	4
AHS Code of Conduct comes under fire for muzzling employees	4
Taking it to Health Minister Ron Liepert	4
Events Calendar	5
Spotlights on your Contract	6
Negotiations Questionnaire Poster	7
Negotiations Questionnaire	8-11
Local 115 AGM Delegate Nomination Form	12
Local 115 Demand Setting Delegate Nomination Form	13
UNA Local 115 Contact Information	14

UNA Local 115 General Meeting

Date: Sep 1, 2009

Time: 1600

Location: FMC, Auditorium



Fishing for facts on the Nursing Shortage?

Visit the Local 115 Web Site home page for this fact filled document at <http://local115.una.ab.ca>

Message from the Secretary

Continued from Page 1

seeing more and more articles in the media that are portraying nurses in a negative light. I encourage all members to sign up on UNA Net so as to be able to sort the fact from the rumors.

It is only by standing together, supported by our Collective Agreement that we, as nurses, will get through these very trying times.

Please contact your local executives to express your ideas or concerns. Our phone number is (403) 670-9960, or we can be reached at local115exec@una.ab.ca.

Ruth Duffy

Secretary, Local 115
United Nurses of Alberta,
Ph: 403-670-960 / Fax: 403-263-2908
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UNA First Vice-President Bev Dick said Albertans must speak up for their public health system at a July 20th, Wrong Way rally in Medicine Hat.



UNA Local 115 working with MLA's.



Nurses put on pressure on health cuts

Alberta nurses are making it a hot summer for the provincial government and its plans for health budget cuts.

On June 30th the new Alberta Health Services announced a \$1 billion deficit but gave no indication of how they plan to handle it. Earlier in June the AHS had frozen hiring, beginning staff cuts, and rumours have been flying of hospital closures.

Nurses have been marching down mainstreet in Alberta cities and towns calling on the Alberta government to stop cuts to the public system. They've been meeting with MLAs, handing out leaflets to citizens and writing letters to newspapers in droves.

"Look at what has been achieved over the past month... it's incredible. There are not many (if any) MLA's that are not aware of the campaign now. Let's continue to keep them informed, and keep the heat turned up..." says Ros Gullickson from Local #301 at the University of Alberta Hospital.

On June 15 at the Local Presidents' meeting in Edmonton UNA Locals joined in with the Friends of Medicare More Health Cuts Wrong Way campaign, and nurses have been ratcheting up the activity level ever since.

Nurses in many communities have also had rallies and taken their issue to other organizations like the Barrhead town council. That got a headline in the Barrhead Leader: "Town council takes up nurses' cause".

Health care has been the hot news this summer in Alberta and nurses have been a big part of it.

Health budget projects whopping \$1 billion deficit

The Alberta Health Services board did not rule out borrowing money to cover its projected \$1 billion deficit when it announced the new budget on June 30.

But CEO Stephen Duckett spent most of his time talking about cost savings, including reducing costs by amalgamating the health region administrations, and specifically payroll departments.

Besides this amalgamation the other major cost control Duckett mentioned was moving 600 patients in Edmonton and Calgary acute care beds into long-term care. Health Minister Ron Liepert made the same reference. But there already are long wait times for admission to the limited long-term care facilities and the government has said it will not be funding new full service long-term care beds.

In response to the announcement, Liberal Leader David Swann pointed out that the deficit was ten times what the combined \$100 million deficit of the nine health regions had been just over a year ago.

"Albertans are going to pay very dearly for this mismanagement. It's clearly going to increase the complication rate, the wait times, the loss of life in the system if they do make those kinds of cuts," David Swann said.

Duckett said going into the fall, spending will continue to be capped at the same rate as the last fiscal quarter of 2008-09.

David Eggen from Friends of Medicare said Duckett is hiding the fact this means huge cuts. "You wouldn't be able to find those so-called efficiencies without making cuts to essential services. In essence, that's eight per cent of the budget and equates to one in 10 workers," he told the Edmonton Journal.



MLA Boutilier tossed from caucus for calling for more Long-term care

At the same time as Duckett is saying AHS will save money with more long-term care, Fort McMurray MLA Guy Boutilier was thrown out of the Conservative caucus for questioning the hold up of a promised long-term care facility in his riding.

But Boutilier must have muddled Duckett's pronouncements about moving people out of acute care into long term care, with the government's real strategy, which is to cut public health services and dampen public debate as much as possible.

"Boutilier challenged the premier's core strategy on health care," noted columnist Don Braid in the Calgary Herald. "Stelmach's inner group wants to take politics out of tough health decisions in communities all over the province...Boutilier refused to accept that. He said that by postponing the care centre, the government broke a promise made by the premier himself only last year."

AHS Code of Conduct comes under fire for muzzling employees

Alberta Health Services is now promising to revise the new Code of Conduct for employees, after MLA Rachel Notley, UNA and other organizations suggested it takes away the democratic rights of employees to discuss health policy and advocate for good care. A flurry of news media coverage ensued, including reports on UNA's grievance filed on the code. UNA said it asks employees to spy on each other and report colleagues if they suspect conduct violates the code.

"It's sort of McCarthyism," Director of Labour Relations David Harrigan, told the Calgary Herald. "We think it's unfair and we think it violates our collective agreement." The Code has some of the broadest possible terms, including phrasing such as: "If your personal conduct could reasonably result in valid allegations or criticism from our fellow Albertans, then the conduct is questionable and may be improper."

UNA's grievance says "The overall tone of the policy, as well as the method of introduction is offensive, condescending and unreasonable."

Taking it to Health Minister Ron Liepert

Meeting with a red-faced and angry health minister wasn't what Local #115 President Kevin Champagne and Vice-President Kathleen Hamnett had in mind when they booked a meeting with Ron Liepert who also happens to be their local MLA.

Kathleen Hamnett reported later that Liepert was upset he was not forewarned about the small rally in front of his office. Kevin politely said he had let others know the meeting was that day and he did not have control of them coming out to show support. Liepert said "well you've got your 5-10 minutes of my time for the questions you sent me."

Kevin began addressing the responsibilities of Liepert's government and ministry to meet the terms of the Canada Health Act. Liepert was very defensive, asking for specific examples under the health act. He also said this was a federal issue not provincial.

Specific questions related to operations or delivery of health care put to Mr. Liepert were re-directed to Alberta Health Services. "AHS is responsible".

After about 5 minutes Liepert stood up and announced the meeting was over. "I am not having any discussions with the Union," he said.

Kevin had tried to talk about staffing levels & Patient care, the delisting of services, selling of the Holy Cross hospital, and the issue of needing more Long-term care beds and staff. Mr. Liepert referred to assisted living, which he said was working well in his view.





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Events Calendar

Last Day for AGM Nomination Forms

Date: Aug 21, 2009

Note: AGM nomination forms to be into the local office by Aug 21/2009 by 1600hr at the Southern Alberta Regional Office.

Last Day for Negs Questionnaire Forms

Date: Aug 21, 2009

Note: Negs forms to be into the local office by Aug 21/2009 by 1630hr at the Southern Alberta Regional Office.

Last Day for Provincial Executive Nomination Forms

Date: Aug 28, 2009

Note: Forms to be submitted to the UNA Provincial Office.

Local 115 Local Meeting

Date: Sep 1, 2009

Place: Auditorium (Ground Floor FMC)

Time: 1600-1800

Note: AGM Delegate vote to be held & Voting on Negs Submissions to be forwarded.

Events Calendar

Last Day for Demand Setting Nomination Forms

Date: Aug 28, 2009

Note: Negs forms to be into the local office by Aug 21/2009 by 1630hr at the Southern Alberta Regional Office.

Local 115 Ward Rep Dinner

Date: Sep 23, 2009

Place: Home Food Inn Peking Cuisine, 5222 MacLeod Trail SW Calgary, AB T2H 0J2

Time: 1800-2030

Note: Please notify the local if you are interested, at least one week in advance.

Local 115 Local Meeting

Date: Oct 6, 2009

Place: FMC – AGW4

Time: 1600-1800

Note: Demand Setting Info & Voting on Negs Submissions to be forwarded.

UNA Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Date: Oct 27, 28 & 29 - 2009

Place: Edmonton

UNA Demand Setting

Date: Nov 24, 25 & 26, 2009

Place: Edmonton



SPOTLIGHT on your UNA Contract

Hours of Work

Has your schedule been changed without your agreement?

Employers may not unilaterally change 12-week schedule

An Employer desiring a schedule change must ask the Employee to amend their 12-week schedule prior to implementing any schedule change

You may agree to amend your schedule but you are not obligated to do so.

On the other hand, Article 7.04 (c) notes that requests by an Employee to alter their 12-week schedule “SHALL be granted where operationally possible without additional cost.”

If an Employee does not agree to alter their shift schedule, the expectation is the Employer will continue to explore options for staffing. If the Employer cannot find an appropriate staffing alternative, they can require an Employee to change their schedule with 14 days or less notice, but the Employer is required to pay overtime in accordance with Article 7.04 (a).

The language in 7.03 Schedule Posting is clear. Employees’ schedules are to be posted at least 12 weeks in advance. A 12-week schedule would be meaningless if an Employer had the right to change a shift without penalty.

If your schedule has been changed without your approval please contact your Local or UNA Provincial Office for assistance. UNA Provincial Agreement 2007-2010

Named Holidays

Employees CAN carry over Stat banks into the next year

Nurses who have accumulated Named Holiday days-in-lieu in a “Stat bank” normally get to choose when they get those days off. The Employer CANNOT unilaterally pay out a Stat bank.

If the Employer and Employee cannot agree on the days to be taken off, however, the Employer can schedule the day off adjacent to a scheduled day of rest.

18.03 a) and c)

- (i) an alternate day off at a mutually agreed time;
- (ii) by mutual agreement, a day added to the Employee’s next annual vacation; or
- (iii) by mutual agreement, the Employee may receive payment for such day at the Employee’s Basic Rate of Pay.

(c) The Employer shall not schedule the alternate day off with pay as provided in Article 18.03(a) and (b) until such time as the Employee and Employer have endeavoured to agree on the date of the alternate day off. Failing mutual agreement within 30 calendar days following the Named Holiday of the option to be applied, the Employee shall have a day off with pay scheduled adjacent to a scheduled day of rest.

— Article 18.03 UNA Provincial Collective Agreement

This Questionnaire is also available on the Local 115 Website


Negotiations ²⁰¹⁰ *forward together*



Remember!

To Return Your Negotiations Questionnaire.

return this questionnaire to your local president.
do not include any identifying personal information.



Member Questionnaire

What do you want in our next contract?

1. About your working conditions
 Employment status: Fulltime Parttime Casual Temporary
 Type of establishment you work for (eg. Medicine, CSE, etc. Please Circle also)
 Term: What length should the contract last? 1 year 2 years Other (specify)

2. Wages: What would you consider to be a reasonable wage increase?
 _____ / year (first year of contract) _____ / year (second year of contract)
 Other _____

3. Scheduling: What changes to the scheduling provisions would you propose?

 Your shift: 12 hour 8 hour 6 hour Other (specify) _____

4. Absence/Pension: What changes would you propose?
 Vacation Allowance No Change Increase to _____ / year
 Dental/Paid Sick Day No Change Increase to _____ / year
 Change Responsibility Pay No Change Increase to _____ / year
 Learning Shift Differential No Change Increase to _____ / year
 Night Shift Differential No Change Increase to _____ / year
 Weekend Premium No Change Increase to _____ / year
 Overtime No Change Increase to _____ / year
 Compensation Allowance No Change Increase to _____ / year
 Other changes or comments _____

5. Health Benefits: What changes should be made to these provisions?

return this questionnaire to your local president.

Please complete and return to your
Local President.

Approved Posting _____
United Nurses of Alberta; June 3, 2009

Every UNA member has a say!

*You can make your proposals
and suggestions.*

*You can vote on proposals
at your Local meeting.*

*You can elect your representatives
to the Demand Setting Meeting.*

You vote on the final proposals.

*UNA insists that it does not accept
any agreement except by a vote of
the members. That means nurses
do not accept contracts imposed by
arbitration or legislation, but only by
a free and democratic vote of nurses!*



Please return the questionnaire to your Local President.



Most of Alberta's nurses are included in negotiations for the provincial agreement.

All Employees of Alberta Health Services, Covenant Health, and many separate Long-term Care providers are included in Provincial Negotiations.

Provincial Negotiations TIMELINE AND DEADLINES

SEPTEMBER 11, 2009

Deadline for Local proposals to be received in UNA Provincial Office

SEPTEMBER 28 TO OCTOBER 2

Elected Negotiating Committee reviews Local proposals and Director of Labour Relations recommendations. The Negotiating Committee's recommendations then go back to Locals for discussion.

OCTOBER 27, 28, 29

UNA Annual General Meeting – Edmonton

NOVEMBER 24, 25, 26

Demand Setting Meeting – Edmonton Local delegates vote to set the final Proposals.

JANUARY 28, 2010

Ratification Vote. Locals vote on Proposals coming out of the Demand Setting Meeting.

JANUARY 2010

Exchange of Proposals and Collective Bargaining for a new UNA Provincial Agreements begins

This Questionnaire is also available on the Local 115 Website

Return this questionnaire to your Local President.
It is the starting point for developing our provincial proposals.



Member Questionnaire

What do you want in our next contract?

1 About your nursing position

Employment status: Full-time Part-time Casual Temporary

Type of unit/office you work in? (eg: Medicine, ICU, LTC, Home Care, etc.) _____

Term - What length should the contract be? 1 year 2 years Other (specify) _____

2. Wages - What would you consider to be a reasonable wage increase?

\$ _____/hour (first year of contract); \$ _____/hour (second year of contract)

Other _____

3. Scheduling - What changes to the scheduling provisions would you propose: _____

Your shift 4 hour 8 hour 12 hour Other (specify) _____

4. Allowances/Premiums - What changes would you propose to:

- Education Allowances No Change Increase to \$_____/hour
- On-call Pay/Call Back No Change Increase to \$_____/hour
- Charge/Responsibility Pay No Change Increase to \$_____/hour
- Evening Shift Differential No Change Increase to \$_____/hour
- Night Shift Differential No Change Increase to \$_____/hour
- Weekend Premium No Change Increase to \$_____/hour
- Overtime No Change Increase to _____
- Transportation Allowance No Change Increase to \$_____

Other changes or comments: _____

5. Health Benefits - What changes should be made to these provisions? _____

Please return the questionnaire to your Local President.

6. **Sick Leave/Leaves of Absence** - What changes should be made to these provisions? _____

7. **Vacations** - What changes should be made to the vacation article? _____

8. **Named Holidays** - What changes should be made to the Named Holidays article?

9. **Professional Responsibility (PRC)/Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S)** - What changes would you propose for PRC or OH&S?

10. **Layoff and Recall** - What changes should be made to the layoff and recall provisions?

11. **In the last two years has the staffing level and mix in your workplace:**
 Improved Remained the Same Deteriorated
Comments: _____

12. **Part-time, Temporary and Casual** - What changes would you like to see to part-time, temporary or casual provisions?

13. **Other** - Please identify any other changes or issues you want addressed in the collective agreement.

14. **Priorities** - Please indicate the three (3) issues that are most important to you.
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please return to your Local President.
If you have any questions regarding negotiations, contact your Local President, your Labour Relations Officer or a UNA Executive Officer.

Please return the questionnaire to your Local President.

This Form is also available on the Local 115 Website



**Local #115
Delegate Nomination Form**

I wish to let my name stand as a voting delegate for the United Nurses of Alberta Annual General Meeting on **October 27, 28 and 29, 2009.**

Name: (Please Print) _____

E-mail Address (Please Print Clearly) _____

Home telephone #: _____

Unit: _____ UNA ID#: _____

Abutting shift(s): Abutting shifts must be pre-approved by the Provincial Treasurer. Please indicate the date(s). **October 26, 2009 evenings/nights and October 29 nights.**

October 26, 2009 _____

October 29, 2009 _____

Signature of Nominee: _____

Signature of 1st member in good standing: _____

Name (Please Print) _____ UNA ID# _____

Signature of 2nd member in good standing: _____

Name (Please Print) _____ UNA ID# _____

PS: Please drop in Local 115 mailbox, or fax to office at 270-5749 by 1600 on Aug 21/2009. Members will be elected at the Local Meeting on September 1, 2009.

May 26/2009

This Form is also available on the Local 115 Website



**Local #115
Delegate Nomination Form**

I wish to let my name stand as a voting delegate for the United Nurses of Alberta Demand Setting Meeting on **November 24, 25 and 26, 2009.**

Name: (Please Print)

E-mail Address (Please Print Clearly)

Home telephone #: _____

Unit: _____ UNA ID#: _____

Abutting shift(s): Abutting shifts must be pre-approved by the Provincial Treasurer. Please indicate the date(s). **November 23, 2009 evenings/nights and November 26 nights.**

November 23 2009 _____

November 26, 2009 _____

Signature of Nominee:

Signature of 1st member in good standing:

Name (Please Print) _____ UNA ID# _____

Signature of 2nd member in good standing:

Name (Please Print) _____ UNA ID# _____

PS: Please drop in Local 115 mailbox, or fax to office at 270-5749 by 1600 on Sept 11/2009. Members will be elected at the Local Meeting on October 6, 2009.

June 18/2009



Contact Information

Local 115 Executive

Kevin Champagne

President

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Kathleen Hamnett

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Ruth Duffy

Secretary

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Newsletter Committee

Al Perreault

Email: aperreault@una.ab.ca

Grievance Committee

Local 115 Executive

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Marilyn Vavasour

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Local 115 Web Site: <http://local115.una.ab.ca>