



Local 115 Foothills Medical Centre & Satellites

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UNA Local 115 Newsletter - Feb 2010

Web Site: local115.una.ab.ca



Message from the Vice President

Kathleen Hamnett

I was wondering what to write for this News Letter that would be inspiring and informative for you. I would like to say how proud I am of Nurses everyday for the hard work and dedication. I recall seeing a poster that

Highlighted what as Nurses we do and reflect about the various roles or hats we as Nurses wear everyday. The poster made me feel proud about being a Nurse and recognize our diversity within our profession.

The Local Office continues to be a beehive of activity. Many calls of late are related to Vacation planning guidelines and the Carryover of Vacation, stat banks & overtime. I would encourage everyone to review the Joint statements and call the local office for assistance as needed.

The Local Executive continue to try and meet the needs of the local in a timely fashion but due to meetings your call may not always be returned the same day. Please do leave a message and if Urgent speak to the Labour Relations Officer on duty.

For an update on Negotiations please access

UNA's Internal server First Class via UNA Net &/or call the office.

I cannot encourage everyone enough to ask to see their personnel file & check your letter of hire for the hire date and Seniority date. Please inform the Local office for assistance in having Seniority dates corrected.

Date & initial any document in the personnel file. The Letter of hire should include your Status as a Temporary or Regular Employee, Full Time or Part time, your date of hire, your seniority date, length of shift, number of shifts in the cycle, the number of weeks in the cycle.

Example:

0.56 FTE Regular Part-Time

length of shift 7.75hr

Number of shifts per cycle 32 shifts

Number of week per cycle 12 weeks

In January, I took the Labour Law course at AFL Labour School and I continue to learn everyday. I enjoyed the learning experience. I am hop-

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Upcoming Events

- Feb 10 - Local 115 Meeting
- Mar 10 - Local 115 Meeting
- Apr 14 - Local 115 Meeting
- May 12 - Local 115 Meeting

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Message from the Vice President

“The poster made me feel proud about being a Nurse...”

ing it will benefit my efforts to support members involved in the Arbitration process. The Local Executive is aware of the anxiety and stress that comes from the workplace. So I want to remind everyone that we are all in this together and we should continue to support each other.

It is important to acknowledge the success of Nurses by participating in rallies, be has active as we can, and talk to others about what is going on in

Health Care. I thank all of you that stand up, ask for answers, and continue to be a key part of the process for change in the health care system. 🇨🇦

Kathleen Hamnett

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Nurse union fears U.S. exodus

Fears of a nurse exodus towards greener pastures south of the border could be even worse in Alberta, says the provincial union boss.

The Canadian Nurses Association has expressed concerns that registered nurses may flood into the U.S. to take advantage planned health reforms that are currently mired in legislative limbo.

And Alberta may be one of the top exporters, says United Nurses of Alberta President Heather Smith, who fears an ongoing hiring freeze for RNs may see new grads streaming south.

“We have great concern that we’re not in a position any longer to retain

nursing grads,” she said.

“As little as 20 percent of grads have the potential for jobs in Alberta and those that don’t stay will look for jobs in other provinces, or more likely, the States.”

Over the weekend, the CNA said Canada will be short some 66,000 registered nurses by 2022 while its neighbour will need 750,000 by then.

And that could create a steady trickle of nursing grads stateside, said Smith, who said a hiring freeze implemented by Alberta Health Services CEO Dr. Stephen Duckett last May will leave many prospective nurses with no options in their own province.

She said when the province releases its budget later on Feb. 9, it will set the stage for whether nursing grads will find a home here or have to look elsewhere.

“There’s a great deal of concern with the upcoming budget that if \$2 billion is cut from the public service as planned there is no way the health authority will be in any position to expand service delivery,” he said.

“Right now we don’t have enough capacity to address the needs of the public.”


The UNA represents some 25,000 front line registered nurses in Alberta. 🇨🇦



H1N1:**The pandemic may be over but the battle for your safety is not**

The second wave of the pandemic is over, CFNU will continue to battle to ensure that occupational health and safety is integrated fully into policies and practices of pandemic planning. We are working to put the occupational health and safety of nurses during a pandemic on the agenda of labour ministers. To assist with this, CFNU President and senior staff met with the office of the federal labour minister in December. As well, we are collecting information from the provincial nurses' unions in regards to the impact of the pandemic on collective agreements.



Email us with your stories of the impact of the pandemic on your work life at: cfnu@nursesunions.ca. 

Klein admits to Two-Tier agenda

While speaking to reporters on January 25 at Olds College, former Premier Ralph Klein admitted that his government attempted to privatize health care in Alberta by creating a two-tier system.

"I tried it twice -- the Third Way and the Mazankowski report -- and I failed."


(Source: "Klein urges two-tiered health system," Edmonton Journal, January 26, 2010)

Klein's statement contradicted comments he made in July 2005 during the attempted Third Way privatization:

"I don't think it's two tier," Mr. Klein said. "I guess it's subjective."

(Source: "Alberta's Third Way", Globe & Mail, July 12, 2005)

In 2005, UNA President Heather Smith voiced her opposition to Klein's Third Way: "Forcing people to rely more and more on private insurance from big corporations will cost everyone, businesses and citizens," she said. "As much as the Premier attempts to deny this is American-style health care, private insurance is just that."

UNA played a central role in defending public health care in Alberta by stopping the Third Way privatization in 2006. 



UNA is supporting the Join Together Alberta campaign.

UNA pleased plan for AHE closures shelved



United Nurses of Alberta is pleased to learn that the plans to close most or all of the beds at Alberta Hospital Edmonton have been shelved.

"Alberta Health Services and the province are wisely backing away from a blow that would dramatically have hurt mental health capacity in the province," President Heather Smith said today.

She also pointed out that the strong opposition from Albertans about the closures at AHE made a real difference.

UNA has concerns that the transfer to Villa Cari-

tas include "All support programs and resources available" as promised in the AHS statement.

"It would be unfair to patients to transfer them to a new facility with reduced staffing and lower levels of care," says Heather Smith.

"The psycho-geriatric patients from Alberta Hospital Edmonton need high levels of care, and of psychiatric specialized care. We have seen few details about the plans for care at Villa Caritas," Heather Smith says.

UNA also points out that establishing a new geriat-

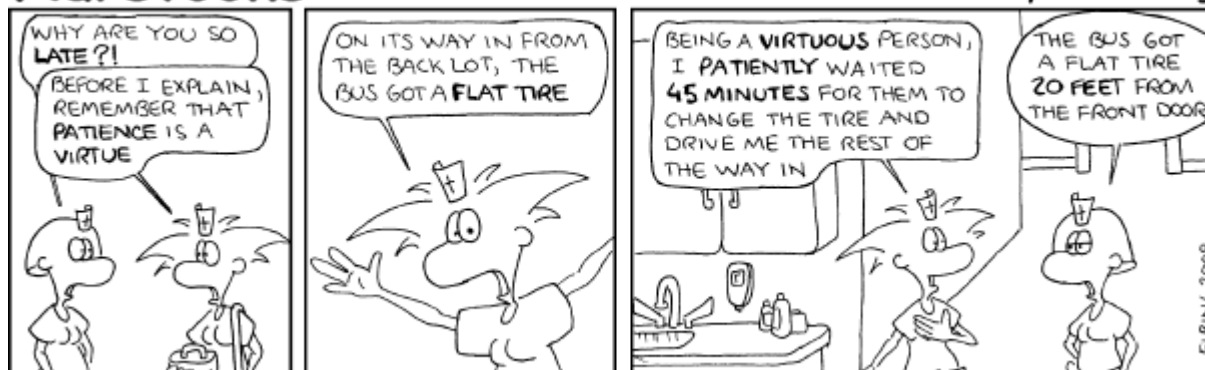
ric mental health "campus" at Villa Caritas and the Misericordia Hospital should be an expansion, not a reduction, in overall capacity.

UNA is also communicating with AHS and the Health Minister about failing to consult with the nurses' union in its process to date.

"We are concerned the Committee did not get the full picture without consultation with the largest professional staff group, front-line nursing professionals," Heather Smith said.

Nurstoons

by Carl Elbing



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Acute-bed closures paused 'for now': Albertans expect new Minister to repair the damage done to their health care system



In his first week as Minister of Health & Wellness, Edmonton MLA Gene Zwozdesky announced "a stop to any further changes of acute care beds right now." This decision pauses plans by the Alberta Health Services Superboard to close 300 acute-care beds in Edmonton and Calgary over the next three years.

Zwozdesky continued to explain that if AHS Chair Ken Hughes and CEO Stephen Duckett "were contemplating closures, I have asked them to not contemplate anything further until I have had a chance to take a look at them."

"It's good that our new minister is turning back from the 'wrong way' of reducing our health care capacity," says UNA President Heather Smith.

But she also points out the announcement about stopping the bed closures was accompanied by the disclaimer 'for now'.


"Albertans absolutely need these beds in our hospitals, there's no question,"

says Heather Smith. "We have dangerous overcapacity beds and crowding and waits, now. We need to be expanding capacity, not shrinking it," Heather Smith says.

Strong opposition from Albertans also forced the new Minister to reverse plans to close most or all of the beds at Alberta Hospital Edmonton, instead promising to transfer the beds to Villa Caritas.

The future of these decisions are not permanent and will be tied to funding in the provincial budget to be released on February 9.

"Albertans accept that there will be costs involved in repairing the damage that has been done to our public health care system," says Heather Smith.

"Albertans expect the Minister to repair the damage and provide the public health care that citizens deserve and depend on," says Heather Smith. 



On January 19, UNA President Heather Smith and the Executive Officers met with new Health & Wellness Minister Gene Zwozdesky and Parliamentary Assistant Dr. Raj Sherman.

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