



NEWSLETTER

Jan / Feb 2015

United Nurses of Alberta



Stand Up For Child Care
Page 4

UNA Alarmed By Possibility Of More Delays For Calgary Cancer Centre
Page 5

Senior Advocates Call On Government To Fix Long-Term Care Crisis
Page 7

UNA Local 115 AGM

United Nurses of Alberta Local 115 members registering for the Local Annual General Meeting.

The recently ratified United Nurses of Alberta 2013-2017 Collective Agreement with Alberta Health Services, Covenant Health, Lamont Health Care Centre, The Bethany Group (Camrose) is now available for download in the Collective Agreements section of the UNA website.



Message From The Secretary

By Wayne Stopa
Local 115 Secretary, United Nurses of Alberta

First and foremost, “thank you”.

Thank you for the opportunity to be your local 115 secretary since the spring of this year.

It's been a privilege to work along side such a talented and dedicated team in Local 115.

We are the largest local in United Nurses of Alberta and as such have a large voice and have the opportunity to advocate for the best possible care in about 179 programs, services and units. We are responsible also for over three thousand members.

It's been a busy year with some big events and positive changes.

Our contract negotiations were completed in an environment of uncertainty with respect to the economy and the politics at the time. But due to the amazing efforts of our negotiating committee we, I believe, came out ahead and voted to accept our current contract.

Personally, I've had the opportunity to engage and listen to a large number of our members at most of the programs that we as a local represent. With this information we have looked into a numbers of ways to further engage our members.

For example, we started to do coffee carts on our walkabouts. They allow our Executive to meet not only the day staff but we expanded the trips to evenings and nights. This has been very well received and very informative for the Executive.

I am listening to new and long time members to get more ideas to increase our signed members to our local.

In closing, membership will always be on the top of my list to better. Meeting new and current members is what I enjoy most. Everyone has new ideas and I'd love to hear them.

It was a good year and I look forward to an even better one next year. Thank you.

To learn about ways you can make a difference, become engaged, attend a local union meeting.

In Solidarity,

Wayne Stopa

Local 115 Secretary
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Local 115 Executive

President: Kevin Champagne
Vice-President: Kathleen Hamnett
Secretary: Wayne Stopa
Treasurer: Cameron Westhead

Local 115 Committees

CDLC Committee: Nicole Bajada • Heather Sawchuk • Sue Weatherhead
Communications: Cameron Westhead • Sarah Paetschke • Al Perreault
Grievance Committee: Local 115 Executive • Martin d'Entremont
OH & S Committee: Kathleen Hamnett
PRC Committee: Kevin Champagne • Wanda Deadman • Jackie Dyck • Laura Muenchrath • Sarah Paetschke • Wayne Stopa • Leona Wright
Portfolio Reps: Jeunine Champagne • Wanda Deadman • Wayne Stopa • Sandra McGonigal

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Al Perreault

Using Personal Leave Days

Under Article 22.08 of the UNA Provincial Collective Agreement signed in 2014, full-time and part-time employees are entitled to three Personal Leave days annually from April 1 to March 31.

These days are for the purpose of attending to personal matters and family responsibilities, including attending appointments with family members.

Employees planning personal leave requests must do so as far in advance as possible. Because of the nature of the request, the ability to give advance notice is sometimes limited. This could mean an employee could request personal leave 8 months in advance or even one hour in advance depending on the circumstances.

The employer must not unreasonably deny requests for personal leave and the requirement to pay replacement overtime is not a reason to deny leave.

Unlike previous collective agreements, an employee does not need to provide their employer with a reason for requesting personal leave and the employer is not to ask.

Because personal leave days are paid at 7.75 hours, if employees work an extended workday, they are able use the additional hours from accumulated vacation or overtime banks.

Personal leave can be used for up to three consecutive days each fiscal year.

If employment commences on or after August 1st of the year, personal leave days will be prorated for the remainder of the year as follows:

- ♦ August 1st to November 30th: 2 personal leave days
- ♦ December 1st to March 31st: 1 personal leave day.

For questions or concerns, contact your UNA local executive or UNA Labour Relations Advisor at 1-800-252-9394.



United Nurses of Alberta

We call on the Alberta government to:

1. Develop a provincial framework for Early Childhood Learning and Care in Alberta.

Early learning and child development objectives should be clearly articulated as a government priority. Early learning and care best practices should be established and support provided for their achievement, to ensure that childcare services are funded and delivered in a coordinated, universal manner. Accreditation processes need to be enhanced and increased operational funding is desperately needed to better monitor and assist centres to achieve quality early education and learning program goals. Funds should be targeted to non-profit and public spaces where there is a direct need based on socio-economic and geographical considerations.

A substantial increase in funding both for the creation of more regulated childcare spaces (particularly infant care) and for the amount per childcare space is immediately required. At minimum, Alberta should allot the national average per space. Additional start-up funding is also required for the creation of new childcare spaces.

2. Recognize and support our children's mentors and caregivers as professionals.

In order to maintain continuity and quality of care, adequate wage enhancements for childcare workers in both pre-school and before/after-school care centres are needed. Early childhood education training is specialized knowledge and should be required as a pre-requisite to employment. Incentives in the form of tuition subsidies and student loan debt forgiveness are needed to attract and retain individuals in the sector. Continuing education requirements should be identified and on-going professional development resources for staff should be adequately provided for.

3. Make early learning and care affordable for all.

Fees in Alberta should be capped at affordable rates. We can copy what already works in other places. For example, Quebec is the only jurisdiction in North America that provides a universal, public and affordable childcare system to its citizens. The results of this system have been positive. Childcare workers are paid more, so more highly qualified workers are attracted and retained. Children benefit from an enriched learning environment and parents pay a minimal flat daily fee for care.

In order to achieve these goals, direct funding of the system needs to substantially increase. Currently subsidies, while helpful, don't solve the problem of accessibility for low income families. Even with subsidies, the base parent-paid fees still can be an obstacle for many families. If a subsidy goes up, it doesn't necessarily result in a lower cost for the family. With a universal cap on fees addressing this fundamental problem, subsidies could then be used in a more targeted manner.

4. Support families with different needs.

The current Infant Care incentive is inadequate to address needs and has been unsuccessful to create sufficient spaces. Additional financial assistance should also be provided to centres that offer care for children with special needs to assist in meeting the higher staffing ratios that are required and to encourage more centres to create spaces for the very young. We also need more options for families who work outside the traditional work week. Sustained resources for early diagnostic testing from age one onwards would allow all children to flourish. If potential difficulties are identified earlier, targeted supports can be put in place to address the children's needs and learning supports for a more inclusive system.

5. Keep childcare public / non-profit.

Rather than expanding private mega corporations by giving public dollars to make these corporations more profitable, public dollars should be going to where they can be much more effective.

Public and non-profit childcare providers are not concerned with real estate futures, high salaries for corporate executives and seeing the continued growth of the largest returns possible. Their focus is where it should be—on our children. Public funding should go where it can be used for the public good. It should be self-evident that our kids are not commodities.

STAND UP

SPEAK OUT FOR

**Quality Public
Early Childhood
Education and Care**

Public Interest Alberta

For more information,
call 780 420-0471,
email office@pialberta.org
or visit the website
www.pialberta.org

UNA Alarmed by Possibility of More Delays For Calgary Cancer Centre Due to Falling Oil Prices

By United Nurses of Alberta

United Nurses of Alberta is gravely concerned by Health Minister Stephen Mandel's comments yesterday that low provincial revenues tied to slumping oil prices may delay construction of a planned new cancer centre for Calgary plus other important health care capital projects.

"We face a continuing crisis in health care in Alberta because our province's approach to budgeting and funding cannot guarantee sustainable and predictable financing," said UNA President Heather Smith. "This has to change."

"Now we have another situation in which entirely predictable fluctuation in commodity prices on international markets is being used as justification to drop important health care projects that were the subject of grand announcements less than a year ago, are urgently needed, and would help alleviate our continuing health care crisis," Smith said.

Smith said it is imperative that the Alberta government implements revenue measures to ensure predictable and sustainable funding for essential services like cancer care centre in Calgary

Mandel told journalists yesterday that construction of the Calgary cancer centre,

which had been scheduled to begin in 2015, later put back to 2016, will likely have to be delayed further.

The centre is desperately needed to relieve pressure on the overcrowded Tom Baker Cancer Centre, where patients experience long waits just to see an oncologist. Overcrowding is so serious staff have difficulty meeting their triage requirements as they face patient volumes they have never seen before.

Just last spring, the Alberta government boasted that it was increasing funding for the Calgary cancer facility, which it then called "the biggest health facility construction project in North America" and promised would be completed by 2020.

At that time, the Progressive Conservative Government said it was "proceeding with all possible speed."

Fund-raising efforts for the centre, based on the government's promises, have been ongoing.

Tying available funds for essential health care services and facilities to royalties based on prices that fluctuate is a political decision that can and must be changed, Smith said.

2015 Events Calendar

Date	Event
January 1, 2015	Implementation of the New Consolidated Benefit Plan
January 5-19, 2015	Open Enrolment Period for Benefits
January 14, 2015	Local 115 Meeting 1600-1800 (FMC Auditorium)
January 18-25, 2015	AFL Winter Labour School
January 28, 2015	Dealing With Abuse Workshop
February 10, 2015	Unit Rep Workshop
February 11, 2015	Local 115 Meeting 1600-1800 (FMC AGW4A-B)
March 3-5, 2015	Executive Board Meeting (Edmonton)
March 11, 2015	Local 115 Meeting 1600-1800 (FMC Auditorium)
March 12, 2015	South Central District Meeting
April 1, 2015	2.25% Rate of Pay Increase
April 8, 2015	Unit Rep Workshop
April 8, 2015	Public Interest Alberta Keynote
April 8, 2015	Local 115 Meeting 1600-1800 (FMC Auditorium)
April 9-11, 2015	Public Interest Alberta Conference (Edmonton)
April 15-19, 2015	AFL Convention
May 1, 2015	MCLS Lump Sum (\$875)
May 1, 2015	AHS Payment of 2014 Lump Sum (\$500) and AHS Payment of 2014
May 13, 2015	Local 115 Meeting 1600-1800 (FMC Auditorium)
June 1-5, 2015	CFNU Convention (Halifax)
June 3, 2015	Unit Rep Workshop
June 10, 2015	Local 115 Meeting 1600-1800 (FMC Auditorium)
June 15-18, 2015	Executive Board Meeting (Edmonton)
June 25, 2015	South Central District Meeting
June 9, 2015	Local 115 Meeting 1600-1800 (FMC Auditorium)
September 15-17, 2015	Executive Board Meeting (Edmonton)
September 24, 2015	South Central District Meeting
October 1, 2015	Unit Rep Workshop
October 14, 2015	Dealing With Abuse Workshop
October 14, 2015	Local 115 Meeting 1600-1800 (FMC Auditorium)
October 27-29, 2015	Provincial AGM (Edmonton)
November 18, 2015	Local 115 Meeting 1600-1800 (FMC Auditorium)
November 24-27, 2015	Executive Board Meeting (Edmonton)
November 27-29, 2015	Parkland Conference (Edmonton tentative)
December 9, 2015	Local 115 Meeting 1600-1800 (FMC Auditorium)
December 10, 2015	South Central District Meeting
December 17, 2015	Unit Rep Workshop

Seniors Advocates Call on Government to Fix Long-Term Care Crisis

Families Suffering Due to Underfunding of Care System

Public Interest Alberta's Seniors Task Force released a Long-Term Care position paper today that calls on the Prentice government to fix the growing crisis in seniors care.

The sixteen organizations are deeply concerned that the Prentice government will not change the government policy that caps the number of long-term care beds and continues to fund seniors care 19% below the national average.

"The crisis in seniors care can be largely addressed if the government is willing to invest in building enough long-term care places to meet the current and future needs and to employ more medically trained staff to increase the number of care hours from 3.6 to 4.5 hours/day" said Noel Somerville, the Chair of Public Interest Alberta's Seniors Task Force. "The Prentice government needs to revise its six year old Continuing Care Strategy that caps the number of LTC beds at 14,500 and stop putting public funds into building more corporately run supportive living and assisted living facilities that charge families huge amounts of money for extra care and supports."

Studies done by the OECD indicate that the 34 member countries have on average enough long-term care capacity for 4% of their population over the age of 65. By that count, Alberta should have about 20,000, a shortfall of nearly 6000 beds.

"How is it possible that a senior official with AHS can get away with telling the government's Public Accounts Committee last week that there are too many long-term care beds in Alberta when my husband Clarence has been at the University of Alberta hospital since August 8th awaiting placement?" asks Bernie Travis, representative of the group Early Onset Dementia Alberta. "This government needs

to build a quality seniors care system so that families are not suffering without the support they need for their loved ones and the care givers."

"For too long our long-term care system has faced constant underfunding and privatization," said Heather Smith, President of United Nurses of Alberta. "Increasing the number of public long-term care beds with appropriate staffing levels will ensure residents receive the safest and most cost-effective care possible."

The release of this position paper comes as Alberta Health Services concludes the continuing care system review that they have been quietly conducting for the past six months. The Seniors Task Force is calling for the report and recommendations of the Continuing Care Resolution Team to be publicly released.

An investigation by the Office of Protection for People in Care was released at the media conference describing how one Edmonton senior died due to neglect in a private, for-profit care facility.

"People are getting angry when they hear stories about seniors and their families who not getting the care they need in the final years of their lives," said Bill Moore-Kilgannon, Executive Director of Public Interest Alberta. "We know that AHS has just wrapped up its review of our continuing care system, but unless Albertans start speaking out and telling their stories about the seniors care system, I am afraid the Prentice Government will not make the necessary changes to fix the crisis in seniors care."



Public Interest Alberta
Advocating for a Better Alberta for All

Please Post!

UNITED NURSES OF ALBERTA - LOCAL 115

Notice of Monthly Meetings:



Jan 14, 2015
4pm to 6pm
FMC Auditorium



Feb 11, 2015
4pm to 6pm
FMC AGW4

Call for Nominations:

Portfolio Representatives

Nomination Deadline Jan 7, 2015 @ 16:30

Election will take place at Jan 14 Local Meeting

6 positions (3 one year terms, 3 two year terms)

Portfolio rep assignments will mirror the six primary AHS directors overseeing Local 115 Members. Portfolios subject to change based on director assignments.

Preference to those working within the portfolio they wish to represent. Contact the local office for more information. Nomination forms on website.

(403) 670-9960

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www.local115.wordpress.com



UnitedNursesofAlbertaLocal115



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