

**CUPE Health Care Council Bargaining Update #5 – December 10, 2008**

CUPE's collective agreement negotiations with SAHO and the Regional Health Employers encountered a major stumbling block this Tuesday December 9, 2008. Media reports have indicated that CUPE has walked away from negotiations – nothing could be further from the truth.

Your bargaining committee remains at the table, contrary to what SAHO has stated to the media. SAHO is determined to chase after major concessions, which would have a severe impact on your rights as health care professionals.

**Some of the concessions SAHO continues to seek are:**

- ◆ **barriers to obtaining positions**
- ◆ **layoff - bumping restricted to facility versus region-wide**
- ◆ **hours of work**
- ◆ **seniority**
- ◆ **removal of workload language**
- ◆ **usage of vacation before time in lieu bank**
- ◆ **relief language**
- ◆ **removal of union participation**

SAHO delivered a letter to the CUPE bargaining committee on Monday, December 8, 2008, maintaining their refusal to provide us with their complete proposal package, inclusive of the monetary offer. They were not able to confirm that their 'principles' (the Premier and Cabinet) had been consulted, as SAHO said they would do. Fair collective bargaining requires full disclosure and on the basis of SAHO's continued refusal to negotiate openly, CUPE is moving forward with an unfair labour practice application.

We also received notice from SAHO that they would be conducting focus groups to "research and achieve a better understanding of the perspectives of the residents of Saskatchewan regarding compensation and essential services in health care." SAHO indicated "the results of the focus groups will have no impact on the Employers' position at the bargaining table." When we inquired further, we were told that these had already been completed and that it was a 'poll' not 'focus groups' as they had clearly stated in an email to CUPE. When asked the purpose of the poll, SAHO responded that the information gained would be used to tailor their own communications to the public about essential services and compensation, which clearly is in direct relation to the provider union negotiations.

To be clear, your bargaining committee urges "SAHO to return to the bargaining table with a monetary package". SAHO came to the table for less than an hour and deceived nearly 13,000 CUPE members in this province. They came, they misled and they left the hotel.

Please be assured that we will continue to update CUPE members about developments over the next few weeks.

In Solidarity,

Your CUPE Bargaining Committee

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