

CUPE Health Care Council Bargaining Update #4 – November 21, 2008

Your Bargaining Committee has asked for the employer’s mandate for monetary issues. This needed mandate was requested by your bargaining committee for the purpose of carrying forward the contract language portions of the collective agreement. Without knowledge of the monetary portion and the wage mandate of the employer’s bargaining proposals, the Union bargains in a vacuum, and the process cannot be considered fair. In an attempt to discover the mandate, we specifically asked the employer “who are your principals?” The answer was, “The Premier and Cabinet.”

Again the provincial government has directly impeded bargaining, for on Tuesday, November 18th, the bargaining committee was told that we could not have this information, indeed that they “didn’t have it” to give. They would need to “get back to us” after consulting Cabinet and the Premier. There was no time frame for when we might receive it, and so as of this the committee is waiting, at the table, for the employer to bring forth the information that we have a legal right to possess.

Your CUPE Bargaining Committee told the employer outright that what our members anticipate, and consider reasonable, as a fair wage mandate would be equity with the increases achieved by other Health Care unions in the province.

We asked if there was any reason why the employer would not believe this to be a fair and reasonable expectation. It is difficult to express to you here the anger, and frustration we felt when we heard the response of the employer:

“Quite simply, you are not nurses.”

It is likely the same anger and frustration that you are feeling now, having read that.

We expect to be treated **as** fairly, and to achieve the same level of progress at the table.

Despite what was clearly a difficult week in bargaining and in the legislature, we as a committee, remain committed to the directions set forth by our Members. With your support we will remain steadfast in this fight for fairness.

Your Bargaining Committee will be holding meetings in each of the regions, as indicated below, to discuss the state of negotiations and the essential services issue. Please watch for specifics on posters in your workplace.

November 25 – Local 3967 – Regina	December 2 – Local 5111 – North Battleford
November 26 – Local 5999 – Weyburn	December 3 – Local 4777 – Prince Albert
November 27 – Local 4980 – Yorkton	December 4 – Local 3967 – Regina

In Solidarity,
 Your CUPE Health Care Bargaining Committee