

CUPE Health Care Council Bargaining Update #6 – January 23, 2009

During the holidays and through discussions between CUPE and the employer, we were expressly advised that the employer committee does not have the information or authority regarding the monetary package to share with CUPE at this time. We were completely stunned by this information. However, after serious consideration and in a significant gesture of good faith, your bargaining committee determined members would be best served by returning to negotiations as previously scheduled.

So, after a day of strategy, CUPE met with the employer on January 20th in an attempt to bargain a new contract. The union committee affirmed our integral role on the healthcare team and our expectation of treatment equal to the treatment the employer shows the other bargaining units. Simply put, we want respect at the bargaining table and beyond. Our committee stated the desire to avoid the trap of a strictly positional approach and challenged the employer to drop their “all or nothing” bargaining strategy. They agreed.

Both parties agreed that more discussion of the issues and problems that we face and discussion of the factors that motivated the proposals will help us achieve mutual understanding on this “two way street”. Additionally, we restated our opposition to the employer’s most regressive proposals dealing with hours of work, multi site workplaces and their attack on hard won rights of past rounds of bargaining. CUPE also reminded the employer that we still require the monetary package in order to make informed choices at the table and expect the government to lift their cloak of secrecy prior to moving to the coalition table.

After reviewing the employer’s revised package, the CUPE bargaining committee developed responses and counters and came a bit closer to settling some of the outstanding issues.

We look forward to reporting progress after our next scheduled bargaining dates the week of February 23rd to 27th.

**In Solidarity,
Your CUPE Health Care Bargaining Committee**

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