

CUPE Health Care Council Bargaining Update #13 – July 24, 2009

NO Progress in July!!

In mid-June, the Minister of Health urged SAHO and CUPE “toward a quick resolution to lagging negotiations”. In response to this challenge, your Bargaining Committee took a giant step by reducing our package substantially. In other words, we met the challenge.

Sadly, the Employers have failed to respond in any meaningful way to the same challenge.

The concessions that brought CUPE members to vote 88% in favour of job action still remain on the table: Multi-site jobs, reducing bumping rights, vacation scheduling, no payment for missed overtime and relief, and homecare hours of work, among others.

This week, the employer responded totally in the negative to your remaining proposals. The employer remained entrenched in their standard attitudes and responses. We heard “No,” “Not in any way, shape, or form” and “We are not interested.”

Out of the remaining 45 proposals the Union has on the table at this point, 17 of them (more than a third!) the employer will not even discuss at the CUPE table. The employer told the press that we were not moving on our issues, and we still had a huge number of issues on the table – yet, their unwillingness to even discuss (or outright rejection of) your proposals is the true problem. It flies in the face of their claims.

This week in bargaining has showed us that this round of negotiations is all about employer control, not just of the workplace, but also of YOU, the worker. Their proposals are all about gaining greater control of you and your life, both in the workplace and out. The employer’s bargaining behaviour appears to be leading toward an impasse at the bargaining table. It seems as though the Essential Services Act has given the employer the attitude of a schoolyard bully!

Finally, as for the monetary package, we are still left wondering who is calling the shots. The Union, in spite of repeated efforts to gain the information we require to move forward with meaningful negotiations, we are continually lead down a mysterious path by SAHO. We have yet to receive a direct answer as to what party ultimately bears the control to release this information.

In summary, it is fair to say that in the absence of “fairness” at the bargaining table your committee shares your frustration, but remains firmly committed to return to the table on August 10th. We will continue in our efforts to fight for fairness, for all Health Care providers and the communities they serve in Saskatchewan.

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