

CUPE Health Care Council Bargaining Update #10 – May 22, 2009

Negotiations remain frustrating. The CUPE bargaining team has been very vocal at the table. Last year SAHO tabled a monetary package with SUN within two months of starting bargaining, but still refuses to provide **any** monetary information for CUPE health workers. It appears that we are not essential enough to be treated fairly.

This has been clearly demonstrated – SAHO will not commit to retroactivity of pay for members, and they have stated that they don't support retroactivity for retirees. If you have spent thirty years in the workplace, they don't want you to get bargained-for raises.

Further, the Employer will not agree to, or even consider, other very simple proposals with no monetary consequence to them. As an example, they refuse to embed OH&S language (around the right to refuse dangerous work) within the collective agreement, though it is legislated, and it is currently included in other health collective agreements.

Other proposals reflecting equity and safety are also not being considered seriously by this Employer. The employer has admitted that all employees can potentially be exposed to Hospital Acquired Infections, and CUPE has language on the table to help lessen that risk, thus protecting both workers and the public. The employer continues to avoid common-sense approaches and instead wants to keep you home without pay if you refuse a flu shot.

The Employer refuses to move on our important LPN issues, because, they claim, to do so would violate various agreements that they and the government have signed with SUN. The evidence of SAHO's view of CUPE health care workers as second-class is mounting. Presently SAHO has over 50 language proposals/concessions remaining in its package and there is simply no significant movement to conclude an agreement.

Delegates at the CUPE Health Care Conference last week unanimously supported a motion for the bargaining committee to seek a strike mandate from the CUPE healthcare membership. **Information meetings and strike votes will be conducted between now and June 8th. It is critical that we achieve a strong strike mandate. We will be returning to the bargaining table on June 10th.**

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

