

Dear Editor:

Do you know who is delivering your health care? Chances are, when accessing health care in the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region, you or your loved ones are being assisted by a CUPE member.

We are licensed practical nurses who administer medications and give direct patient care; special care aides who deliver all hands on care for our long term care residents; housekeeping staff who keep our buildings clean and work to prevent hospital acquired infections; laundry aides who provide clean bedding, towels and clothes; dietary staff who cook nutritious food and snacks, maintenance, plumbers, carpenters, electricians, grounds keepers, engineers who keep our buildings, boilers and equipment up and running; phlebotomists, laboratory, transfusion staff who are responsible for drawing blood , running the tests and making sure blood is typed and crossed matched for you should you require it; radiology and nuclear medicine who perform the x-rays, ultrasounds, CTs, MRIs, and bone scans; clinical engineering who keep our vast amounts of equipment in tip top shape; porters, who transport patients from one department /ward to wherever they need to go. This is just to name a few. As you can see, there is more to health care than meets the eye.

SAHO stated recently that their bargaining objectives with CUPE include putting patients first. In the event of a labour dispute, health employers are requesting CUPE health workers provide essential services. In some instances they've deemed more people essential than even work in the facility. Ironically, during day to day operations, in which we put our patients first, employees continually work short staffed. Go figure!

No, we are not registered nurses but we work alongside them. We are all members of the health care team and we all provide important and valuable service. We want our employer and the Government of Saskatchewan to value and respect this service that is provided to the public of Saskatchewan.

We deserve a fair and equitable collective agreement.

Pauline Yung, CUPE health care worker

Regina, Saskatchewan