

May 28, 2010

Dear CUPE Members:

### ***Collective Bargaining Information – What’s really happening!***

On May 11, 2010, the provider unions (CUPE, SEIU-West and SGEU) tabled with Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations (SAHO) and the Employers a significantly modified and serious “Fair Offer” to reach a Collective Agreement.

SAHO responded soon after insisting that its final offer is ‘competitive’ and is refusing to discuss the Unions’ offer. SAHO gave no consideration to the provider unions’ fair and reasonable plan to address the overall cost of the agreement in terms of our parity issues and their concession demands. SAHO continues its public campaign of misinformation by stating that it is willing to meet and have discussions with the unions. The truth is that SAHO REFUSES to negotiate. SAHO will not engage in negotiation of any of the unions’ concerns about parity issues, joint job evaluation or the concessions that it continues to demand without any acknowledgement of their worth. Nobody can figure out how SAHO arrived at its latest cost figures, we only know that they are inflated and misleading.

To counter SAHO’s campaign of misinformation and “spin doctoring”, we are sharing our “Fair Offer” with the public and the Saskatchewan Party government.

In June, the CUPE Health Bargaining Council will be presenting our “Fair Offer” to CUPE members, for your review and consideration.

### ***“What’s in the ‘Fair Offer’ tabled by the Coalition of Unions?”***

#### **Monetary**

- 4 year collective agreement: April 1, 2008 – March 31, 2012
    - 4% April 1, 2008 – March 31, 2009;
    - 2% April 1, 2009 – March 31, 2010;
    - 1.5% April 1, 2010 – March 31, 2011;
    - 2% April 1, 2011 – March 31, 2012.
    - Retroactive adjustments: All employees on staff as of date of reaching tentative agreement eligible for retroactive adjustments on all paid hours with any employer party to this collective agreement.
    - Employees who have retired during term of agreement also eligible for retroactive adjustments.
    - These General Wage increases are on base rates of pay.
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#### **Other Monetary Items:**

##### **1. Shift Premium:**

- Effective March 31, 2011 - \$2.70.

- Effective March 31, 2012 - \$3.75.
2. **Weekend Premium:**
    - Effective March 31, 2011 - \$2.35.
    - Effective March 31, 2012 - \$3.10.
  3. **Transportation Allowance:** Base rates are: \$0.40/km - \$0.45/km in the north - effective date of signing collective agreement. These rates are the base and may increase or decrease based on the SPTI index, but will never drop below the base rate set out above.
  4. **Professional Fees:** For the 2011 licensing year and thereafter, the Employer shall pay licensing and/or professional fees, as required by the Employer and/or statute, at the last rate established in 2010 by professional association and/or statute, or \$175, whichever is greater. The Employer shall reimburse employees upon proof of payment of fees.
  5. **Market Adjustments:** Maintain adjustments for JJE jobs #300, #121, #70, #25, #170, #195, #301, and #193. Apply same adjustments to the pay bands of the family of these job classifications using the 'stream maps' on the JJE website as of March 18, 2010.
    - Market Adjustments: effective date of signing tentative agreement.
    - Unions will submit lists of other classifications to the Provincial Market Supplement committee within 90 days of signing CBA. Rationale for market supplement will include *"hard to recruit issues and/or competitive wage rates"*.
  6. **Stand-by Payments:**
    - Effective March 31, 2011, regular standby rates will be \$2.32.
    - Effective March 31, 2011, days off/Stat holiday rates will be \$4.25.
    - Effective March 31, 2011, OTFT EMS standby payment will be \$4.25.
    - Effective March 31, 2012, regular standby rates will be \$3.15.
    - Effective March 31, 2012, days off/Stat holiday rates will be unchanged.
  7. **LPN JJEMC changed job file:**
    - Apply market adjustment with retro to April 1, 2008 (date of first graduation of LPN's with changed qualifications) equal to the difference between pay band 14 and 15, until such time as the JJEMC completes their review of the classification.
    - Upon completion of the JJEMC review, the market adjustment shall end and the changed rate of pay for LPN's as per the JJEMC decision shall commence.
  8. **Shared Services Organization (NEW):**
    - Any CUPE, SGEU and SEIU-West employee(s) transferred to a provincial shared services organization shall remain a member of his/her respective union and shall be covered by his/her respective collective agreement.
  9. **Joint Job Evaluation:** Counter proposals were made to address our concerns. These include proposals that would reduce the quorum needed for the JJEMC to conduct business (2 union and 2 employer representatives) and a joint process for expediting JJE Maintenance files.
  10. **Extended Health and Enhanced Dental Benefits:** The Health Care Provider Unions are prepared to agree to the SAHO counter proposal: Letter of Understanding (LOU) on

Extended Health and Enhanced Dental Benefits. (CUPE - LOU#9, SGEU - LOU #10, SEIU - LOU#1) which would guarantee the current level of benefits to March 31, 2012.

**11. Licensed Practical Nurses' Scope of Practice:** The Health Care Provider Unions are prepared to agree to the SAHO counter proposal: Letter of Understanding - Re: Licensed Practical Nurses.

Coalition items withdrawn by CUPE/SGEU/SEIU-West, except as provided for within individual union item proposals, with agreement to revert to current language:

- Overtime rates, Minimum report, Call-back, Bereavement, Family Leave, Responsibility Pay, Group Life Insurance and Pension Issues.

CUPE has amended its position on some employer concession demands in an effort to achieve a settlement. These changes to our position are conditional on SAHO's acceptance of the provider unions' comprehensive proposal package. These changes are as follows:

- **27.04 f) i) Assignment of a Longer Shift:** In an effort to reach a settlement, CUPE has proposed that we would agree to SAHO's proposal that the replacement of a shorter relief shift with a longer relief shift shall be limited to within a department.
- **27.17 Weekends Off:** Currently employees who work three or more consecutive weekends are paid an overtime premium for those weekends worked until they are scheduled a weekend off. SAHO's proposed language eliminates this weekend overtime premium altogether and gives the employer the ability to schedule employees for three or more consecutive weekends without penalty. In an effort to reach a settlement, CUPE has tabled a counter proposal that would limit the weekend overtime premium to the third weekend worked. CUPE's counter proposal is a very generous and reasonable compromise that aligns our weekend work language with the language of other health care agreements.

**Other proposals specific to the CUPE/SAHO table:** SAHO has demanded major concessions from the Unions. CUPE in particular has been a major target for SAHO concession demands because in past bargaining rounds we have fought for and achieved superior contract language in some areas.

With the exception of the above, CUPE maintains its position that we are prepared to withdraw our outstanding language proposals provided the employer withdraws its concessions.

So, as you can see, our proposal is fair and reasonable. However, SAHO and the government stubbornly refuse to budge in any significant way on their January proposal. Instead they continue to intimidate and bully members by threatening to take away hard-earned retro pay, and they dismiss any attempt to get back the parity in shift, weekend and standby premiums fought for during the last round of bargaining.

As well, SAHO continues to demand major concessions that take away CUPE members' seniority rights and job security. The areas of our collective agreement under attack by SAHO are vital to protecting members' jobs in the event of future health care restructuring, facility closures and the establishment of the recently announced provincial shared services organization. In fact, SAHO's concession demands, if agreed to, would leave CUPE members with far fewer workplace rights and benefits than those of other health care unions. This is grossly unfair and unacceptable.

The provider unions have pared down our package in a sincere effort to get a deal, but SAHO and the Wall government don't seem to want a Collective Agreement. SAHO acts like we are a million miles apart in our proposals, rather than admitting we proposed a good deal.

Why is that? Do they feel they were too *“soft”* in the SUN negotiations and are afraid the public might think the same thing may happen in our bargaining? The results of the public survey commissioned by the provider unions would indicate otherwise. The public thinks the government should quit stalling and settle the agreement now.

Is it that the government wants to dash any hope that health care provider employees might be seen as valuable members of the health care team? Do they want you to think that you will never be on a par with other health care providers?

And what about this business about not paying retro pay after April 1, 2010. This is not an added expense – this is a conscious roll back and a savings to the Saskatchewan Party government. Moreover it is a sleazy threat motivated by arrogance and a desire to intimidate and divide union members. Disgusting! No other public sector employer has asked its employees to take such a roll back. Why should we?

There you have it... that is what is in the provider unions' ***“Fair Offer”*** and that is why the so-called SAHO ***“Final, Final offer”*** is not in your best interests, and should not be entertained.

### ***What can you do?***

- Continue to support your bargaining committee and the provider union coalition. SAHO and the Employers have spent a large fortune on advertising in an effort to divide and conquer our membership. The only way to combat these concessions and to regain parity is for the membership to stand solidly with their union.
- Continue to lobby MLAs and participate in rallies and such events. SAHO recently withdrew some of its concessions in areas such as Home Care Hours of Work and Call Back. The lobbying efforts of CUPE members to date were responsible for this change of position.
- Attend a local bargaining meeting. The CUPE health care bargaining committee will be holding local meetings across the province to explain our ***“Fair Offer”*** as compared to SAHO's ***“Final, Final Offer”*** and to discuss bargaining strategy.

Your bargaining committee appreciates your continued support.

### **Stay Strong! Stay United!**

On behalf of your CUPE Health Care Council Bargaining Committee,

Gordon Campbell  
CHCC President  
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