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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## CUPE HEALTH CARE WORKERS RATIFY PROVINCIAL AGREEMENT

**REGINA:** The Canadian Union of Public Employees' Health Care Council announced today that the membership has ratified the collective agreement reached on January 7, 2006 with the Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations.

Results of the ratification vote were tabulated this morning and 97% of members casting ballots voted in favour of the new agreement that covers the period from April 1, 2004 to March 31, 2008.

"Equity in the workplace was a major theme in this round of negotiations", said Pearl Blommaert, Vice President of the Council. "Vacations, shift and weekend premiums will be standardized with other members of the health care team. Many other workplace issues are addressed, including guaranteed funding of the benefit plans for the term of the agreement, new provisions to address workload concerns and important improvements in the area of occupational health and safety".

"The 13,000 members of the Council should be congratulated for supporting their priorities in this round of bargaining" said Gordon Campbell, President of the CUPE Health Care Council. "Health care providers achieved significant improvements in their wages and working conditions as a result of internal solidarity and through a bargaining coalition with other Saskatchewan health provider unions - the Service Employees International Union and the Saskatchewan Government and General Employees Union. With our coalition partners we represent over 25,000 Saskatchewan health care workers on the front lines delivering acute, long term and home care as well as community and public health care services to the Saskatchewan public".

CUPE health care workers include special care aides, licensed practical nurses, food services workers, laundry, housekeeping and activity aides, maintenance staff, clerical personnel and medical technicians and technologists in five health regions in the province of Saskatchewan.

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