

Six days in...bargaining continues

Your HPD bargaining team has now met at the table with the Ontario Hospital Association for six days. Progress is being made, but certainly not at a record pace.

We first met with the employer on February 9. At that time, we presented the list of demands that you set for the 2011 bargaining round. Those demands include a wage increase, improved job security protections and increases to leaves, specifically vacation, bereavement, pregnancy and parental, emergency and family leaves. We have also tabled improvements to pensions and benefits, health and safety and professional development.

We believe the proposals we have put forward are modest, responsible and in keeping with increases in the cost of living. Our main concern is the well-being of front-line hospital staff, considering the increased pressures that are being put on our health care system.

Employer takeaways no surprise

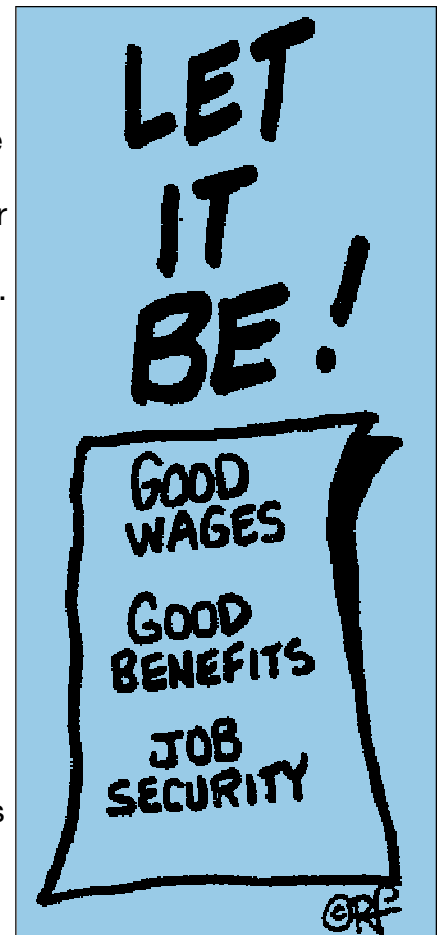
Of course, we were neither shocked nor shaken when the OHA tabled their list of demands for this round. It seems they are also concerned about the well-being of front-line staff...and they want you to have less "well-being" than what you currently experience.

Number one on the OHA hit parade is "short shifts." As we are aware, the HPD Central Agreement prohibits shifts of less than seven and one-half hours unless there is mutual agreement between the hospital and the local

union. We are not aware of there being any problems with the arrangement, and in cases where the hospital has tried to unilaterally impose short shifts, we have grieved and won. Obviously, the employer has taken exception to being caught violating the collective agreement, so now they want the right to impose short shifts without agreement by the local union.

The next item they want to address for your well-being is how you get paid when your being is not so well. The employer has proposed changes to the Hospitals of Ontario Disability Income Program (HOODIP). The employer wants to reduce the 100 per cent coverage for short-term disability to 70 per cent as a "cost savings" measure. This is in spite of the fact that the employer has openly admitted that OPSEU hospital workers are not the problem with short-term disability usage.

Other items that the OHA wants to impose are just as troubling. They want to remove



the right to grieve Long-Term Disability benefit issues under HOODIP, and they want to influence who will be on the union-side grievance and negotiating committees at the local level. They have also proposed new language under the disciplinary record, which would see **ANY** record of incidents that involve violence, harassment, bullying, or abuse remain on an employee's file indefinitely.

Of lesser note, the employer has also tabled changes on the definition of casual employees with respect to "skill maintenance" and language on outbreak management and influenza vaccines.

Back to the table March 23

As we said earlier, your bargaining team is making progress on some issues, and will continue to defend our members against attacks by the participating hospitals. We return to the bargaining table on March 23 and we will let you know how negotiations are progressing.

If you have any questions or comments, please direct them to your local president.

Your HPD 2011 Bargaining Team Members

Sandi Blancher – Chair – Local 106
Sara Labelle – Vice Chair – Local 348
Yves Shank – Local 659
Betty Palmieri – Local 206
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