



# WHAT'S STILL ON THE BARGAINING TABLE?

## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR BARGAINING TEAM TO ALL UNW/PSAC MEMBERS AT HRHSSA

---

January 15, 2019

Dear Members:

Your Bargaining Team has worked hard over the last 18 months to negotiate a new Collective Agreement that we can recommend to you for acceptance.

Unfortunately, this round of negotiations has been protracted and difficult, with HRHSSA saying NO to many of our proposals to improve our terms and conditions of work at the hospital and to increase wages to keep pace with inflation.

### **Some progress has been made. For example:**

- A new article Harassment, Abuse of Authority and Workplace Violence will replace the outdated Sexual Harassment article
- The Employer will provide the Union with bargaining unit information quarterly, instead of semi-annually

### **Some things were agreed to by the Employer, BUT only if the bargaining team accepted the significant concessions that the Employer had on the table:**

- Lab, x-ray, rehab and counselling appointments are included in the professional appointments for which an employee can take special leave
- An employee can be asked for a medical certificate if they are sick for four consecutive days, up from three days
- The Employer commits to continuing to provide an Employee Assistance Program



- Discriminatory language that limited Ultimate Removal Assistance to only one entitlement per household is removed
- Business insurance for using a personal vehicle is increased to \$300 from \$125
- A new allowance of \$250/year for employees in positions that are required to provide services in clients' homes.

**Unfortunately, the Employer has said NO to many of the key issues that you, our members, have told us are important to you. Such as:**

- Wage increases that keep pace with inflation. The Employer's best offer to date is 3.9% in a four-year agreement, when real and forecast inflation for those years is about 7.6%.
- Increase in shift differentials
- Fair and equitable distribution of additional work opportunities and a fair process for assigning overtime
- Improvements to the job security provisions, with a commitment to offer early retirement opportunities and voluntary separation plans before laying off employees
- Compassionate care leave of up to 27 weeks in accordance with the federal Employment Insurance Act
- Access to Special Leave when a family member requires care and support
- No unreasonable denial of leave without pay

**The Employer also has serious concessions on the table.**

- It wants you to accept no wage increase – that's 0% and 0% - in the in the first two years of the contract. The national rate of inflation in 2017 was 1.61% and the most recent forecast for 2018 is 2.57%. **That means a decrease in your purchasing power of 4.18 per cent.** That's a concession and it's wrong.
- It wants to add a provision to the Employee Medical Travel article to say it does not have to pay what the Collective Agreement provides for if Government of the Northwest Territories does not approve the travel. This article is the subject of a grievance that has been referred to arbitration. We say let the arbitrator decide.



- The Employer wants the right to bring more casual workers in from the South to fill X-Ray Technician, Sonographer, Laboratory Technologist, Dialysis Nurse and Midwife positions, even though these positions are all currently filled with full-time indeterminate employees. We need more good-paying permanent full-time jobs in Hay River, not more casual workers from the South who have fewer rights and benefits under our contract and do not spend the money they earn here in our territory.

**Your bargaining team has said no to these concessions.** We want a better contract for our members at HRHSSA, not one with fewer rights and benefits.

**Please show your support for your Bargaining Team by voting YES to give your Team a strike mandate on January 17.**

In Solidarity,

**YOUR BARGAINING TEAM**

Heather Coakwell, President, Local 21

Barb Holland

Ann Schreuders

Anne Marie Thistle, UNW Director of Member Services

Gail Lem, PSAC Negotiator