

# EXTENDICARE BARGAINING UPDATE

September 1, 2011

On August 24 & 25, President Barbara Cape and Staff Rep Kerry Barrett attended information meeting with Elmview, Sunset and Parkside Extendicare facilities in Regina. The offer to hold meetings in both Saskatoon and Moose Jaw is being addressed by your unit chair people.

The purpose of the meetings were to address the concern and frustration that our members have expressed about the misinformation & lack of communication about the status of the new Collective Agreement.

This list of questions/answers came as a result of those meetings. If you have any additional questions, please don't hesitate to contact Bob Laurie, Director of Contract Bargaining and Enforcement or Barbara Cape, President of SEIU-West.

## ***1 Why has there been no communication since our tentative agreement was ratified?***

At the meetings, Barb Cape apologized for the lack of communication to the membership; while we had provided updates on the status of Provincial SAHO bargaining and the Extendicare bargaining process – we had dropped the ball after the tentative agreement had been ratified. As a result of those meetings, SEIU-West commits to a stronger communication process with the Extendicare members going forward.

## ***2. Why is it taking so long to get our agreement signed?***

After a tentative agreement has been reached and then ratified by the parties to a Collective Agreement, the process of drafting the agreed-to clauses into a formal Collective Agreement document begins. This involves the first draft – which was drafted by SEIU – then sent to Extendicare for their edits; then we re-draft based on those edits and send it back to Extendicare. It's only when the parties agree that what is drafted in a document accurately reflects what was agreed to at the bargaining table, that SEIU-West and Extendicare will meet to sign the agreement.

At this point, we're waiting for Extendicare's response to our latest draft of the document. And we do not have a date for signing yet.

## ***3. When are we getting our retro?***

As mentioned in Question #2, we are still waiting to hear back from Extendicare regarding a date for signing. However, we have also indicated to Extendicare that because of the length of time it has taken the parties to finalize the Collective Agreement for signing, we would like them to expedite the payment of the retro immediately upon signing.

When we held our membership meetings in June, there was miscommunication/ misunderstanding about when the general wage increase retro was being issued and when the other articles in the Collective Agreement were being implemented.

#### **4. Will it take this long again in the next round of bargaining?**

We are in the unfortunate position that Extendicare doesn't sit at the provincial SAHO bargaining table. Extendicare will not settle a Collective Agreement before the provincial SAHO agreement. Our last round of provincial bargaining with SAHO was very contentious and SEIU-West members had to fight for every dime, every improvement in our Collective Agreement – this took time but helped pave the way for the Extendicare members.

For the next round of bargaining, we want Extendicare to be at the provincial SAHO table in order to move this process along faster. Should this not be agreed to by SAHO and/or Extendicare, we are looking at running two bargaining tables – SAHO and Extendicare – at the same time so we can conclude bargaining in the same general time period.

#### **5. How will you improve communications?**

The first step is providing this membership update as a result of the meetings held on August 24 & 25. In addition, Kerry Barrett will provide updates every two weeks on the status of getting the agreement signed, along with updates on retro. Keep in mind that much new information in the update is dependent upon the Employer moving along their part of this process.

These updates will be sent to the facilities via fax to be posted on the union bulletin boards. The email group that has been started will also receive an email copy. And the updates will also be posted on the website.

#### **6. How can only parts of a Collective Agreement be implemented when it hasn't been signed?**

The language of the Memorandum of Settlement, which members received when they attended the ratification meetings in June, stated that as of notice of ratification, the articles in the agreement would be implemented. But it also stated that retro will be effective as of date of signing the Collective Agreement. So what that means is the general wage increase retro is issued after we sign the Collective Agreement...but all other language and the retro on your shift and weekend premiums was effective when the agreement was ratified.

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In addition to the questions above, there were individual questions about the Collective Agreement. A number of people in both facilities have stepped up to become Shop Stewards for all three units; their names have been submitted to the list for upcoming training.

In Solidarity,

Barbara Cape  
President  
SEIU-West

