



JERRY DIAS NATIONAL PRESIDENT • PETER KENNEDY NATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER • MICHEL OUIMET QUEBEC DIRECTOR

Paramedic Regulation Report

On March 26th 2010, the Hon. Deb Matthews, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, asked the Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council (HPRAC) to advise whether paramedics and emergency medical attendants (EMAs) should be regulated under the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 (RHPA). Paramedics were invited to participate in the consultation process, and this was reported in the May 2013 Pulse.

HPRAC has completed its review on this matter and submitted a report, with recommendations, to the Minister. The report is now available and can be accessed on HPRAC's website: <http://www.hprac.org/en/projects/Paramedics.asp>

Assistant to the President Deb Tveit notes that feelings about the decision will be mixed, but in the end paramedic regulation was not recommended. "They recognized that paramedics are skilled health professionals, but ultimately felt that the current oversight system as a whole is sound and adequately addresses risk of harm to patients."



Unifor Health Care Members Photo Tour; Ornge paramedics in front of their aircraft

For your information, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is providing an opportunity for the public to comment on the recommendation contained in the report. The deadline for comments is March 31, 2014. Further information is available at: www.health.gov.on.ca/en/news/bulletin/2014/hb_20140307_1.aspx

Where Can I Find The Pulse?

The Pulse newsletter, published every two months is sent to any local unions that request copies. It is always available on the Unifor web site; www.unifor.org under "What's New", and then "Newsletters".

Local unions and unit chairs can order copies by emailing the request to katha.fortier@unifor.org

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2014 Health Care Conference

Plans are well underway for the 2014 Health Care Conference scheduled May 23, 24, 25 in Halifax. National Staff Representative and LPN Susan Taylor says that the Nova Scotia health care workers could not be more pleased to be hosting delegates in their home province for this important event. "We welcome the opportunity to extend our hospitality to our colleagues from across the country, and showcase some excellent Atlantic speakers who will cover relevant topics for health care workers."

For more information about the conference please contact your local union office.

Registered Practical Nurses Lobby Queens Park

Thirty RPN's from across the province lobbied MPP's, including Deb Mathews Minister of Health and Long Term Care at Queens Park on Monday March 3rd. A preparation session prior included experts from the Unifor Political Action Department and RPNAO Executive Director, Diane Martin.

Kelly-Anne Orr, RPN and National Staff representative reported the lobby was a great success. "Any initial nervousness quickly dissipated as our RPN's eloquently explained to these MPP's, their role and value in the health care system, their extensive skills, and their expectations for respect and equity"

The lobby was held in follow-up to a cross-province meeting of RPN's last October. Plans are underway to put together an RPN committee. Please email interest in participation to katha.fortier@unifor.org



Regulated Professional Liability Insurance

The new requirement, effective March 31st 2014

for nurses and other regulated health care workers to have professional liability insurance has been clarified recently, with the result that the coverage that all health service providers carry for their employees is sufficient to meet the standard. While Unifor continues to look for options for additional coverage, it is also available through membership in professional associations, like the Registered Practical Nurses Association of Ontario.

RPNAO Executive Director, Diane Martin says that similar to RNAO, only about 20% of Ontario RPNs hold a membership. "At less than \$20 a month, RPNAO membership provides so much more than liability insurance; we support practical nurses through a number of ways, including education, research, and providing professional practice expertise."

For further information visit www.rpnao.org RPNAO annual memberships begin in July, but they do have a bridge membership price available for new members who would like to start earlier. A variety of payment options are available, including monthly withdrawals.

2014 Health Accord Day of Action

March 31st actions will be planned across the country to mark the expiry of the 2004 Health Accord. This will be the start of a several actions that are intended to make sure a renewal of the accord is an agenda item for the 2015 federal election.

"It's apparent that the Harper government has no interest in sustaining, let alone expanding our medicare system" says Katha Fortier, Ontario Regional Director. "Many of us weren't around for the fight for universal health care in Canada, but we can certainly all be a part of the fight to keep it."

For a complete list of March 31st events, and to download material for the campaign please visit: <http://healthcoalition.ca> Local unions can request campaign postcards that go to the Prime Minister as well as the leaders of the federal NDP and Liberal parties, asking for their support in renewing the accord. Email katha.fortier@unifor.org with the amount requested and the mailing information.

Sexual Relationships in Long-Term Care Settings; A report by Kitchener Area Director Bill Gibson

Workers in long term care homes recognize that their workplaces are also the homes of the residents. They know that human sexuality is a normal part of life and that residents in long term care homes have a right to engage in sexual expression, if they so choose. There may be the rare occasion however, where a worker has good faith concerns about whether consent to such activity can, or has, been given.

Sexual activity in a long term care facility, as elsewhere, must be consensual for it to be legal. The Criminal Code requires a person to provide consent at the time of the activity. Accordingly, it is not possible, for example, to express in a power of attorney that should a person should become mentally incapable of giving consent to sexual intimacy, he or she would still want to engage in such activities. Equally, it is not possible for a substitute decision maker to provide consent to sexual activity on behalf of a resident.

Workers in the long term care environment must support the sexual expression of capable and consenting residents, but must also remain cognisant of the possibility of non-consensual sexual activity. As a front line health care worker, if you have concerns about non-consensual sexual activity we encourage you to report the issue to your home management, and/or call the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's toll-free ACTION Line at 1-866-434-0144 and/or contact your local police department. In all cases we would strongly encourage you to report any such matter your local Union representative.

Please be assured that the good faith lodging of a complaint is a protected activity by law.



Bill 67 to Expand WSIB for Emergency Personnel Passes Second Reading

Unifor Paramedics, Charles Telky, Chairperson Local 2002, Mike Chad, Bargaining Representative, Local 2002, Steve Olsen, Vice-President Local 1359 were joined by Transportation Director Ron Smith and National Representative Corey Vermey at Queens Park on February 27th to support the second reading of Bill 67. They joined police and fire representatives at a press conference, arguing for the expansion of WSIB to cover emergency personnel for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

Telky notes that this legislation is critical for first responders. "We witness trauma and even tragedy on a regular basis so it's critical we have a support system in place to cover us. It was great to be a part of this, and act in solidarity with our colleagues who face these same challenges."

Paramedics from Local 302, Gord Mathers and Laura Bell were scheduled to attend, but unfortunately a sudden storm prevented travel from St. Thomas. MPP for Parkdale - High Park, Cheri DiNovo, will be pushing for the Bill to pass through committee in a timely manner, and become law on May 1st - First Responders Day.

Revera Home Care Ratifies New Agreement

Members at Revera Home Care in Dryden ratified a new collective agreement by 83%, that will see the top wage of a PSW go to \$16.17 an hour, and mileage increase to \$0.41 per kilometre. National Staff Representative Stephen Boon recognized the challenge in negotiating for a sector that is poorly funded. "While the increases are modest, this agreement takes these workers almost a dollar above the industry standard, with higher mileage and paid time for travel which is exceptional." He added, "We've included a wage re-opener clause should the provincial government put additional funds towards PSW's in the sector."

The 35 members in the bargaining unit were represented by Chief Steward Carol Jolicouer and Local 324 President George Smith.



Ontario is Taking a Stand to Save Our Services

- ✓ Protect our community hospitals from cuts and privatization
- ✓ Protect the future of **Public Medicare**

www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca

Ontario Health Coalition Launches Massive Cross-Province Referendum to Save our Local Public Hospitals

A door-to-door campaign was launched Monday March 10th at Queens Park by Ontario Health Coalition Executive Director Natalie Mehra and Unifor Ontario Director, Katha Fortier. Fortier says that the campaign will culminate with a massive community vote on Saturday April 5th asking the public to decide on the issue of privatization of services. "We are confident that Ontarians have had enough cuts to their community hospitals and will support efforts to sustain them."

Unifor members are encouraged to get involved with this campaign. Assistant to the President, Deb Tveit notes that efforts will be concentrated in Windsor, London, Peterborough, Sudbury and Kitchener, materials can be sent to wherever we have activists willing to help out. "The goal of the campaign is 50,000 completed ballots and we are hopeful we will even surpass this amount. Its critical we move this issue front and centre, especially since we are facing the possibility of a spring election."

Postcards and all campaign materials including leaflets are available through the OHC. Email: ohc@sympatico.ca Web site: www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca Phone: 416.441.2502, or contact your local health coalition.

Oneida Long Term Care (TSI'Nu:Yoyantle 'Na Tuhwatisni) Joins Unifor

A 64 bed long term care facility located in Oneida Nation of the Thames in Southwold Ontario south-west of London Ontario voted to join Unifor on February 11, 2014. The 74 workers, including PSW's, RN's, RPN,s and Dietary and Maintenance voted by a 3-1 margin in favour of the union.

This new facility opened February 1, 2012 and is operated as an unincorporated association, at arms length by the Oneida Nation of the Thames Band Council.

In meetings with Local 27 leadership leading up to the representation vote, workers expressed a need to bring some fairness to the workplace around issues such as job posting, scheduling and discipline.

Many of our members in this facility are also members of the Oneida Nation of the Thames and take great pride in being able to provide care to the elders in their community.

Talks to bring about a first contract will begin in the coming weeks with the active support of Unifor Local 27 and National Rep. Julie Herron.

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