



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

Fight Back Begins Against Bill 37 In Nova Scotia



In a surprise move, the recently elected Liberal government in Nova Scotia, used their majority to pass Bill 37 The Essential Health and Community Services Act, severely limiting the rights of health care workers to have a meaningful strike in the province.

Unifor health care workers immediately joined with other unions to protest the loss of this fundamental right. Local

4600 President Susan Gill, who represents more than 50 classifications of health care workers in Cape Breton said that health care workers don't want a fight and want to care for their patients, but stressed that they will stand up to defend their rights as workers. "We provide a full spectrum of care, and it's a job we love to do, but we deserve respect, decent working conditions and fair bargaining."

National President Jerry Dias, lead more than 200 delegates on a march to the legislature on Friday, March 4th, just hours after the Bill had passed. Dias told those assembled that Unifor would not give up their rights easily. "We expect that this government will negotiate fairly, but if they don't, then we will do whatever is necessary to make sure that happens."

Atlantic Regional Director, Lana Payne, spoke before the Law Amendments Committee in an attempt to stop the passage of the Bill, defending Unifor's ability to negotiate collective agreements without resorting to strike action. A joint letter from Payne and Dias sent to Premier MacNeil can be found at http://www.unifor.org/sites/default/files/attachments/nova_scotia_legislation.pdf

Unifor represents 4,000 health care workers throughout Nova Scotia in acute, long-term and community care who would be adversely be affected by this legislation.

Your Union and Social Media

Are you following your union? Did you know you can follow Unifor for up to date information on all issues. Just search @UniforTheUnion, @JerryPDias, @kathaforunifor, @Lanampayne, @UniforWomen, @UniforMobilize and get up to date information on news and events. As an added bonus, you can retweet issues that are relevant to your followers.

You can also follow us on facebook by searching Unifor Canada. Watch for Unifor Health Care coming soon!

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Ontarian's Fully Support Public Health Care

A referendum sponsored by the Ontario Health Coalition has received nearly 100% support from more than 59,000 votes received to date, to keep hospital services intact in our public hospitals, rather than transfer them to clinics.

Suzanne Pulice, Vice President of Local 229 and co-chair of the Thunder Bay Health Coalition reported that community support was incredible. "We spent some time in our local market, and the shoppers really understood that clinics were a giant step towards privatization of medicare, and a system where we are treated based on our ability to pay."

Mail in ballots are still being received. If you would like to receive ballots or copies of the information leaflet contact the Ontario Health Coalition Ontario Health Coalition at www.ontariohealthcoalition.ca or 416-441-2502



Caressant Care Homes Plan Action to Support Bargaining

The Unifor committee's from four Caressant Care nursing homes met on March 31, 2014 to discuss the current state of negotiations with their Employer. The meeting hosted by Unifor Local 636, was held in Woodstock. They were joined by Rusty Sproul, Secretary Treasurer from local 302, Ruth Pryce, Vice President from local 1106 and Ross Gerrie, President from local 636, as well as national staff representatives Robert Buchanan and Mike Reuter, and Ontario Regional Director, Katha Fortier.

Committee members from nursing homes in Harriston, St. Thomas, Courtland and Woodstock were on hand to discuss pending negotiations and report on how bargaining has gone at two of the four homes so far. Both Courtland and

Woodstock are in negotiations now. Committee's from these homes spoke how the Employer is refusing to offer any general wage increases, and this was totally unacceptable after two years of wage freezes.

Fortier noted most long-term care workers in the province have not had a real wage increase since 2011. "Our members have done their part in deficit reduction while these employers have continued on through the recession, business and profits as usual; that's not only unacceptable, it's shameful."

Resolve from the committee's to do whatever is necessary to negotiate an agreement with solid increases was unanimous. Plans are underway for a mass picket of the Caressant Care head office in Woodstock in May.

Health Care Conference Deadline Approaching

The deadline to register and for booking hotel rooms for the Health Care Conference May 23 to 25 in Halifax Nova Scotia is Tuesday April 22, 2014. Please contact your local union or email healthcare@unifor.org for more information.

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 then click on "What's New", and then click on "Newsletters". Scroll down till you find The Pulse.

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

Advocating For Care

As healthcare workers we need to start to speak out, write letters and knock on doors to save healthcare says Anne Marie Tulett, Unifor Chair at St. Joseph's Hospital in London. "This is not only about preserving medicare, it's also about preserving our jobs. Austerity measures taken by the provinces are not just putting our wages on hold, but they are now looking at ways to save money in any way they can."

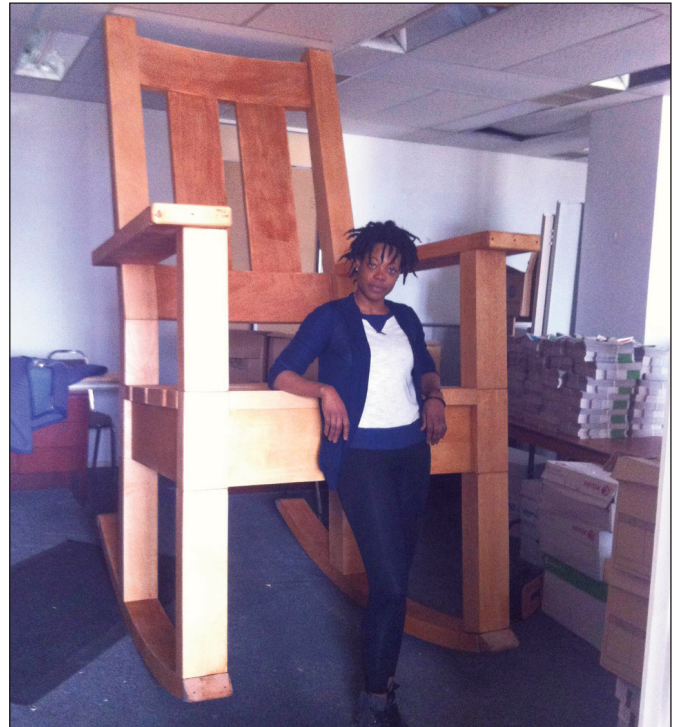
New funding models that operate per bed in Ontario will likely cause program closures in hospitals. The private sector is anxiously looking for opportunities to profit from health care.

Tulett adds "These profits will be made on the backs of health care workers. These jobs will be low paying, no benefits and part-time jobs."

At St. Joseph's Health Care in London (Local 27) the Unifor co-chairs have been writing letters to the editor of the London Free Press. Tulett along with co-chair Michelle Flewin have written letters to the editor on hospital under-funding and the lack of appropriate staffing in long-term care homes, that sometimes has tragic results.

Tulett and Flewin both applaud the hard work of Unifor member Peter Bergmanis, who has been working hard with the Ontario Health Coalition campaign to stop hospital services from moving to private clinics. To date over 59,000 votes have been cast across the province in support of services remaining public.

Flewin advises others to follow his lead. "Get information on the save our services campaign and make sure you vote. Have information pickets to inform the public and make it loud. Write that letter to your local newspapers and call into talk radio. If we don't save public health care and our jobs, who will?"



Rocking Chair Tour for Minimum Standards

The Ontario Health Coalition will be touring the province later this month with a giant rocking chair, to raise awareness for the need for a minimum measurable standard of care in our nursing homes.

Assistant to the President Deb Tveit encourages all Unifor members, especially those who provide care in long-term care homes to participate in local events. "We always find we are most effective when front-line caregivers speak out about the conditions of care that they witness every single day as they struggle with overwhelming workloads, to meet the often multiple and complex needs of the residents they care for."

More information on the tour, including the schedule will be available soon at www.healthcoalition.ca or on facebook at Save Medicare.

Support Staffing Alliance for Every Resident on Facebook

SAFER, the coalition advocating for an evidence-based, minimum, measurable, enforceable standard of care in our nursing homes has launched a facebook page to drive home the message, that the level of care is grossly inefficient to meet the needs of the vulnerable people they are providing care for.

Assistant to the President Deb Tveit is asking Unifor members to search "SAFER" on facebook, like the page, and invite their friends to do the same. "This is a simple way to send a message that all Ontarians care about the well-being of those who live, and those who work in long-term care."



March 31st Protests Mark the End of the Health Accord

Unifor members took part in rally's across the country to mark the end of the 2004 Health Accord, that would see the end of the agreement between the federal and provincial governments that saw stable funding increases and enforcement of the Canada Health Act.

Vice President of Local 1359 and Paramedic Steve Olsen reported that Unifor members were out in full force outside the office of Sault Ste. Marie MPP David Oraziotti's office as well as MP Bryan Hayes' office, joining other health coalition members in protest. "Unifor Local 1359 health care providers are angered that the federal government has not taken steps to renegotiate the Canada Health Accord and fear its expiration will damage and fragment the nation's already fragile health care system."

Unifor's flags were held high with pride and sent a strong message to the government: protection of public health care is paramount for all Canadians.

The Unifor Health Accord fact sheet can be found on line at: http://www.unifor.org/sites/default/files/documents/document/health_accord_final.pdf
Copies can be ordered by email to healthcare@unifor.org



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keeps Canadians healthy**
Unifor - a union defending health care for everyone

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