



JERRY DIAS NATIONAL PRESIDENT • PETER KENNEDY NATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER • RENAUD GAGNÉ QUEBEC DIRECTOR

Unifor celebrates National Nurses Week 2015



Unifor is proudly supporting National Nurses Week this year with a wide range of national and local actions and events. Unifor represents 4,000 registered practical nurses and registered nurses in Ontario and licensed practical nurses in Nova Scotia among the more than 29,500 members in the health care sector across Canada.

“Our health care system relies on the hard work of nurses, who practice collaboratively as a vital part of a collegial team of dedicated health providers, and it is important that we recognize and honour their work during this week – and all year,” said Unifor National President Jerry Dias in the Unifor statement and media advisory. If tweeting events and comments during Nurses’ Week 2015, use the hashtags #NNW2015 or #UniforHealth or #Unifor.

To read the Unifor statement on National Nursing Week, please visit:

http://www.unifor.org/sites/default/files/brief-statements/statement_on_nurses_week_2015_rev_0.pdf

Tentative settlement reached with Northern Hospitals

Unifor members in a variety of hospital service, clerical and paramedical units represented by Unifor Local 229 and Unifor Local 1359 are ratifying a settlement reached late last week.

Members from St. Joseph’s Care Group – St. Joseph’s Hospital and Sister Margaret Smith Centre in Thunder Bay; Atikokan General Hospital; Nipigon District Memorial Hospital; Geraldton District Hospital; Wilson Memorial Hospital and Manitouwadge General Hospital were supported throughout the negotiations by Local 229 President Kari Jefford; Vice President Suzanne Pulice and Financial Secretary Angie Martz.

Members from Unifor Local 1359 employed at the Sault Area Hospital (service and office & clerical units); St. Joseph’s General Hospital, Elliot Lake and Lady Dunn Health Centre, Wawa were joined by Local 1359 President Laurie Lessard-Brown. National staff reps Fred Bond, Richard Paquin and Andy Savelle as well as Assistant to the president Deb Tveit supported the negotiated committee.



Since our last issue, hospital settlements were also ratified in March and April by members of Unifor Local 27 at St. Joseph’s Health Care, London and London Health Sciences Centre as well as members of Unifor Local 2458 at South Huron Hospital, Exeter.

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Victory for Nova Scotia health care workers

Unifor and the other three unions (CUPE, NSGEU and NSNU) representing health care workers reached a last minute agreement with the Nova Scotia government after the Premier personally intervened following months of arbitration hearings and the prospect of continuing disputes over bargaining rights. The agreement has since been ratified by the affected members and will see the four unions

in health care bargain together under a Council of Unions structure the four province-wide collective agreements.

"I am so very proud of the leadership role Unifor played in this ongoing ordeal. And I am so pleased to say that as a result of our work, Unifor members will remain proud Unifor members," said Lana Payne, Unifor Atlantic Regional Director. Earlier in that process it appeared that licensed practical nurses (LPN) represented by Unifor would in particular be taken from their bargaining unit and union and be placed elsewhere.

"Make no mistake, this is a huge victory for our members and for workers' rights." "We stubbornly held to our principles and in the end justice was on our side," said Payne. The Unifor press release can be found at: <http://www.unifor.org/en/whats-new/news/victory-nova-scotia-health-care-workers>



Unifor makes headway for long-term care workers

Following the ratification of the Extendicare; Revera and Group of 22 nursing homes settlements affecting over 5,500 Unifor members at 44 nursing homes across Ontario in February, many other nursing homes members have voted to ratify comparable settlements. These more recent ratified settlements include members employed at the following long-term care homes:

Local 598 at Villa St. Gabriel, Sudbury
Local 598 at St. Joseph's Villa, Sudbury
Local 598 at Finlandia Nursing Home, Sudbury
Local 598 at Valley East Elizabeth Centre, Val Caron
Local 8300 at Pleasant Meadows Manor, Norwood
Local 2458 at Chateau Park Nursing Home, Windsor

Local 302 at Kensington Village, London
Local 302 at Caessant Care Courtland
Local 302 at Chelsey Park Oxford, London
Local 636 at Caessant Care Woodstock
Local 8300 at Village Green Nursing Home, Selby
Local 2163 at Leisureworld Oxford, Ingersol

There are now 61 Unifor represented nursing homes and over 8,100 members that have ratified a voluntarily negotiated settlement this year. Many remaining long-term care homes have scheduled negotiations dates this month with further settlements expected.

For the Unifor April 2 press release, please see

<http://www.unifor.org/en/whats-new/press-room/unifor-makes-headway-long-term-care-workers>.

New Faces, Same Places

Linda MacNeil, [pictured second from left] National Representative servicing in the Cape Breton, Nova Scotia region and former health care worker herself from Cape Breton, has been appointed Atlantic Area Director, stepping in to replace Rino Ouellet. Susan Taylor and Linda MacNeil, both national service representatives in the health care sector, were critical players in the struggles in Nova Scotia this past year. Congratulations as Linda takes on further challenges.



Members at Schlegel Village homes ratify settlement

Unifor members negotiating at one table on behalf of members at five Schlegel Villages long-term care homes ratified a settlement this week. The Schlegel Village homes include Village of Aspen Lake in Tecumseh; Village of Glendale Crossing in London; Village of Wentworth Heights in Hamilton; Village of Winston Park, Kitchener and the newest facility, the Village of St. Clair in Windsor.

After a long and difficult bargaining process, the members ratified collective agreements covering a four year term effective December 1, 2013 and expiring on November 30, 2017. In addition to general wage increases effective December 1, 2015 of 1.5% and effective December 1, 2016 of 1.3% reflecting the industry pattern, the settlement also provided \$800.00 signing bonuses for full-time and \$400.00 signing bonuses for part-time employees.

Other contract improvements included vacation entitlements and vision care coverage, as well as job sharing language and a new Paid Educational Leave provision at 2¢ per hour.

The following is an abridged version of a letter was published in the London Free Press on April 18 regarding Country Terrace nursing home in Komoka represented by Unifor.

Nursing homes get bad rap

As I sit here contemplating my father's recent death at Country Terrace nursing home in Komoka on March 27 I can't help but be so very grateful for the commitment of care that all staff of Country Terrace provided to my father over that last couple of years, especially in the last 10 days of his life.

My brother and I took turns so our dad would not be alone at his time of death and we were able to witness the level of care that was extended to him as well as to us.

We hear so many negative reports about nursing homes and I am here to say you have to look at the big picture. We will be eternally grateful for Country Terrace and its wonderful staff for all they did to make a tough time easier to deal with.

*On behalf of the McPhee clan, thanks again for everything.
Terry Kimmerly, London*

Unifor members in northern Ontario unanimously approve agreement

More than 100 members of Unifor Locals 324-12 and 324-16 providing support for persons with developmental disabilities at Community Living Dryden-Sioux Lookout voted unanimously in favour of ratifying new two year deals. "Unifor members were obviously very pleased with the language improvements and key monetary gains achieved in both deals" said National Rep Stephen Boon. Wage rates were increased by \$1.00 per hour over the two year term, in addition to \$2,000 lump sum payments for full-time workers; \$1,500 for part-time workers and \$800 for casual employees.

Boon also negotiated a first contract for some dozen home support workers with Revera Home Care Ear Falls/Red Lake that was also unanimously ratified. The home care group organized with Unifor in December and will negotiate in the future with an existing Revera Dryden unit combining some 40 members across these communities. Another recently organized group of Unifor members at the Dryden Volunteer Recruitment and Referral Centre (DVRRC) also voted unanimously in favour of ratifying their first collective agreement last month. And a warm welcome to these proud new Unifor members.

Unifor and Council of Canadians

With an October 19th, 2015 federal election looming, Unifor is supporting the Council of Canadians in a number of Canadian cities hosting a series of public forums across the country with one message: Go vote! Together, we can choose a government that creates good jobs, invests in public health care, addresses climate change, and so much more.

The public forums will include Unifor national president Jerry Dias in Moncton, NB on May 20; Toronto on June 18 and London on June 22 (with Jim Stanford). More details are available on line at <http://www.canadians.org/govote2015>



Unifor Member's letter to London Free Press

The letter below is an abridged version of a letter that appeared in the London Free Press written by a Unifor member elected as a committee person at London Health Science Centre:

London Free Press
April 10, 2015

Sunshine List reveals hospital's income inequality

I have worked in health care for almost 18 years. As a personal support worker, I love helping people to heal or learn how to function with a physical challenge, and helping the nurses do the day-to-day care that takes time away from their medical duties.

For years I have stood by and watched while service after service is cut back, while the front-line workers and the support staff constantly have their workloads added to in the name of budget cuts. I can't stand silently watching any longer.

This year I was an elected representative for Unifor at London Health Sciences Centre and part of a bargaining committee that negotiated a contract for the more than 1,500 support workers, RPNs and skilled trades workers. We gained very small increases over the next three years.

I thought it was a pretty good deal. The hospital is faced with severe cutbacks from our government and it simply could not afford to give anymore.

Then the Sunshine List came out.

In 2012, then-CEO Bonnie Adamson made \$581,624.79 plus taxable benefits of \$19,330.44. That seemed steep for a public-sector CEO, particularly since the front-line staff and support staff took a pay freeze. But it gets worse.

May I suggest that instead of looking to much-needed services to the people of London and Southwestern Ontario when it comes to cutting costs that we look at the offices within the hospital?

Perhaps we could cut some of the \$200 million we spend on administration? Do we really need nine vice-presidents, 43 directors, and 61 managers? Those numbers come from the Sunshine List. Let us not forget the countless co-ordinators who made slightly less than \$100 000.

This is our health-care system. It is broken. We need to raise our voices and let this government know that health care is not an appropriate place for cuts. We need to insist that the money that does go into health care is being spent wisely. It is time to stop standing by idly watching.

Marcy Besterd

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