

May 2016

## TO ALL CUPE MEMBERS

Sisters and Brothers:

### NATIONAL NURSING WEEK May 9 – 13, 2016

We are writing to acknowledge the hard work and critical contributions of CUPE nurses to our health care system during National Nursing Week. CUPE proudly represents tens of thousands of registered practical nurses (RPNs) and licensed practical nurses (LPNs). We are also very proud to count several hundred registered nurses (RNs) as CUPE members.

We congratulate CUPE members and staff who have worked diligently to advance nursing issues such as full scope of practice, advanced training, improved staffing levels, protection against violence in the workplace, quality patient care, pay equity and adequate health care funding.

Particularly in CUPE's Year of Health and Safety, we want to acknowledge the health and safety risks faced daily by nurses in the workplace. Understaffing in our facilities creates many health and safety risks such as stress and injuries from workload and increased risk of violence. The risks of violence made headlines this past year in North Bay, Ontario when CUPE nurse Sue McIntyre was fired after speaking to the media about violence in the workplace. CUPE stands by its health care workers for the right to safe workplaces.

CUPE nurses continue to be on the frontline for health care in all areas of the country. Here are a few highlights:

- In **Quebec**, CUPE nurses won bargaining gains that include pay equity maintenance, critical care premiums and overlapping shifts so that nurses can inform the next nurse taking the shift about the previous shift.
- In **New Brunswick**, CUPE hospital nurses are now working to full scope and one health authority is providing advanced training in-house. In the long term care sector, CUPE continues to lobby for nurses as the staffing ratio mix changes. There is also a full campaign to stop the P3 nursing home in Miramichi.

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- In **Newfoundland and Labrador**, CUPE nurses are preparing to fight privatization and austerity that hurts health care workers and patients. In April 2015, CUPE nurses received wage increases with the implementation of the negotiated Job Evaluation System (JES). CUPE nurses are proud of their lobby work to help stop four P3 nursing homes.
- In **Nova Scotia**, CUPE and our allies successfully pressured the government to stop the privatization of home care in Nova Scotia. CUPE nurses are fighting provincial budget cuts to health care services and Bill 148, the *Public Service Sustainability Act*. This *Act* would be triggered if a union went to arbitration and would force a four-year non-negotiated wage package.
- In **Saskatchewan**, CUPE continues to lobby for LPNs to work to their full scope of practice. CUPE plans to lobby employers to hire and train LPN nurse educators as the RN association has banned its members from training LPNs in specialized areas. CUPE won a grievance that the use of first and last names on name tags was unsafe for LPNs and health care workers.
- In **Ontario**, the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions (OCHU) and CUPE Ontario continue to fight to protect nurses and patients against violence and understaffing, are challenging hospitals cuts and working to expand community care.
- In **British Columbia**, HEU represents 1,148 licensed practical nurses (LPNs) and registered nurses (RNs). CUPE and HEU constantly fight threats to LPN job security from private owners and operators in long term care, while negotiating fair contracts that value LPN's work.

CUPE will continue to fight for our LPNs, RPNs and RNs on issues that are important to them. Their work is critical to our public health care system and we will continue to promote the important role they play.

Thank you to all CUPE's nurses for delivering public health care every day and best wishes for a successful National Nursing Week.

In solidarity,



MARK HANCOCK  
National President



CHARLES FLEURY  
National Secretary-Treasurer