

SUN NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE

Negotiations concerning a renewed SUN/SAHO Collective Agreement have not been taking the traditional path in this round of bargaining and are taking longer than members have been accustomed to in previous rounds. Your Negotiations Committee had not originally anticipated this turn of events and remains committed to achieving the bargaining priorities as set by the members at the 2013 Bargaining Conference.

Discussions have continued this fall with the latest meeting being held the morning of December 8. These meetings have also included discussions that centre on mutual gains that can be achieved through amendments to the Collective Agreement or through Letters of Understanding. We are actively exploring all options for resolution of the issues important to members.

Your Committee's number one priority heading into bargaining was the protection of the bargaining unit. A critical challenge for SUN, as well as other unions in Saskatchewan, was the new *Saskatchewan Employment Act* that mandates separate bargaining units for "supervisory employees". This issue was raised in our discussions and our continued efforts made it possible for SUN members to achieve protection from the new supervisory language through an exemption for registered nurses within the new legislation's associated *Regulations*.

This was a significant victory for SUN but only one piece of what we needed to achieve.

As these discussions continue, we continue to analyze the labour relations and professional environment to remain alert to challenges and opportunities. Since late fall, it has become abundantly clear that our biggest challenge and obstacle in protecting the bargaining unit and profession is the issue of role clarity and protecting the role and value of the registered nurse. Addressing concerns regarding role clarity is critically connected to our work at the bargaining table. While we recognize that role clarity is the purview of the regulatory body, there are crucial points of overlap and the issue cannot be separated out from ongoing conversations entirely. This is one of several complex issues that will require adequate time and consideration to arrive at a satisfactory outcome within the context of ongoing discussions.

While your Committee is looking to see resolve on a number of issues, we are not prepared to rush to a conclusion in the interest of time. Your Committee is committed to ensuring they achieve the best possible settlement that not only meets the needs of the membership but also protects the future of the registered nursing profession.