10 YEARS AGO
WE UNITED TO
BECOME EVEN STRONGER

2013 REPORT TO MEMBERS
Dear valued member and healthcare worker,

Welcome to your rebranded union!
I’m happy to inform you that this year, SEIU Healthcare has gone through an internal process of reflection. Your union took a step back to think about why we do the things we do. And we came to an obvious conclusion: YOU — our members!

Every day, we strive to improve the lives of our members and to make sure that they are listened to and valued. And so, I proudly present to you “The Heart of Healthcare”, our motto and the very breath of the organization.

While 2013 has been a very thoughtful year here at SEIU Healthcare, it has also been a very lively one. As an organization, we have made a conscious effort to be even more politically engaged. We want to create awareness amongst politicians and the general public that the frontline workers we represent are the heart of our publicly-funded healthcare system.

So, our shift to be engaged in politics is to educate the masses and politicians of the critical need to make the changes in the system to ensure Ontarians remain healthy. It is a process of stepping up and unveiling ourselves. Healthcare is the most important sector, but shamefully, many of the people we represent are often the lowest paid. This is unacceptable to SEIU Healthcare because each and every one of our members connects to someone else’s life - the work you do is the heart of healthcare - and so we are committed to creating awareness of this fact and committed to stand up for your rights.

As we look ahead to 2014, I am excited and thrilled to continue telling our members’ compelling stories of caring, professionalism and heroism. I invite you to join the conversation on Facebook, follow us on Twitter to get daily updates, and attend an SEIU Healthcare event.

Together, we will STEP UP in 2014 to hold our politicians accountable.

Sharleen Stewart
President, SEIU Healthcare
Earlier this year, I had the opportunity to welcome a new addition to my family – my beautiful granddaughter. As I looked at her perfect face, I wondered what words of wisdom I could offer to her, and couldn’t help but reflect upon the world that she is entering.

In a way, this moment was also a telling one, for, as I reflect on this year that has gone by, the significance of being a female is all the more relevant.

In 2013, SEIU Healthcare committed itself to speaking on behalf of the thousands of mothers, daughters, sisters, and wives who make up our membership. We are proud to be one of the few unions that represents a predominantly female membership. It is for this reason that the issue of pay equity is one that we strongly pursue. The fight for pay equity is not about the pay scale - it’s about taking the work that women do, and valuing it just as much as we value the work a man does.

For that reason, 2013 has been a year in which we bring this value to the forefront of our discussions. In September, SEIU Healthcare settled a 3-year pay equity case with four Hospitals (Bluewater, Joseph Brant, Niagara Health System and Hotel Dieu Shaver) allowing the work our members perform to be fairly measured and recognized. Additionally, in this report you will find further details of the Nursing Convention, Women’s Conference and the Equal Pay Day, where we have pushed the issue of pay equity forward.

By the time my granddaughter is of working age, I hope that all women are valued in the workplace and that the issue of pay inequity is a thing of the past. On behalf of our daughters and granddaughters, for every working woman in Canada, we continue to fight for equality. And we continue to fight on behalf of our members, because we believe that they are the Heart of Healthcare.

Cathy Carroll
Secretary Treasurer, SEIU Healthcare
As many of you are now aware, SEIU Healthcare has introduced our new brand, the Heart of Healthcare. For me, the heart of healthcare represents all members and all facets of our union. There are different components to a heart - different elements that make it function and run smoothly. In a similar way, our members are distinct yet intertwined pieces of the heart. If one section of the heart becomes weak, the others will eventually weaken. It is your union’s responsibility to make sure that all components of this heart are looked after - but we can’t do it alone. The time has come for all our members to come and stand united together to advocate for a well-funded healthcare system.

You may be aware of an ambitious new campaign we launched this year called “Fulfilling the Promise”. We are holding the government accountable for the promises they have made to invest in homecare. After all, in the next 20 years, almost one in four people in Ontario will be a senior. However, I want to be the first to tell you that this campaign isn’t solely about the homecare sector. The shift that is happening right now in healthcare affects everyone. The plight of a homecare worker will affect every healthcare worker in some capacity - if not today, then tomorrow. Fulfilling the promise is about advocacy for all workers.

Neglecting one part of the heart, will lead to a weaker heart overall. And so, regardless of where you work, our job is to help one another. Let 2014 be the year where you come out and support your fellow healthcare workers. Together, I know that we can fulfill the promise.

Emanuel Carvalho
Executive Vice President, SEIU Healthcare
Evolving to serve you better

2014 will be a very special year for SEIU Healthcare! This year will mark the 10 year anniversary of the merger of six Canadian SEIU locals to form what was then called “SEIU Local 1.on”. In 2008, SEIU Local 1.on was renamed to SEIU Local 1 Canada, and most recently to SEIU Healthcare in 2013.

By coming together, we were able to create one voice for all our Canadian SEIU Healthcare Sisters and Brothers. Today, we are a vibrant and thriving community of more than 55,000 healthcare professionals!
Members take action

STRENGTH

Standing up to anti-union legislation

SEIU Healthcare members helped delay Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s conservative government’s attack on unions through its proposed Bill C-377. This discriminatory, unconstitutional, invasive and poorly-drafted bill aims to harass and weaken unions under the cloak of transparency and accountability. Under this bill, unions would be forced to violate the privacy of their members, clients and partners by providing highly-detailed financial information to the government. This proposed reporting structure is not imposed on any other Canadian sector, including non-profits, professional associations and private corporations. This is why virtually every organization that appeared before Senate Committee hearings on the bill, including the Canadian Bar Association, the mutual fund industry and the federal Privacy Commissioner, were opposed to it.

The aim is to create so much work for unions to meet this new requirement that their servicing and political engagement resources would suffer, and eventually run out. The bill is a witch hunt designed to weaken the ability of unions to represent their members and stand up to the Conservatives for the issues that matter to working-class Canadians.

Thanks to pressure from SEIU Healthcare members, the Senate refused to pass Bill C-377 and sent it back to the House of Commons with major amendments. But the fight isn’t over. The Harper government refused to change the bill and sent it back to the Senate in its original form. This time, SEIU and its partners are demanding that the Senate doesn’t just amend the bill, but defeats it altogether. The battle over C-377 comes at a time when the government is trying to pass other anti-union laws that will reduce your strength at the bargaining table and make it harder for unions to organize workers. As we head into the upcoming provincial and federal elections, it is more important than ever before that we unite to stand up and defend our rights!

The result?
Our strength helped elect two NDP candidates in Windsor and London and two Liberal candidates in Scarborough and Ottawa.

SEIU Healthcare 6, Tim Hudak 1

SEIU Healthcare flexed its muscles during the August by-election cycle in Ontario! Our members were able to make more than 201,687 contacts with voters during this cycle, encouraging frontline workers to exercise their democratic rights, educating the public about the importance of protecting and strengthening public healthcare, plus the need for an action plan to fulfill the promise of homecare.

By the time the polls closed, it was clear our members had made the difference in key contests, as voters were persuaded they did not want to trust Tim Hudak with matters like the future of public healthcare.

The result?
Our strength helped elect two NDP candidates in Windsor and London and two Liberal candidates in Scarborough and Ottawa.

After seven by-elections in 13 months, the Tories picked up only one seat. As the Toronto Sun put it, despite the results of this one battle, Hudak appears to have “lost the war”. These by elections really crystallized SEIU as a force in Ontario politics.
SEIU Healthcare RPN Lobby Day

RPN Lobby Day on May 7 was a hit! Advocating for the nursing profession, SEIU Healthcare RPNs gathered at Queen’s Park to meet with Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne, the Minister of Health Deb Matthews, NDP Health Critic France Gélinas and many other Members of Provincial Parliament. Our RPNs explained how they can be better utilized to their full scope of practice and provide even better patient care. This will allow healthcare facilities to deal with the nursing shortage while reducing the need for overtime and outsourcing work to agency nurses.

WE’RE JUST A CALL AWAY!

Your Member Resource Centre is your direct line to everything you need to know about:

- Job security
- Scheduling
- Compensation agreements
- Events
- Political action and much more!

Want to get involved? Political Engagement is going to be a big part of SEIU Healthcare in 2014. Call the MRC to find out how you can make a difference.

CALL US TOLL-FREE AT 1-877-MRC-SEIU (672-7348)
COMPASSION
In October, the SEIU Healthcare Nursing Division held its 2013 Convention in the scenic little town of Blue Mountains, Ontario.

Nearly 100 SEIU Healthcare RPNs and RNs met to discuss the state of nursing in Ontario, and how we can ensure it remains a thriving profession through political action and community engagement.

The nurse leaders then elected a new Nursing Division Executive and Regional Reps, who, with the strong support of the union and its membership, will guide the Division for the next three years.
FAIRNESS
To our members,

SEIU Healthcare represents more homecare workers than any other union. Despite the critical work they do, caregivers in the community care sector are among the most vulnerable. Did you know that of every dollar spent on homecare, only 33 cents is spent on salaries? But, at the same time, a CEO of one of Canada’s top homecare agencies awarded himself with a 9% pay raise in 2012, worth nearly $25,000. For context, his raise is more money than the average PSW makes in a year. And what about the fact that currently, more than 10,000 Ontarians are waiting for homecare services? This number will only increase as one quarter of the population will be a senior by 2036.

These unfair realities don’t sit well with SEIU Healthcare. The fact that Ontario’s homecare system is flawed is something that we have drawn greater attention to in 2013. Through our Fulfill the Promise and Justice4 PSWs campaigns, we have challenged the status quo by calling attention to the plight of homecare workers. The Fulfill the Promise team successfully worked with city councils in such key cities in Ontario as Hamilton, Toronto, Ajax and Sudbury. Thanks to the dedication of our members in the cities, the team managed to get homecare resolutions passed in every city! The Justice4PSWs campaign included a massive advertising blitz across Ontario. Ads were placed in major Canadian newspapers, buses, transit shelters, subways, highway billboards, digital billboards, the radio, the internet, and more. Next, we hit the streets with flash mobs, rallies, and protests to attract positive news coverage.

... But we recognize that these campaigns are only the beginning of a longer, uphill battle.

We acknowledge that all our victories and defeats are small steps along a longer path to a bigger goal – fixing Ontario’s broken homecare system. Making a change to a system that has existed for decades, takes much effort and time – and we are proud to be fighting on behalf of our members. And we will continue to do so.

Homecare: fulfilling the promise

www.fulfillthepromise.ca
#fulfillthepromiseca

Did you know that the number of seniors in Ontario is expected to double by 2031? They’ll need more care, more medications, and more attention. Our government acknowledges that much of the problem can be answered by homecare. We need an action plan that meets the needs of an aging population, costs less than institutional care, allows people to remain independent and active in their community, and sustains Canada’s public healthcare system for the next generation. We call on all levels of government to work together to strengthen public health care and fulfill the promise of homecare in the following ways:

1. cut waiting lists for home care
2. provide relief to family caregivers
3. guarantee security and peace of mind
4. insist investments go to the frontline, not the bottom line
5. demand transparency and accountability
6. protect the heart of healthcare: frontline staff
February – Food Drive

Members from the Hamilton region organized a 3 month long food drive for Living Rock Ministries - a food bank for Youth.

March – International Women’s Day

SEIU Healthcare hosted more than 100 woman leaders at its 2013 Women’s Leadership Conference in Toronto. To cap off the day, the women marched to Dundas Square to perform a flash mob dance to raise awareness of the 28% wage gap between men and women in Ontario!

April – SEIU Healthcare marked first Equal Pay Day

If a man and woman start working the same job on January 1st 2013, the woman will have to work until April 9th 2014 – an extra four months – to earn as much money as the man did by December 31st 2013. To help illustrate this inequality, SEIU Healthcare joined forces with the Ontario Equal Pay Coalition to mark the province’s first Equal Pay Day on April 9. Members gave out Equal Pay Day shortbread cookies (because women get short changed!) and spread the word to hundreds of people in Toronto. If you want to help fight this inequality, contact the MRC to join the fight for fairness.
June – SMCN Gala

SEIU Healthcare’s Multi-Faith and Community Network (SMCN) Gala is a forum designed to recognize the incredible contributions SEIU Healthcare members make in their communities through their charitable work. The network hosted its third annual fundraising gala in Mississauga to raise funds to create community scholarships. More than 300 attendees were treated to live gospel music, sketch comedy, dinner and dancing. And thanks to their generous support, we were able to raise more than $12,000!

July – Purple Day

Thousands of members took part in this year’s Purple Day – the organization’s day to celebrate solidarity, success and future!

July – Caribbean Picnic

The 2nd annual event brought together more than 500 SEIU Healthcare members, their families and political figures to celebrate diversity and to honour the contributions healthcare professionals make to Ontarians. The event was attended by Davenport MPP Jonah Schein, Davenport MP Andrew Cash, Trinity Spadina MP Olivia Chow and Toronto city councillors Anthony Perruzza and Ana Bailao.
August – OHC Niagara-On-The-Lake Health Accord Summit

Over 50 members came together for the Health Accord Summit in Niagara-on-the-Lake, to educate Canadians on the importance and necessity of the Health Accord. Members, workers, and the public united to send a strong message out to Stephen Harper, who did not attend and refuses to have conversations about renewing the health accord.

August – Peterborough

Members organized a charity car wash to raise money and awareness for the Kawartha Participation Project- an organization that provides care and affordable housing for people with physical disabilities.
September – Labour Day Parade

More than 300 SEIU Healthcare members, their families and friends showed up to support our fight for a better Ontario, making this year’s parade one of the biggest turn outs in SEIU Healthcare’s history. Members from all regions took part in parades around the Province. Sharleen Stewart, SEIU Healthcare’s president, shared the organization’s demand for improved working conditions and a better healthcare system with correspondents from CP24, CTV News and the Toronto Star.

Thanks to all those members who continue to lead, support, organize and advocate for their communities and for SEIU Healthcare. In 2013 we had members in Sudbury who partnered with the Lions Club to raise awareness of homecare, members who participated in the International Ploughing Match in Goderich, a food drive in Thunder Bay, and many other such events that continuously make us proud to represent you!
RESPECT
Picture a workplace that shows anti-union videos to every new employee; one that treats its workers with little respect. Imagine the type of place that hires pricey lawyers in order to prevent unions from defending the rights of its employees.

Sadly this place isn’t fictional.

For workers at Sunrise Aurora, a nursing home in Aurora, Ontario, forming a union had been a struggle for many years. Finally, in 2012, they filed an application to have a vote. During the course of the campaign, the employers at Sunrise aggressively engaged in activities that violated the rights of Sunrise team members under the Ontario Labour Relations Act – so SEIU Healthcare took legal action.

After a year of litigation the Ontario Labour Relations Board released a ground-breaking decision that found Sunrise to have violated the rights of its employees. As a result, the Board ordered the certification of your union and the workers at Sunrise Aurora were able to join SEIU Healthcare!

This course of action inspired workers at other Sunrise homes to join SEIU, and we are so proud to welcome our new Sisters and Brothers from Sunrise Burlington, Thorne Mills and Aurora! All three of these homes have elected a bargaining committee and have already begun negotiating their first contract.

Indeed, 2013 was a year of steady growth for SEIU Healthcare. We would like to welcome all our new members, from Sunrise and beyond.
Hospital bargaining, round ONE

SEIU Healthcare’s Central Hospitals Bargaining Committee displayed an impressive amount of resolve against the Ontario Hospital Association (OHA) as they entered another round of bargaining. They were told that money was sparse, and that they were to accept a wage freeze.

Thankfully, they didn’t.

Hospital bargaining, round TWO

If it’s broken, fix it! That’s the message SEIU Healthcare hospital workers sent the Ontario Government about the central bargaining system.

Even though SEIU Healthcare and the OHA have been bargaining centrally since 1974, the process wasn’t working anymore. Bargaining was slow and we weren’t making the progress we needed to. The OHA never seemed willing or able to negotiate a contract, forcing the union to take the case to arbitration every time. This process takes a lot of time and money.

In June our members took matters into their own hands; they voted to withdraw from centralized bargaining with the Ontario Hospital Association (OHA). That means all 64 hospitals would have to negotiate separate contracts with each individual unit.

This bold step got the respect we deserved from the OHA. Representatives from the Ontario Government swiftly contacted SEIU Healthcare and asked us if we could go back to the central bargaining process. SEIU Healthcare agreed, but only if the OHA agreed to meet with SEIU Healthcare for a mediated settlement. In December the arbitrator released his ruling. We were successful in achieving a number of wage adjustments for hospital workers.
SEIU Healthcare strikes back! SEIU Healthcare worked overtime for a better and fair contract for central nursing home members. We went back to the table with the provincial arbitrator to clarify a few unresolved issues. And clarify we did!

The arbitrator made several fair decisions that were positive for nursing home members. First, the arbitrator stated they will receive a 15-cent lump sum for every hour they worked in 2013 and 2014. These hours include holidays, breaks, sick days, lunches, vacation time, and other periods of time off. Second, they now can bank three statutory holidays anytime during the year. Third, we eliminated the drug cap. Some nursing homes had a drug cap worth $25,000 over 25 years on their drug and benefits plan. That means after 25 years, you weren’t covered anymore. SEIU Healthcare scrapped the cap!

2013 was a very successful year for retirement homes. Every contract we negotiated this year for retirement home workers got a raise. Your union is helping close the pay gap between nursing and retirement homes.
Barrie
121 Commerce Park Drive, Unit G
Barrie, Ontario L4N 8X1
Toll Free: 1-800-267-7348
Fax: 705-722-9215

London
41 Adelaide Street North, Unit 83
London, Ontario N6B 3P4
Phone: 519-432-2661
Toll Free: 1-800-265-1549
Fax: 519-432-1780

North Bay
126 Lakeshore Drive
North Bay, Ontario P1A 2A8
Phone: 705-472-2571
Toll Free: 1-800-466-0722
Fax: 705-472-4775

Ottawa
251 Bank Street, 5th floor
Ottawa, Ontario K2P 1X3
Toll Free: 1-800-267-7348
Fax: 855-233-8238

St. Catharines
One St. Paul Street, Suite 102
St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 7L2
Phone: 905-682-9263
Toll Free: 1-800-265-2942
Fax: 905-682-4821

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