



June 27, 2018

Coalition Unions will not be intimidated by SAHO

Your SEIU-West, SGEU, and CUPE bargaining committees resumed bargaining on June 21, continued bargaining through the weekend, and went late into the evening of June 25.

The Unions and SAHO exchanged proposals on extended health and dental plan funding, joint trusteeship process for the benefit plans, and monetary issues related to general wage increases.

The Union Coalition felt momentum building and was hopeful that a tentative agreement would be reached. However, on the evening of June 25, the positive tone at the table quickly turned. SAHO and the Ministry of Health questioned whether your bargaining committees were committed to reaching an agreement. SAHO made comments that the Coalition was delaying the process and splitting hairs. What this translates into for our membership is that we are not willing to sell out our hard-earned collective agreement protections and benefits to get a deal.

We were close to language that would help us to get joint trusteeship of all of our benefits plans; this is incredibly important in order to ensure the health and long-term viability of these plans. It should be noted that joint governance will be a requirement of the Canada Revenue Agency in 2019, and this joint trusteeship will help both our benefit plans and members by significantly reducing plan taxation liabilities.

Your coalition bargaining committee put forward a proposal on a general wage increase that we believe was fair and reasonable. It took into consideration fiscal restraint of the province. But we were told that we hadn't moved enough! SAHO and the Government of Saskatchewan have offered health providers less than other public sector workers – yet they are demanding concessions.

It is clear that the government wants to end the 100% employer funding commitment for our Extended Health and Enhanced Dental Plan (EHD) plan and push some of the costs onto you. We believe that the Coalition's unwillingness to agree to rollback the funding to the EHD plan has triggered SAHO and the Government of Saskatchewan to change their mood. SAHO ended the meeting until further notice. There are currently no scheduled bargaining dates. SAHO did not accept our suggestion to access voluntary mediation to assist in concluding a reasonable collective agreement.

It is clear the Government of Saskatchewan is very much involved in this bargaining process. Please continue contacting your MLAs, Minister of Health Jim Reiter, and Minister of Rural and Remote Health Greg Ottenbreit to insist they treat health care providers fairly and with respect.

Jim Reiter – Ministry phone number: 306.787.7345; Constituency Office number:
306.882.4105

Greg Ottenbreit – Ministry phone number: 306.798.9014; Constituency Office number:
306.783.7275

We've informed SAHO that we are going to meet with our members to get clear direction. Please watch for notices of upcoming meetings in your area.

In solidarity,

SEIU-West, SGEU, and CUPE