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September 4, 2013

The Honourable Dustin Duncan
Minister of Health
Room 315, Legislative Building
2405 Legislative Drive
Regina, SK S4S 0B3

Dear Minister Duncan:

BARBARA CAPE
President

SHELLY BANKS
Vice-President

JANICE PLATZKE
Treasurer

SERVICE EMPLOYEES
INTERNATIONAL UNION
CLC

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We would like you to understand that we began requesting a meeting with you in January of 2013. This was a follow-up to our November 5, 2012 discussions where you assured us that you were interested in building a pattern of meaningful dialogue with us. Since January, numerous emails, telephone calls and letters were sent out from our office in the months of March, April, May, June and July; all efforts to set a meeting to ensure our stakeholder information was provided to you on the important topic of safe staffing levels, among other issues.

We have compiled this brief summary of our ongoing work within the various health regions and Extendicare Canada Inc. to highlight the most significant problem areas identified by our members in respect to excess workload and/or their experience of unsafe staffing levels. We would like to note that this detail is available only by virtue of the hard work and dedication of our members to complete Workload Tracking forms on a daily basis and submit same to us. Our members are most interested in the provision of quality and safe health care services – they would appreciate having adequate resources to accomplish this goal.

Saskatoon Health Region:

Letter to Shelly McFadden, Director of Worksafe & Employee Wellness at St. Paul's Hospital dated April 8, 2013 re: Unsafe Staffing levels and Summary Offence Ticketing – no reply received;

Letter to Jean Morrison, President - St. Paul's Hospital dated April 24, 2013 re: Unsafe Staffing levels (Security and Surgery/OR units) – no reply received;

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Meeting with Senior Leadership Team on April 26, 2013 – SEIU undertakes to provide feedback on data received from members (via Workload Tracking forms);

Emails sent to Barry Barss detailing 'hotspots' (further to our undertaking) – replies received in respect to vacant positions only;

Letter sent to Barry Barss, Manager of Employment Services dated July 15, 2013 re: Safe Staffing levels at Saskatoon City Hospital – email reply received;

Letter sent to OH & S Committee at St. Paul's Hospital dated July 25, 2013 – no reply received;

Cypress Health Region:

Letter to Jeff Schwan (Director of OHS) dated May 23, 2013 re: Unsafe Staffing levels and Summary Offence Ticketing – no reply received;

Heartland Health Region:

Letter to Brenda Scholer (Director of Human Resources) dated May 29, 2013 re: Unsafe Staffing levels and Summary Offence Ticketing – reply received dated June 21, 2013;

Subsequent Letter to Brenda Scholer dated July 22, 2013.

Extendicare Canada Inc.:


Letter to Norm Zimmer dated May 14, 2013 re: Unsafe Staffing levels and Summary Offence Ticketing – acknowledgement received, no further reply.

It remains our understanding that the Ministry had mandated senior leadership within the various health regions to conduct unit visits (primarily within the long term care sector) in an effort to respond to staffing concerns that were raised in the Legislature. It was reported to us that, in some areas, there was no opportunity for the health care providers to share their perspective on workloads and staffing levels. As indicated in our May 10 letter to you, we believe that the members of SEIU-West are uniquely positioned to provide you with data, both anecdotal and statistical, that will assist you with your review.

We continue to welcome a partnership that will inform decision-making as it relates to improving the resources for our health care providers to focus on patient and family centered care. We remain hopeful that the urgent circumstances posed by unsafe staffing levels will be addressed in a meaningful way upon the conclusion of your review.

Thank you for your interest in patient and family centered health care through improved staffing levels and an analysis of workload excesses.

Yours truly,



Barbara Cape
President
SEIU-West

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Enclosure

cc.: Danielle Chartier, Opposition Critic – Health
Sheila Pajunen, Heartland Health Region
Brenda Schwan, Cypress Health Region
Stuart Cunningham, Five Hills Health Region
Norm Zimmer, Extendicare Canada Inc.
SEIU-West Executive Board