



INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS

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Facilities bargaining committee returns to table for sixth week of negotiations

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The 10-union Facilities Bargaining Association (FBA) and the Health Employers Association of BC (HEABC) headed back to the table today for a sixth week of negotiations. The two parties took a break from face-to-face talks last week, and are now set to resume bargaining discussions for a renewed collective agreement covering 44,000 health care workers in the province.

Chief negotiator Jennifer Whiteside of the Hospital Employees' Union says the unions have already tabled an extensive set of proposals on occupational health and safety, including workload, which will continue to be under discussion as negotiations proceed over the coming weeks.

"Our members' working environment is characterized by extreme workloads, pressure-cooker working conditions and chronic stress – all of which contribute to making health care one of the most dangerous occupations in the province," says Whiteside.

"It's imperative that we arrive at solutions that will bring down the unacceptably high injury rates in health care."

A key focus for this week's discussions with the employer will be rebuilding contracting-out protections for health care workers.

The parties are scheduled to meet until the end of this week, at which time they will take a two-week break.

The multi-union FBA (***HEU, the B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union, the International Union of Operating Engineers and seven smaller unions***) are fighting hard to improve our Contract.