



THE ACCENT

Prince Edward Island Union of Public Sector Employees
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Volume 16 Number 8

Tuesday, May 12, 2009

Public Information session on Hospital Acquired Illness (HAI) to be held on May 20



Controlling the spread of superbugs is a priority for health care workers world-wide.

UPSE members are invited to attend an information session on Hospital Acquired Illness. CUPE PEI is hosting the session and they have arranged for Mr. Steve Davies, a Senior Research Fellow at the Cardiff School of Social Sciences in Wales to be the guest speaker. Mr. Davies is well known for his research into Infection Control in Health Institutions. The types of infections that will be discussed include MRSA, C-Deficile and VRA. These are the 'superbugs' which have been causing many problems in health care facilities across Canada, as well as here on P.E.I. Health care-associated infections are the fourth leading cause of death in Canada. One in every nine hospital patients contracts an HAI, and 8,500 to 12,000 Canadians die of HAIs every year. The meeting is open to all Islanders and will take place:

DATE: Wednesday May 20, 2009

PLACE: Delta Prince Edward Hotel, Charlottetown

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

Protect yourself and others from the flu



All strains of influenza can be dangerous; however, good infection prevention measures can help protect you and others if the H1N1 virus begins to spread rapidly in Canada.

- Wash your hands often and thoroughly in warm, soapy water or use hand sanitizer
- Cough and sneeze in your arm, not your hands
- Keep common surfaces and items clean and disinfected
- Stay home if you're sick, unless directed to seek medical care

Members invited to submit grass cutting tenders

UPSE is calling for tenders to supply grass cutting services for the 2009 season. The property to be serviced is the UPSE office located at 4 Enman Crescent, Charlottetown. Services are required from June 1, to September 30, 2009. All tenders should be clearly marked: **Grass Cutting Tender** and mailed to:



**Union of Public Sector Employees
c/o Kevin Gotell - Sec./Treas.
4 Enman Crescent, Charlottetown
P.E.I. C1E 1E6**

Deadline for receipt of tenders is May 22, 2009

The Accent is an internal publication of the Prince Edward Island Union of Public Sector Employees. Comments, questions, concerns and suggestions should be sent to : Cathy MacKinnon, UPSE Communications Officer
cmackinnon@peiupse.ca

Note to members distributing *The Accent*:

Because the material contained in this publication is often of a time-sensitive nature,
Please Post Or Distribute This Accent As Soon As Possible.

UPSE is proud to represent members in both the Public and Private Sectors



Effects of the 7.5 % Wage Roll-back still evident - 15 years later



The historic injustice that took place 15 years ago this month is still being felt by many UPSE employees. Pension income that many members will or have received upon retirement is less than it should be due to the reduced salary levels which resulted from the roll-back. UPSE has never given up the fight to have this injustice rectified for our members. The roll back, noted by the International Labour Organization to be a violation of human rights for those affected, was the most blatant assault on Public Service Employees in P.E.I.'s history. The decision to take this action was made by a Liberal Government who felt that targeting a specific group of Island taxpayers, as opposed to an action shared by all Islanders, was a legitimate response to deal with an ever increasing deficit. Their decision followed voluntary wage freeze agreements by these same employees in an effort to assist the government through a difficult financial period. Businesses across the Island also felt the effects of the rollbacks as many members were forced to cut discretionary spending to try and compensate for the loss of income.

Egmont M.P. votes against improvement to E.I. Bill

Egmont's Conservative M.P. Gail Shea recently voted against Bill C-241 during its second reading in the House. The Bill, which calls for the elimination of the two-week waiting period for E.I. benefits, was supported by the three Island Liberal M.P.s; Wayne Easter, Lawrence MacAulay, and Shawn Murphy. The Bill was successful in making it through second reading. UPSE represents many part-time and seasonal/casual members who are forced to rely on E.I. benefits to supplement their income each year. The removal of the two-week waiting period would reduce the financial strain faced annually by these members. The Bill is not meant to replace the additional five week provisions that have already been implemented, but to enhance the program in an effort to further assist those forced to rely on E.I. benefits. Members are encouraged to call on their M.P. and encourage him/her to support the Bill when it returns to the House for its third and final reading.

Strait Crossing Employees vote to reject tentative agreement



Members of the Strait Crossing Bargaining Unit voted on April 24, 2009 to reject a tentative agreement which had been reached on their behalf. Following the vote UPSE President Shelley Ward together with Labour Relations Officers Paul Atkinson and Hans Connor talked with the elected Bargaining Representatives over the vote and reasons behind the rejection of the tentative agreement. The Bargaining Representatives agreed to talk with SCBL members to assess and report on the issue holding up the contract. They were asked to focus on the bargaining proposals previously put forward by the membership; negotiations should not go forward with a new list of proposals being advanced as such an action would be considered bargaining in bad faith. UPSE asked the Bargaining Representatives to focus on the one issue which the majority of members feel was not addressed in the tentative agreement. Once the direction on this issue is determined, the parties will meet again and resume negotiations in an effort to achieve a negotiated contract.

Radio Campaign underway in support of members involved with Departmental Relocations

A two-week radio campaign in support of UPSE members employed with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Rural Development began on May 4th. The campaign features three messages which outline the basis for UPSE's opposition to the relocations. The ads all contain the same message:

- We support the government's rural development initiative.
- We support having government services available across the Island.
- We support a government that is fiscally responsible.

It continues to be UPSE's position that these moves are a waste of taxpayer's dollars. The moves will not create any new employment opportunities in rural communities. The positions being located are not new; they already belong to a current civil service employee.

In these tough economic times we need a government that is willing to place the needs of Islanders ahead of its own personal agendas. These dollars should be allocated to creating sustainable, meaningful employment for unemployed Islanders. If the government truly wants to assist struggling rural communities then they should consider creating satellite government offices, complete with new positions throughout rural P.E.I. This would create sustainable employment and assist with rural development. These proposed relocations are, as the government said when it announced them, -"bold and shocking". A bold and shocking waste of taxpayer's money!