



Tel: 604-273-5722 | Fax: 604-273-5762 | Toll Free: 1-866-273-5766 | Toll Free Fax: 1-866-273-5762
105 - 21900 Westminster Hwy., Richmond, BC V6V 0A8
info@apbc.ca | www.apbc.ca

June 3, 2022

Dear Members:

Member Update Re: Other Agreement/New Support for On-call and Remote Communities

As members are aware the Employer issued a memorandum to all employees regarding an initiative for New Support for On-call and Remote Communities on April 6, 2022. The Employer's memorandum suggested the Union was in support of the Employer's actions which is simply not true and was not authorized by APBC.

Yesterday, the Union learned of the Employer's intent to unilaterally introduce temporary locum positions and a scheduled Kilo staffing model in 26 remote communities breaching the terms of the Collective Agreement and labour relations code.

Further to this the Employer has the audacity to state: "these positions and the associated stabilization payments are offered on a without prejudice basis; they are not intended to be permanent or indicative of future staffing arrangements". It would be convenient for the Employer to simply say they can do anything on a "without prejudice basis" and disregard the bargaining agent, BC Labour Code and terms of the Collective Agreement.

The Employer's unilateral actions have in effect completely halted the implementation of SOC around the Province, a clear indication of the SOC model's complete failure to meet its objectives and has led to confusion surrounding staffing rights and responsibilities.

The Union has formally served notice to the Employer of the failure of SOC and the Union's intent not to renew Appendix 18 in the 2022 Collective Bargaining round. Stated simply, SOC will not carry on in its existing format. I know this may be alarming to some of our members, please know that the model will be negotiated into a different service model with equivalent remuneration.

The Employer's poorly conceived incentive has many fatal flaws including, the obvious paramedic shortage across the Province in every single post. No clear explanation has been given on how 26 of 63 SOC stations were selected, as many stations have the same staffing crisis. This will also create a multi-tiered pay structure and significant wage disparity between employees which will no doubt impact staff morale.

Over the last few months, the Union has been actively working on many initiatives with HEABC and BCEHS, sought to improve staffing models and ensure ESA compliance surrounding payment of overtime and wages. Unfortunately, HEABC and the Employer have failed to act on their responsibilities leading to lengthy arbitrations on the Execution of the 2019-2022 Collective Agreement terms. The delay in enacting the full terms of the 2019-2022 Collective Agreement has led to financial hardship of our members struggling with all time high inflation and costs of living.

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The Union considers the employers unilateral actions executed in bad faith and interference with a trade union. A policy grievance on the matter has been advanced and will be expedited to arbitration.

The Union is working to resolve these matters as expeditiously as possible.

Regards,



Jason Jackson
Provincial Vice President
Ambulance Paramedics of BC
CUPE 873

JJ/km/MoveUp

