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May 20, 2020

Dear Members;

Re: Kilo Guarantee, Additional Resources & Temporary Pandemic Pay Updates

Kilo Guarantee and Collective Agreement Rollout

The Union is aware of the Employer issuing the attached [memorandum](#) with respect to discontinuing the Kilo Guarantee for 39 stations effective June 1, 2020.

The memo attached was sent out to Station Unit Chiefs to “Post” in their stations, not even a distribution via email to the members affected in the 39 stations. The Union finds this action disappointing as we expect senior leadership to communicate directly with those members affected.

Since COVID-19 began, the Union has worked hard to ensure Kilo Guarantee remains in place for the 39 stations while roll out of Scheduled On-Call (SOC) was delayed due to the Pandemic. As you know we were successful in maintaining it until May 31, 2020 and were hopeful it would continue until such time as the Collective Agreement (CA) implementation and SOC rollout was restarted.

We are obliged to advise the membership that neither has happened despite numerous unanswered requests from the Union: [April 22 Letter](#), [May 1 Letter](#), [May 8 Letter](#), [May 11 Letter](#), [May 13 Email](#). Then, yesterday, at 1520 the Employer advised they were sending this memo out with no consultation or discussion with the Union. We requested they not send out as written, particularly with the misinformation in the communication, which is as follows:

- As mentioned, we have had no response nor has there been any working hard together as inferred, we have not met despite numerous requests going back to early April.

“BCEHS, together with CUPE 873, are working hard to maximize opportunities for our paramedics as part of a dynamic, integrated health sector. Part of the implementation of the ambitious and progressive new collective agreement is focused on creating permanent paramedic positions that provide benefits and regular, scheduled work. As you are aware, this work was put on hold while all BCEHS resources were focused on the priority of supporting staff and patient care during the COVID-19 pandemic.”

- The parties have not begun or resumed work as mentioned, just yesterday the Employer confirmed our first meeting for March 25th to discuss resumption of CA implementation and SOC discussions.

“With the introduction of the scheduled on-call model, the parties have agreed to phase out the Kilo guarantee by November 1, 2021. Although the phase out of the Kilo guarantee for 39 of our higher call volume stations was scheduled for April, the guarantee was extended for the months of April and May. Work on the implementation of the new scheduled on call model is now resuming.”

- Regrettably with significant decreased workload for On-call members and these stations, and with the delay in rollout of the CA and SOC, this has and will significantly impact the members in these 39 stations and potentially others.

“In 39 of our urban and rural stations with higher call volumes, the Kilo guarantee will not be continuing, and shifts scheduled on June 1, 2020 onwards will revert to the Kilo call- out language in the collective agreement. Your station is one of the 39.”

- This is great news, hopefully the Employer moves ahead soon to ensure rollout and implementation, there is a lot of work to do particularly with the departure of their key leaders for SOC.

“The 92 rural and remote stations that have lower call volumes and are candidates to move to a scheduled on-call staffing model will continue to receive the Kilo guarantee until they transition to the new model.”

- Prior to putting the CA implementation and SOC on hold due to the Pandemic we were advised these practices were going to be put in place. We are hopeful we will be advised how this will be implemented and operationalized as members have not seen this thus far, and the Union will have an opportunity to collaborate as intended.

“We recognize that this change may be difficult for some staff, and work has been underway with dispatch to standardize the workload between regular and Kilo ambulances, to help ensure our Kilo units are deployed in ways that use them more effectively and ensure these cars remain active. This includes moving to the consistent practice across our organization of prioritizing our Kilo units for transfers, ensuring our regular units remain in their base communities for 911 response when needed.”

Our position remains Kilo Guarantee should be continued into June, and until such time as the Employer meaningfully implements the terms and conditions of the Collective Agreement which were delayed; most specifically Scheduled On-Call (SOC). We feel there is no need to delay the implementation of SOC or any agreed to terms and conditions, and are ready to support its implementation immediately as negotiated. With the Employer unilaterally choosing to delay implementation of SOC and the CA, and not maintain the Kilo Guarantee, they will cause hardship and have significant impacts on members' earnings, morale and employer wellness. It's a double hit when members don't get the benefits of SOC which they ratified in good faith and expected to see, and in addition lose KG. By the Employer delaying SOC implementation, they will see the benefit of not paying out Kilo Guarantee in conjunction with the benefit of not having to fund or implement SOC, on the backs of so many already struggling members. Maintaining Kilo Guarantee is cost neutral to the Employer and quite frankly the right thing to do.

Despite the foregoing, we are very aware of the issues and challenges all members face, including the precarious work and adverse working situations many of our On-call members face. I want you to know that, despite our best efforts falling upon the Employer's deaf ears, we intend to continue our efforts to vigorously pursue this important issue on your behalf.

Finally, we will also continue to focus our energies to encourage the Employer to address the enormous problems with staffing and service models that primarily utilize an outdated on-call staffing model for a large portion of the province.

Additional Resources Announcement

We remain excited with respect to the April 20th announcement of a new framework for health care in rural, remote and Indigenous communities. To improve residents' access to critical and culturally appropriate health care during the COVID-19 pandemic and moving forward, for ambulance resources in the Province long term.

We have communicated repeatedly since the announcement ([April 28 Correspondence](#), [May 7 Correspondence](#)) as there are significant implications on the Collective Agreement, our membership and the patients we serve. We have been persistent and repeatedly asked to meet as soon as possible to be brought up to speed on the thoughtful and collaborative planning efforts, background, and particularly to address any of the preliminary planning and process issues. We are keenly interested and wish to collaborate on how this impacts SOC, CA implementation, staffing and workload reviews which were not followed through with for so many areas of the province.



As mentioned, we are particularly interested in both details and working with the Employer on the improved land and air transportation modes for people who need to leave their home community for treatment in larger urban centres. Including 5 more air resources - 3 planes, 2 helicopters, 55 new ambulances and associated CUPE Local 873 staffing.

Again, at this point we have no update or new information to report.

Frontline Temporary Pandemic Funding

As many of you know we have been working hard to ensure we maximize funds and benefits for our members, and to ensure members are supported to provide for themselves and their families. Although we have been fortunate to work through these times many have faced considerable impacts personally and financially, in particular some of our On-call members. We appreciate and are sensitive to these issues and public perception. We have been working diligently to address issues such as this and have heard you loud and clear on the Ontario situation, other health professionals' benefits and me-too implications. We have strategically chosen to be professional and not politicize or go to the media at this point as we do not damage public support. I hope you can appreciate it's a tough balancing act.

Yesterday we were made aware of the following announcement with respect to additional funding for frontline workers: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/temporary-pandemic-pay?keyword=Covid>

We are encouraged the announcement includes paramedics however we have had no confirmation of particulars or rollout. We are reviewing and reaching out to government to confirm specifics and will advise as soon as we have details. We are very concerned after receiving a call yesterday afternoon, a senior excluded manager suggesting because we had KG we will not be getting any additional funding; we have no information to suggest this is true but is disturbing none the less.

Although this is not the most positive message, I want you to know we remain committed and we will get through this challenging time. We are all in this together and we continue to be hopeful that the Employer will realize the benefits of working collaboratively to deliver the best patient care we can.

Be safe, kind and well.

On behalf of the Provincial Executive Board,



Troy Clifford
Provincial President
CUPE Local 873

TC/sd/MoveUp

