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Dear Members;

Re: Prince George Airevac - Update

As many of you may be aware it has recently come to the Union's attention that the Northern Health Authority has posted and filled an Expression of Interest (EOI). RNs will receive training in conjunction with our staff to work on a newly implemented "low acuity" PCP plane based out of station 580 in Prince George. We have four members who have been selected. We also have members who have been directed to provide this training, which has put them in a very difficult position. We ask that we all support them while we work through this. I want to thank all those in the Prince George and CCP programs for your support and working with the Union on these issues. It is appreciated and shows how we can work together for our members and our patients.

The Employer has taken the position that this is the same as what has always been done. As everyone knows, the practice of RNs/RTs/Physicians as escorts is not new and has been used ad hoc, patient to patient basis, for ground transportation when BCEHS is unable to provide the appropriate level of care, in a timely fashion to transfer a patient. I.e. a lower level facility to a tertiary hospital as an "escort", on a patient to patient basis, relative to the exhaustion of our paramedic resources.

We are also getting wind of similar initiatives in other Health Authorities such as the Island. Please let your RVP's and Executive know of any details, intel, escalation or when you get word of these initiatives. We need all hands-on deck.

It is interesting to note that two temporary resources are being added; one in Kelowna out of 380, and the identified one at 580. Both are being staffed and managed completely different. We have every reason to believe that Kelowna is being rolled out for the most part in compliance with the Collective Agreement, and Prince George is not.

On April 21st, during a conference call, just prior to the Premier's announcement, the Employer confirmed all of the new positions announced (55 car and 5 aircraft) would be staffed by 873 members.

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020PREM0020-000725>, [BCEHS Memo](#) and [APBC Memo](#).

We understood that to mean that this included the aircraft in Prince George. The Employer later advised the Union that this announcement did not impact their plans with respect to the RN/PCP model they were going ahead with in Prince George, based out of 580.

We have received confirmation that the Prince George Airevac plans are scheduled to go into service on Monday, April 26th, regardless of our objections and clear collective agreement violations. We are further advised that training of the nurses started this morning in Prince George, in conjunction with four of our members from the Prince George post who have been appointed to the temporary positions at 580.

I can assure you we have been very clear on our position as a Union, that we are in support of these additional resources and are prepared to resolve the LR and Collective Agreement associated issues in any

way possible to move ahead expeditiously. We are not however, prepared to allow RN's to do our work. We have been working at every level to try and cooperatively resolve these matters to no avail thus far. We have made many attempts to correct this with the Employer with zero resolve; in fact, we have been "ghosted". Further to this the Employer has been misleading and has created a toxic, poisonous atmosphere for the Union and the rest of our members. The employees, particularly in Region 5, feel threatened and are afraid to speak up, fearing retribution.

Make no mistake, this is our work. We are in support of added resources, and very much in support of providing additional assistance to the areas like the North that have been neglected by BCEHS for a long time. We have expressed our commitment. Critical Care work is not only our work but is best performed by our highly skilled and trained CCP paramedics. We must exhaust and use internal measures and our paramedics for this work, to allow the nurses and allied health care providers to do the vital work they need to do. Particularly in view of significant shortages in the North as mentioned in this article:

https://www.princegeorgecitizen.com/news/local-news/area-nurses-struggle-with-staff-shortage-1.24120561?fbclid=IwAR1IbDBZJfg2AYpyv2IS5PU_CrP7FUi-zYOi72_72eHAodjnyzpZJTfCT8E

We have proposed providing training and utilizing our members with increased training and scope in either the same model previously used in Kelowna (with 380X) or an alternate one utilizing an ACP's configuration for the calls they feel the RNs are needed on. Things are unfolding quickly and we are using all legal, labour relations and political means available to fight this ill-advised and neglectful approach. We pledge to you that we will communicate and use all means at our disposal. These will be exhausted until this is corrected and we are asking for the following disclosures.

- We are putting BCNU on notice with regards to this directive, our position and the work jurisdiction matters.
- We are addressing and putting the Employer on notice for the numerous violations of the Collective Agreement, including but not limited to; temp posting violations, scheduling/wag, post hopping, contracting out, etc...
- We will utilize all expedited measures to reach resolution as soon as possible.
- We are working on the best way to ensure and enhance communications with our members In Prince George and the rest of the province.
- We are looking at and considering a town hall format for a virtual meeting as this unfolds.

Thank you, on behalf of your executive board.

Sincerely,



Troy Clifford
Provincial President
Ambulance Paramedics of BC
CUPE Local 873

TC/sd/MoveUp

