

MEMBER UPDATE

WILD ROSE MEMBERS (AND CHARTWELL GRIESBACH & HERITAGE VALLEY)
YARROW/OPTIMA LIVING
LOCAL 047 CHAPTER 054

AUPE APPLIES TO HAVE NEW WILDROSE OWNERS RESPECT CHARTWELL'S OBLIGATIONS TO MEMBERS

On January 18, 2021 AUPE filed a successorship application with the Alberta Labour Relations Board (ALRB) on behalf of the staff at Edmonton's Wild Rose Retirement Residences to retain their union membership and complete the process to achieve a fair collective agreement with the new owner of the facility. These members democratically voted to join AUPE in November 2018.

Back in November 2020, Chartwell blindsided the residents and staff at Wild Rose. Without warning, the multi-million dollar company sold Wild Rose to another corporate provider, Yarrow/Optima Living, in the middle of Chartwell's forced proposal vote.

As you know, you and your fellow members, across Wild Rose, Griesbach and Heritage Valley banded together to vote against the agreement. This sale means that Wild Rose will now be on its own path, separate from the other two facilities.

However, our successorship application asserts that Yarrow/Optima Living must accept all the obligations of the previous owner, including recognizing your rights as union members, and the progress you have already made on a first collective agreement.

For instance, Chartwell committed to entering into enhanced mediation and we expect Optima Living to honour this commitment. We cannot skip to arbitration, which is happening at Griesbach and Heritage Valley, but we can hold them to enhanced mediation. If we do not reach a settlement with Optima in enhanced mediation, we will also apply to move to arbitration, where a third-party arbitrator would impose a collective agreement.

Your needs haven't changed just because the owner of your workplace did, and AUPE will continue to help you meet those needs. Your fellow AUPE members at Chartwell and across the province stand in solidarity with you.

Quality seniors' care is clearly not the priority of for-profit companies like Chartwell or Optima. Selling Wild Rose is extremely disruptive to residents as well as workers, especially because of its hastiness.

When Optima took over a continuing-care home in Vegreville in 2019, they sub-contracted the work of 53 AUPE members to a company from B.C. and through that process downgraded working conditions.

More and more, for-profit seniors care companies are putting profits and real estate assets above seniors' health care and the workers who provide it. Now more than ever, you need the protections of your union, which is why we have applied for successorship rights.

Your AUPE representatives are here for you. The fight for a collective agreement is not over, and you can count on your fellow members and your representatives to support you every step of the way.

Stay tuned for more information about the ALRB application and any other developments in the transfer to the new owner/employer. If you have any concerns at all, please reach out.

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