

# BARGAINING UPDATE



## BETHANY CARE SOCIETY RIVERVIEW LOCAL 048 CHAPTER 048 – NURSING STAFF

# AUPE members at Bethany Riverview await labour-board decision

## Your negotiating team has applied to have talks go to arbitration

AUPE nursing-care members at Bethany Riverview are waiting for a written decision from the Alberta Labour Relations Board (ALRB) in their attempt to get a first contract with the employer.

This is the latest stage in the long and difficult process of negotiating a first collective agreement that began in March 2019, when AUPE was certified as the bargaining agent for all workers in nursing care at the Calgary facility.

The union has asked for the ALRB to declare that the settlement of the collective agreement should proceed to arbitration because of the failure to reach a deal. The employer has objected to this and said it wants both parties to return to formal mediation instead.

### How did we get to this point?

After AUPE gave notice to begin bargaining in April 2019, talks between the two sides were held in October and December of that year and in January of 2020.

These talks did not result in satisfactory progress, so AUPE applied to the ALRB for assistance. The labour board directed the union and employer to take part in enhanced mediation with an independent mediator.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused some delays, but both negotiating teams met with the mediator in October 2020, March 2021 and June 2021. The arbitrator the mediator issued

a report with draft recommendations in September 2021.

Bethany had some reservations about the report, but accepted it. AUPE members, however, voted to reject the mediator's recommendations. Your negotiating committee had recommended voting against it because it offered:

- No increase to wages or any compensation for 2020;
- A lump-sum payment of only \$500 for 2021;
- A 'me-too' wage increase based on what nursing-care workers employed by Alberta Health Services (AHS) were given when their agreement was finalized; and
- No increase in the \$850 annual flexible spending account.

It was at this point that AUPE applied for talks to go to arbitration.

### What happens next?

We must wait for the ALRB Chair to submit a written decision on our application to go to arbitration.

We presented oral arguments on our application in March 2022 and followed that with written submissions.

Until that decision is handed down, if you have questions or concerns, please contact a member of your negotiating team.

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