

HEALTHCARE NEWS



Candace Rennick and members of Local 2280 picket MPP Jeff Leal's office in Peterborough Feb. 14

Long Term Care Workers Win Budget Move Towards Standards of Care

Ontario adds 4300 nurses and personal support workers

During the 2007 election, Ontario's Liberals promised to introduce a guaranteed standard of personal care into Ontario's Long Term Care facilities, but residents, their families and workers are still waiting.

In the March 2008 budget the province announced an additional 4,300 nurses and personal support workers, but no standard of care. In response, Sue Schmidt, Chairperson of CUPE's Healthcare Workers' Coordinating Committee said "the new staff are desperately needed and very welcome. But what residents in long-term care really need is a standard of care."

The Harris government eliminated a guaranteed 2.25 hours of care a day.

The Liberal government has announced yet more consultation, led by Shirlee Sharkey. It is not clear that

she has a mandate to recommend a care standard. CUPE wants a standard at an average of 3.5 hours per resident per day. New Brunswick, a much poorer province, has 3.1 hours per day.

Conditions in Ontario's LTC facilities are worsening. CUPE members arrived at MPP offices all across the province on Valentine's Day to once again raise the deplorable conditions resulting from under funding and a lack of accountability on spending.

"We thought it was appropriate on Valentines Day to tell the government - it's time to care, it's time they had a heart and it's really time they followed through with the commitments that they made to workers and seniors in this province", said Candace Rennick, CUPE Ontario Second VP and long-term care worker.



Campaign To Step Up

CUPE Ontario is stepping up its fight for a guaranteed level of care for individuals living in Ontario's Long Term Care system. Please contact your MPP and demand 3.5 hours of Nursing and Personal Care per resident per day and the funding commitment to back it up.

CAMPAIGN TO END COMPETITIVE BIDDING IN HOME CARE



Natalie Mehra (Ontario Health Coalition) Patricia Pitt Anderson and Kelly O'Sullivan (CUPE) announce campaign to end competitive bidding at Queen's Park

Hospital Locals Fight Superlab Privatization

Eastern Ontario hospital locals have begun a campaign against a superlab which would strip lab testing from smaller communities and downsize the workforce by 10%. Community meetings happen across Eastern Ontario in May.



Liberals Must Keep Election Promise to Ban on Competitive Bidding in Home Care

CUPE Sets Up Homecare Hotline

The competitive bidding system has driven down wages in the home care sector in Ontario, caused thousands of workers to lose their jobs and led to staff turnover rates of over 50% a year. Care has deteriorated very significantly.

In December the Ontario Health Coalition, CUPE, OPSEU, ONA and SEIU fought the homecare competitive bidding system in Hamilton and forced the province to announce a temporary moratorium on competitive bidding.

**Major
Victory in
Hamilton**

1-888-599-0770

Hamilton locals 786, 4800, 778 and 5167 led the fight that put 4000 people into an arena and made the province move.

The Ontario Health Coalition has held 6 community meetings demanding a permanent ban.

CUPE is holding media conferences in Ottawa, Cornwall, St. Catharine's, Kingston, Hamilton, Windsor, Guelph, Toronto, North Bay, Peterborough, Belleville, London and Sudbury to push the province to extend the ban permanently.

Province Drags Feet on Labour Adjustment

7 months after CUPE and 4 other unions negotiated a provincial agreement that would have provided one year's severance pay for long-term care and home care workers and up to one year's pay to entice workers to transfer when health services move, the province has not agreed to support the deal with funding to employers.

Minister of Health George Smitherman promised that healthcare workers would not be the victims of restructuring and offered government assistance for labour adjustment when Bill 36 passed in May 2006.

Healthcare workers will discuss how to increase pressure on the Minister at the Ontario Division convention in May.

