

February 21, 2008

Fighting Health Care Privatization Ending Competitive Bidding in Home Care

TO: All CUPE Home Care and LHINs-Affected Locals
FROM: CUPE Ontario
Ontario Council of Hospital Unions (OCHU)

At the end of January 2008, Ontario's health and long-term care minister announced a temporary province-wide moratorium on home care competitive bidding, while his ministry conducts a two-month 'internal' review of the contract process.

It is the second time in four years that the minister has halted bidding and taken time to review a contract competition model that isn't working well for Ontarians.

Since contract competition began in the mid-90s, for-profit corporations have taken over home care province-wide. Not-for-profit home care agencies, that once provided the majority of services and supports to communities, have been all but eliminated under the competitive bidding model. In the process, home care costs have increased, the range of services and supports declined, and the wages and working conditions of home care workers have been diminished substantially.

While the minister again reviews a flawed competition model, we have an opportunity to build a public, not-for-profit home care system. Our goal is to move quickly on a province-wide CUPE campaign that puts home care workers front-and-centre in our communities advocating for:

- 1.** Province-wide public hearings on home care competitive bidding.
- 2.** An end to competitive bidding in home care.
- 3.** A public, not-for-profit, integrated and cooperative model for home care in Ontario to improve care/services for patients and working conditions for front line home care staff.

This campaign is an important anti-privatization fight in Ontario. Ending competitive bidding in home care is key to stopping health service privatization in hospitals, long-term care, and community-based social services. The province-wide campaign includes: community media conferences to announce a 1-800 patient and worker hotline number and town hall meetings with the Ontario Health Coalition (OHC).

More information will be provided to all CUPE home care, hospital and social services LHINs-affected locals on a telephone broadcast call (call-in # 1-800-786-6596) on Monday, March 3 at 7 p.m.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sid Ryan".

Sid Ryan
President, CUPE Ontario

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Hurley".

Michael Hurley
President, OCHU