

Division Executive Update
December 2006

PANDEMIC PLANNING

OPSEU's position is that it is reasonable for employers to provide N95 masks as a form of respiratory protection. The Ministry of Labour (who administrates the health and safety act) has not yet issued any written directives on what personal protective equipment a health care professional should be wearing in a pandemic situation. The CDC (centre for disease control) has stated that it is "prudent" to use an N95 mask when caring for a patient with pandemic flu. OPSEU will be sending advice to all of the health care workers in early 2007, as well as a guide to the provinces pandemic plan. Presently awaiting latest recommendations from the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC) due this month. MOH Health and Safety meeting to take place in January. There is a respirator N95 available which will accommodate full facial beards.

SECTION 21 COMMITTEE

Under the auspices of the Ontario Health and Safety Act to address Health Care Sector concerns. Committee members include representatives from Labour (including Lisa McCaskell on behalf of OPSEU), various Ministries and other various stakeholder organizations. The inaugural meeting took place on Sept. 12, and the most recent was on Oct. 31.

The Executive discussed the need for Section 21 committee, specific to paramedics, similar to existing committees for Fire and Police.

HEALTH CARE DIVISIONAL COUNCIL

The generic Workload Investigation Survey was distributed and discussed. Modifications specific to the Ambulance Division were tabled. The survey will be forwarded to Local leaders for completion on behalf of their workplaces in early 2007. It is hoped that these surveys, in conjunction with other sectors in the Health Care Division will help to demonstrate the need for improved funding and resources from the MOHLTC.

OMERS

The OMERS Pension Survey for Paramedics was reviewed. The Division will await a costing from OMERS (expected early 2008) before distributing a survey to the membership, that will be used to develop principles for bargaining. In the meantime, it is recommended that all units incorporate language that will allow the right to address this issue if the collective agreement expires in than September 2008.

BROADER PUBLIC SECTOR CONFERENCE

The 2007 BPS Conference will be taking place at the Delta Meadowvale Hotel in Mississauga June 1-3.

The WSIB level II course will be offered for Ambulance Division members. All units are required to pay their Divisional dues for 2006 and 2007 by the Conference Registration deadline or relinquish the right to delegate status for the Division meeting on the last day of the Conference.

Per the Divisional bylaws, the dues are payable as follows:

- \$2.00 per member for all Ambulance and Dispatch bargaining units, with a \$100.00 minimum.

CLASS "F" CERTIFICATION

Arbitration is ongoing in Simcoe County, in regards to a Paramedic who lost his "F" Class license due to medical reasons (i.e. vision changes). The Ambulance Act requires all Paramedics hold a valid license to drive an ambulance as part of the qualifications to be eligible for employment.

RESUSCITATION OUTCOMES CONSORTIUM STUDY

A draft ROC Study waiver between the employer and the union was discussed. All Paramedics will be encouraged to have the waiver completed before participating. The waiver can easily be modified to address any "study", that the employer wishes the members to participate in.

EATING PERIODS

Changes to Section 20 of the Employment Standards Act, allow for an agreement between the parties pertaining to "eating periods" and hours between scheduled shifts.

EMCA REWRITE REVIEW COMMITTEE

There appears to be some indication, that prior to the Directors order to rewrite your EMCA is enacted, it is pasted before a Peer review committee. No other information is available, other than it has been in place for approximately six months.

DIRECTORS REPORTS

Patrick Fry-Smith

OPSEU continues to meet with MOHLTC on several issues including ergonomic 24 hour chairs, availability of part time staff as well as dispatchers being restricted from using the Ministry's computer system.

The *Windsor CACC* has had the Ministry of Labour into their workplace and orders were issued around the ministries refusal to maintain a hazardous address/patient database. MOHLTC is currently contesting the Ministry of Labour's order, OPSEU is working with CUPE (the union that represents the paramedics in Windsor) to assist in any way, as this issue continues to be an issue to all paramedics in Ontario.

Terry Baker

Lennox and Addington are entering in to bargaining for two contracts, one for the North and one for the South.

Frontenac County bargaining continues and Kingston dispatch is getting ready for bargaining in early January 2007.

No response from *Northumberland* or *Kawartha Lakes* to the Directors inquiry for updates

Darryl Taylor/TREASURER

Negotiations began at the *Manitoulin-Sudbury DSSAB* on November 6th. There have been four dates so far, with the next date on January 8th.

The dues formula is \$2.00 per member per year, with a 50 member (\$100) per ambulance unit annual minimum.

John Rinehart

London Middlesex has had 3 negotiation meetings with talks breaking down last day. We are going to conciliation with no date set as of yet.

Oxford counties contract expires at the end of December and are expected to start negotiations early in the New Year.

Both Lambton County and Chatham Kent are heading to arbitration. Windsor has nothing new to report.

Perth and Huron Counties contract expires in 2007 and are expected to be watching to see what happens in Middlesex.

Brenda Wilson Young

Peel Region will begin negotiations in spring. (contract expires Mar. 31/07)
Hybrid deployment plan remains difficult for employees in Peel region. Difficulty in staffing trucks due to working conditions. High percentages of workers are off on WSIB, short term disability and LOA's. Company has hired 28 contract workers to cover these vacancies.

Due to the deployment plan, health and safety committee has been busy having ergonomic assessments done from a third party consulting firm examining the patient compartment and cabs. Hearing testing is being done on medics as well. Paramedics are

spending the better part of 2 hours at a time in trucks on standby - like posts. Mobile from post to post between calls.

ROC study not cancelled as of Dec. 8th. Plans to roll out in Jan. 2007.
GPS units have been installed in all vehicles.

New leadership elected in Nov. 2006

Halton Region will commence negotiations in New Year (Jan. 07). Contract expires the Dec. 31 2006.

Delegation of medical acts now controlled by the Sunnybrook Base hospital.
Region has purchased the Metro Toronto ACP program and will train ACP's in house.
The Region will be adopting the OSCE (oral skills competency examination) testing/certification process with new ACP's.

Guelph/Wellington's new contract is favourable with members.

Concerns at the union level re: medics not being paid if employees doesn't "swipe in"
policy grievance filed, awaiting arbitration.

Employer is handing out suspensions if employees lose their narcotic keys.

Will be going to paperless ACR's in Jan. 2007

Brad/HEALTH AND SAFETY

Hamilton's first day of Arbitration is scheduled for Dec. 15 2006. To date there has been at least 30 days bargaining, with 20-30 issues left to arbitrate. This is a first collective agreement arbitration.

Numerous outstanding grievances are awaiting arbitration dates. At least 200 on file, filed as far back as Sept 2004.

Ongoing grievance over missed meal breaks continues with approx 700 individual grievances filed to date.

The Service is currently under review by Health Analytics. These consultants were hired after local Medics held a public rally in May 2005, re: poor response times and downstaffing. Review due Feb 2007.

Brant is preparing for upcoming Bargaining.

A recent grievance settlement makes the employer responsible to pay/provide annual recertification in CPR.

All employees have been issued personal Safety Helmets, Reflective Vests and through a gradual process, new winter jackets with improved reflective striping.

Local medics have ongoing concerns with MOH<C annual review/ investigations.

Employees concerned that the Inspectors are accessing personal info of employees in

contravention of PHIPA and PIPEDA.

Norfolk: No report filed by Norfolk at time of printing

Health and Safety: attended recent provincial H&S committee meeting. Numerous Provincial issues discussed. Ongoing appeals by Essex County re: two portable radios and Flagging Dangerous Addresses.

This committee consists of Paramedics from OPSEU, CUPE, SEIU, and CAW. The committee welcomes all H&S reps from any Provincial service.

Many helpful links can be found at the PEMS HSAC website such as previous MOL orders.