



NEWS

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A Newsletter for OPSEU members working in community health care

Champlain CCAC Local 4101

Forging ahead for an effective local

Much work has been accomplished in the few months since OPSEU won the right to represent the professional staff at the Champlain CCAC. The transition committee members and stewards have worked closely with staff representative Pat Schillemore to lay the groundwork for a strong and effective local. More than 94 per cent of the professional staff has signed membership cards.

On Nov. 24, 2007, Local 4101 held its first general membership meeting at the Travelodge Ottawa Hotel and Conference Centre. In attendance were Regional VP Dave Lundy, Regional Executive Board Member Lynn Orzel, Chair of the Community Health Care Professionals Division Lois Boggs and organizer Ed Ogibowski. During this meeting, the local by-laws were adopted. Elections were held for the local executive officers, trustees, and communications and nominations committees. The bargaining team was also elected. Bargaining survey results were presented to the membership and demands for negotiations were established.

The bargaining team met with the employer on Oct. 29 to negotiate common provisions from the various inherited collective agreements. As is the case of the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant CCAC, the employer referred the matter to the labour board for a decision. OPSEU made its submission on Nov. 13. The Labour board hearing on the issue, scheduled on Jan. 22, was cancelled due to inclement weather. OPSEU legal counsel has been in communications with a Labour Board LRO. A decision is pending.

In the past, OPSEU has had good labour relations with the previous employers – the Eastern Counties



Front Row (L to R): Christine Mynott (Membership Secretary), Sophie Racine-Sigman (Secretary), Elaine Giles (Treasurer), Debbie Chadsey (Ottawa Branch, 1st VP). Back Row (L to R): Lynn Orzel (EMB), Dave Lundy (EMB), Cam Manson (Chief Steward), Shelley Hickson (Pembroke Branch, 3VP), Louise Mulligan-Roy (President). Absent: Chantel Vachon (Eastern Counties Branch, 2VP)

CCAC and Renfrew County CCAC. However, L4101 is currently faced with multiple challenges in regard to maintaining its relationship with the Champlain CCAC. The employer has been implementing numerous changes without disclosure to the Union, has reneged on agreements reached with the union and more recently refused to comply with the posting provisions of the two ONA and two OPSEU collective agreements. OPSEU has been diligently enforcing the five collective agreements and filing grievances on behalf of its affected members.

CASC de Champlain, section locale 4101

Prendre de l'avance pour une section locale efficace

Beaucoup de travail s'est effectué dans les quelques mois suivant l'octroi du droit au SEFPO de représenter le personnel professionnel du Centre d'accès aux soins communautaires (CASC) de Champlain. Les membres du comité de transition et les délégués syndicaux ont travaillé en étroite collaboration avec la négociatrice Pat Schillemore afin d'établir une base solide essentielle à la mise sur pied d'une section locale efficace. Plus de 94 % du personnel professionnel ont signé une carte de membre du SEFPO.

Le 24 novembre 2007, la section locale 4101 a tenu sa première réunion générale à l'hôtel et centre de conférence Travelodge d'Ottawa. Étaient présents Dave Lundy, vice-président régional, Lynn Orzel, membre du conseil exécutif régional, Lois Boggs, présidente de la division des professionnels des soins de santé communautaires et Ed Ogibowski, recruteur du SEFPO. Lors de la réunion, les règlements de fonctionnement de la section locale ont été adoptés. Les élections du comité exécutif, des vérificateurs et des comités de communication et de nominations ont eu lieu. L'équipe de négociation a également été élue. Les résultats du sondage préalable à la négociation ont été présentés à l'assemblée et les revendications ont été établies.

L'équipe de négociation a rencontré l'employeur le 29 octobre pour négocier les dispositions semblables de plusieurs conventions collectives précédentes. Comme dans le cas du CASC de Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant, l'employeur a référé la question à la Commission des relations de travail pour une décision. Le SEFPO a fait parvenir sa proposition le 13 novembre.

L'audience de la cause devant la Commission des relations de travail, planifiée pour le 22 janvier 2008, a été reportée en raison de la météo défavorable. Nous attendons une décision.



L to R: Pat Schillemore (Staff Rep), Ed Ogibowski (Organizer), Lois Boggs (Chair Sector 17 Community Health Care Professionals)

Dans le passé, le SEFPO a entretenu de bonnes relations de travail avec les employeurs précédents – le CASC des comtés de l'Est et le CASC du comté de Renfrew. Toutefois, la section locale 4101 fait présentement face à de nombreux défis pour garder une bonne relation de travail avec le CASC de Champlain. Cet employeur a mis en œuvre de nombreux changements sans donner préavis au syndicat, a changé de position par rapport aux ententes négociées avec le syndicat et, plus récemment, a refusé de respecter les dispositions relatives à l'affichage de postes contenues dans les deux conventions collectives d'ONA et les deux conventions collectives du SEFPO.

À l'heure actuelle, le syndicat travaille avec diligence pour assurer le respect des cinq conventions collectives. En cas de besoin, il déposera des griefs au nom des membres concernés.

Competitive bidding brought to a halt

On Dec. 13, 2007, the Victorian Order of Nurses (OPSEU Local 269) was dropped from the tendering process to decide home care nursing services in the Hamilton region. After providing nursing to the Hamilton area for 107 years, the local was told that about 100 nursing and administrative workers would be left without jobs after March 31 as a result of the decision.

VON was the second not-for-profit agency in the Hamilton region to be disqualified that week. St. Joseph's Home Care discovered earlier that it also failed to continue forward in the bidding process. Together the two largest not-for-profit agencies in the region provide 80 per cent of the home nursing care in this area.

Together, with OPSEU in the lead, VON worked with St. Joe's to fight to launch a campaign to end the flawed bidding system. This campaign came to a climax on the evening of Jan. 16, 2008. A rally was attended by more than 1,500 supporters of the VON and St. Joe's, filling a local banquet hall to capacity. Many others were left outside, unable to get through the doors. The rally featured many special guests, including OPSEU President Warren (Smokey) Thomas.

With the support of OPSEU, the community, MPs, MPPs and many others, success was achieved. On Jan. 23, 2008, Health Minister George Smitherman, halted the awarding of a new Hamilton nursing contract that would have ended generations of service to the community by the VON and St. Joseph's Home Care.

On Jan. 28 Health Minister George Smitherman officially froze the competitive bidding process across Ontario's home care sector. No request for proposals (RFP's) for nursing, personal support, therapy and homemaking services will be issued until the government has an opportunity to review the current Community Care Access Centre procurement process.

The battle still continues, as there has yet to be a decision on the next steps of the RFP's.

Retention and recruitment of staff is becoming more difficult. More staff is leaving to employers



Comedian Mary Walsh co-hosted a rally in Hamilton attended by more than 1,500 supporters of the VON and St. Joseph's Home Care.

that offer more security, higher wages and stability. OPSEU met with Health Minister George Smitherman Feb. 13 to discuss ways of bringing stability to the sector. The union is also working with the Ontario Federation of Labour Health Care Committee to develop an alternative proposal to competitive bidding.

Solutions could include:

- No automatic contract issue dates: if an agency is working well, its contract would continue to be renewed
- An ability for the CCAC to upload staff in cases where agencies cannot provide quality management.
- Greater compensation equity between sectors to retain workers in home care

Watch for coming editions of OPSEU's "Dialogue" for further updates on this issue.

'Aging at home' initiative duplicates effort to serve seniors

The CCACs were set up to serve frail and elderly populations, providing referrals to long term care homes and home care.

The government has recently initiated a \$700 million three-year initiative where the LHINs — not the CCACs — contract services to assist seniors in their homes.

For example, the South East LHIN has contracted the VON to administer a pilot support program to seniors that is independent of the Community Care Access Centres (CCACs).

The VON will administer the regional three-year \$17.4 million program to provide supports to keep seniors in their home.

It doesn't mean the VON staff will be providing the service. Dubbed the SMILE program – Seniors

Managing Independent Living Easily – the program will serve as a broker for such services as transportation, laundry, shopping, running errands, or around the house chores.

“That might mean compensating a neighbour or local business for a home care service, or tapping into services from an existing community support service agency,” says Georgina Thompson, Chair of the SE LHIN.

Housekeeping services used to be provided by many CCACs prior to years of budget shortfalls. The new service means much of this work will be picked up by the voluntary or commercial non-union sector.

It is an odd move for a LHIN that is supposed to integrate services, rather than create new parallel structures.

Northeast CCAC and Carefor choose OPSEU in recent votes

OPSEU is proud to welcome our newest CCAC members. In a vote held Oct. 29-30, 230 North East CCAC Office/Clerical/Administration staff voted heavily in favour of joining OPSEU. This group also includes all the direct service providers (therapists, dietician, rehab assistants) in 18 work locations that span Region 6. Also, as a result of the vote, OPSEU is the only union in Ontario that still represents direct service therapy staff at the CCACs. Organizers Tracey Mussett and Lois Boggs thank Local Team Members Laurie McLachlan & Peggy Richardson (OPSEU Local

667 – North Bay) and Sylvie Brulé & Elyse Lebeau (OPSEU Local 675 – Sudbury) for all of their hard work during this campaign.

OPSEU also welcomes our newest members at Carefor in Ottawa. Carefor Health and Community Services is a not-for-profit, charitable health care organization offering community allied health services, personal support, nursing care, meals on wheels and transportation. In a recent representation vote, the 30 paramedical employees voted 100 per cent in favour of joining OPSEU. Welcome!

2007-2009 Community Health Care Professionals Executive

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