



TAKE ACTION ON **COMMUNITY HEALTH!**

*A campaign bulletin for OPSEU members
working in community care*

November 2, 2000

Local 274 Update:

Members of OPSEU Local 274 are entering their fourth week on strike. At a rally held on Tuesday, October 24, strikers were joined by staff from surrounding area CCACs, as well as provincial and local politicians.

Ted McMeekin, MPP, whose father was a client said:
"Because of the work that you do, my father was able to die at home, surrounded by his family and home care professionals."

Strikers wearing crowns made from Kraft Dinner boxes sang Solidarity Forever, with a verse focused on the strike issues:

*We're waiting for the parity
that really should be there,
That's why we're fighting
powerfully for what should be
our share,
We're striking for a settlement
that's honourable and fair.
We know our cause is right.*

Sue McSheffrey, Chair of the Community Health Care Professionals Division, brought greetings and donations from other OPSEU locals. OPSEU President Leah Casselman and Region 2

Vice-President Vic Vinerskis also spoke.

On Saturday, 200 people joined strikers at the CCAC headquarters as part of the annual Ontario Health Coalition Day of Action on Health Care. Speakers included Pam Clark, local 274 president; Gwen Lee, seniors activist; Wayne Marston, president of the Hamilton and District Labour Council, as well as local and provincial politicians.

Lois on tour:

Lois Boggs, President of Local 269 at the Hamilton-Wentworth Victorian Order of Nurses is available to come to your local meeting to talk about building their local and mobilizing towards their strike. You can reach Lois at **(905) 541-5212.**

Home Care: The Silent Crisis:

A group of Local 269 members at the Hamilton-Wentworth VON want to keep home care issues on the front burner, especially during the federal election. They have written a flyer which is now

available through OPSEU and the Ontario Health Coalition. The flyer asks people concerned about home care to call Mike Harris and Elizabeth Witmer. It also asks people to contact federal Health Minister Allan Rock to demand that home care be protected under the Canada Health Act.

People with stories to tell are encouraged to call the home care hotline at:
1-877-561-8692, or write to:
Ontario Health Coalition,
15 Gervais Drive,
Toronto, M3C 1Y8.

Thanks to OPSEU members Greg Cressman, Mary Catherine Rilett and Judith May, as well as VON Volunteer Frank Miller for their work.

You can order multiple copies of the flyer by contacting Barb Linds at OPSEU head office.

Now Available:

Ontario Health Coalition's
**Guide to the New Long
Term Care Act**
Ontario Health Coalition
Primary Care Reform

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Position Paper

Ontario Community Support Association (OCSA) document, The Effect of the Managed Competition Model on Home Care in Ontario: Emerging Issues and Recommendations

To and from the minister:

OPSEU President Leah Casselman wrote a letter to Health Minister Elizabeth Witmer about homecare issues including her concern about wage disparity between hospital and community home care employees.

In response to this letter, Witmer said that she has received a report from the Joint Provincial Nursing Committee, as well as the recommendations of the Community Wage Disparity Working Group, and that she has asked ministry staff to review the recommendations.

She said that a review is being done of the long term care community equity funding formula. She will be provided with recommendations for improving the allocation of community funding.

The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care has initiated a review of the CCAC program to determine the extent to which CCACs are meeting their mandate to ensure fair and equitable

access to the highest quality services at the best cost.

The Ontario Health Coalition responded to this review in a letter to the Minister:

"The experience of managed competition in the home care sector, and the chaotic results of health cuts and restructuring underline the crucial need for your government to assess communities' needs and listen to their feedback. Your current review of the CCACs is an opportune time for your government to hear from Ontarians about what is and is not working. Our members have expressed to us serious concerns about the lack of democracy in the governance - and secrecy shrouding the service contracts - of some CCACs as well as issues with service levels and duplication. We call upon your government to include broad public consultation in your evaluation of the CCACs."

New Zealand abolishes market-led health model:

New Zealand Health minister Annette King recently unveiled health reform legislation.

"(it was) a commitment that we were going to restore a New Zealand public health service that was based on co-operation and collaboration, that we were going to replace the current commercial and

competitive model, that we were going to ensure that local communities once again had a say in the running of health services, and that we were going to focus on improving people's health as the fundamental role of a health service."

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Authorized for distribution:



Leah Casselman, president