



# Hospital CEOs get \$25,000 pay raises. *What do you get?*

**To:** Hospital professionals involved in central bargaining  
**From:** Aimee Axler, chair, Central Bargaining Team,  
OPSEU Hospital Professionals Division  
**Date:** January 29, 2003  
**Subject:** Taking action for higher wages, better health care, and  
RESPECT from your employer

Dear colleague:

As you know, your collective agreement expired on March 31, 2002. Ten months later, we still don't have a new contract.

The employer bargaining team is in no hurry to give us one. Why should they be? In 2001, the average pay raise for their hospital Presidents and Chief Executive Officers was \$24,485.56 a year!

But while hospital bosses are doing fine, hospital professionals like you and me are not. Our wages have fallen far behind compared to wages at other hospitals and in related professions like nursing.

Even worse, we've seen workload stress go through the roof in many hospitals. We're responsible for more patients. We're doing more work for patients who require more care and more complex care. We're working longer, harder, and faster, and we're skipping breaks.

Recently, your union hired a professional polling firm to survey 608 hospital professionals – you and your co-workers. What we learned confirmed our worst fears. Of those interviewed, over 90 per cent said their workload had increased while staffing levels had declined or stayed the same. It's a fact: Ontario hospitals are understaffed

This hurts your health. It hurts our patients' health. **In our survey, 78 per cent said shortages in their profession are negatively affecting patient care.**

We've got to do something. That's why, on January 11, local presidents from hospitals across the province voted to do something we've never done before.

*(please turn over)*

**We are declaring a Hospital Emergency Day of Action on February 13. OPSEU members will be engaging in major protest action on that day.**

It's a big step, I know. It means taking a risk. You could be disciplined. If you are, the union will challenge it. Sometimes in life, though, we have to stand up for what's right. One of those times is now.

Of course, OPSEU is committed to safeguarding patients. Don't let your employer tell you differently.

**We wouldn't suggest this Day of Action if we hadn't tried everything else.** We've written letters. We've been in the news. We've demonstrated. We've lobbied. We've had our issues raised in the Legislature.

Most of all, we kept on bargaining until the employer quit. Ten months later, we still have no contract. It's time for strong persuasion.

The employer has agreed to arbitration for just six of the 40 hospitals covered under central bargaining. We have no guarantee of a successful outcome. In any case, the employer has refused to apply the results of those arbitrations to the other 34 hospitals. Our problems could go on for years.

Hospital professionals do the same work no matter where they work in Ontario. We all deserve the same treatment, and that means fair treatment. That is why central bargaining is so important.

If we apply pressure now, we believe we will be able to negotiate a central collective agreement or convince the Ontario Hospital Association to agree to central arbitration. Either way, we win.

Winning takes courage. Our plan is a bold one. I know you will have a thousand questions about our plan – far too many to be answered in a short letter. In the days ahead, get informed. Check our web site at [www.hospitalprofessionals.org](http://www.hospitalprofessionals.org). Call our hotline at **1-877-561-8692**. Speak to your local steward. Talk to your co-workers. And get ready to take action.

We are going forward with the full backing of OPSEU President Leah Casselman, the OPSEU Executive Board, and the resources of a 100,000-member union. **Together, we can win. On February 13, let's make it happen.**

In solidarity,



Aimee Axler  
Chair, Central Bargaining Team  
Hospital Professionals Division

Authorized for distribution:



Leah Casselman, President.

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