



# Help us save Central Bargaining

## *It's your contract too!*

**To:** Hospital professionals NOT involved in central bargaining  
**From:** Aimee Axler, chair, Central Bargaining Team,  
OPSEU Hospital Professionals Division  
**Date:** January 31, 2003  
**Subject:** February 13 Day of Action – The central agreement affects you too

Dear colleague:

The OPSEU central collective agreement with the OHA 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.

**As you know, over the past 10 years, 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.

**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.

We are declaring a Hospital Emergency Day of Action on February 13. **Members in centrally participating hospitals across Ontario will be doing "Whatever it takes" to get a great central contract. We ask for your active support.**

Of course, OPSEU is committed to patient safety and no matter what happens on February 13, there should be enough staff to handle critical care situations.

**We've 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 central contract.

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.**

How does this affect you?

*(please turn over)*

For 25 years, a strong central agreement has been the backbone of labour market conditions in our hospitals. 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 Hospitals Association to agree to central arbitration. Either way, we win. You win too. That's why we're asking for your help.

We are asking you, as members in non-participating hospitals, to support our Day of Action. Here is what you can do:

Hold a local meeting to decide if your members are prepared to join us. Once your local decides, it should inform the hospital that there is a Day of Action on Feb. 13 at your hospital and that, whatever happens, patient safety would be preserved. Please involve your staff representative in your local plans.

You or several members of your local may:

- Join a picket line at a participating hospital in your community; and
- Hold a lunchtime picket at your own hospital (picket signs available from your regional office); and/or
- Wear red in the workplace; and/or
- Contact other OPSEU members in your community for assistance; and/or
- Attend a general membership meeting and discuss possible actions; and/or
- Do a news release in your local community explaining this action (assistance available from OPSEU head office)

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.**

**Your action in support of other hospital professionals will be appreciated. If your local is in negotiations, or waiting for an award, it is all the more urgent for you to participate.**

OPSEU is supporting this action with the full resources of the union. We need your support to get a great central agreement, one that will set the bar for other agreements across the province in the years to come. **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.