

Cadogan Chatline

March 2006



« Honour in Battle »

Sector 8 Long Term Care and Related Facilities

Update on the sector

We're Back! Sorry for the delay with your newsletter but with the changing of the guard came a few delays!

BPS Conference

This meeting of OPSEU delegates from the broader public sector, held the weekend of Sept. 15-18, was a fantastic display of willingness to keep the members informed and armed with sound and helpful information.

Bullying in the Workplace

In the Long Term Care Sector, our local representatives were presented with a half-day seminar on bullying in the workplace by management. If your steward has not yet shared the information please ask for a copy of the power-point or contact a member of the division executive. It is informative and educational, and it also provides a sense of confidence along with a solid basis to judge whether you are being openly discriminated, harassed or just plain being "pushed around" by your administrator.

Health and Safety

Saturday and Sunday of the BPS provided members with a useful presentation of health and safety

matters and how the law is there to protect and help employees in the workplace. Lisa McCaskell and Terri Aversa, OPSEU health and safety officers, reminded us how easy it is to slip into taking a shortcut to get the job done. We forget how one shortcut turns into a habit and how management saves at our expense.

Med Dispensing

Every time we crush a pill or dispense a powdered med we are breathing tiny amounts of the drug. Over time this could cause respiratory problems such as asthma. Please check with your health and safety representatives to ensure masks are always available on or near your med carts when dealing with these situations. Remember – providing safety equipment to the employees is management's responsibility. Using the equipment is our responsibility!

The Pandemic

We have all seen items in the media about the increasing concern of a worldwide flu virus that could potentially kill thousands. In response to this OPSEU and several other unions and other health care organizations will provide both



Members of the Long Term Care Facilities Sector Executive, Debbie MacDonald, Carol Bonnis, Joan White, Kimberly Hayes Rogers.

the government and the public with ideas on how to prevent, treat and limit the effects a worldwide flu virus might have. Read up on it! While the possibility of it occurring may seem far-fetched, our lack of knowledge will be what causes us harm.

Needlestick Campaign

Every time anyone administers a needle we increase our chances of getting an infection. OPSEU has begun an advertising campaign and has lobbied the Ontario government to pass legislation forcing health care employers to use retractable needles. (When used the needle tip retracts into the vial.)

For more information check out:
www.saferneedles.ca

Meet your 2005-2007

Sector executive

A new executive was formed at the BPS Conference. Thank you to all who have served before us - we do not go into battle unarmed.

Debbie MacDonald

Chair

Employed with Sherwood Park Manor Home full time since Dec. 1977, I have worked in housekeeping, laundry, activities and as a HCA. I have been departmental clerk since Feb. 1998. An active member of OPSEU, I was part of organizing my facility in 1989, have been on the executive in many roles, and am now local vice-president. A co-founder of the Long Term Care Sector in 1990, I've been secretary-treasurer, vice-chair and am now chair. I have been married for 27 years and am a mother of a 24-year-old daughter. I enjoy reading, decorating, shopping and family time.

Carol Bonnis

Vice-Chair

A co-founder of Local 305, James Street Place in Bracebridge, Ontario, I've been unit steward since 1999. I have helped our members go from having no contract to being a part of negotiating two contracts. Listed as a guest attendant, I am a certified PSW who has trained for all positions. I was first alternate for the sector in 2003 and was elected vice-chair of the sector at the BPS Conference in 2005.

I enjoy outdoor activities including ATV riding and hunting!

Joan White

Secretary

A health care aide, I have been with Local 261, Allendale in Milton, since 1994. As vice president of Local 261, I am also a member of

our joint health and safety committee and our negotiating team. I do orientation of new members and also edit our employee newsletter *Local 261 Briefs*. My interests include sewing, cross-stitch and baking. I train at a local martial arts club and have my blue belt in jiu jitsu. With LHINs, the pandemic and the overall workload our members face in long-term care, I take my position to keep you informed very seriously.

Kimberly Hayes-Rogers

Communications

Elected shop steward for Local 305 in June 2005, I am on our recently formed joint health and safety committee and have started an employee newsletter called *The James Street Junction*. While listed as a guest attendant at James Street Place in Bracebridge, I have trained for all shifts. I was hired in 2003 for and still enjoy the position of morning cook. I have been married 20 years and am sending four sons off to college and university to regain my sanity. I am an avid dart player. I have a strong conviction that union members have a right to know and am always promoting that the information the stewards receive needs to get to members. I hope to continue this through our sector newsletter.

Tell us about ourselves

Over the next few issues we will feature our long-term care locals. We hope this brings our sector closer through sharing both what is good and what needs to be improved in our own workplaces and by seeing what is done elsewhere.

James Street Place

Located in Bracebridge, we are members of Local 305.

We are a 73-room facility. We are considered an independent living facility but the number of residents who need "hands on care" (i.e. escorting to and from dining room, dressing for the day or bedtime) has increased. We now have five full-time employees, eight part-time employees with two student positions and varying casual employees. While our job duties and training vary from RPNs to floor staff who assist with resident care and housekeeping, to the cooks in the kitchen, we are covered by the blanket title "guest attendant."

Like many other facilities in health care our workload is increasing with a continued decrease in respect for the extra effort. We have let management disregard our collective agreement and the rights and privileges our stewards have bargained for. We have allowed management to bully us into taking shorter breaks and doing more work in the guise that we are helping our fellow co-workers. This must stop.

A push to get information to the members has started a renewed awareness that while the collective agreement grants us certain rights we must speak up to ensure those rights are adhered to!

The Pines

Also located in Bracebridge, we are another unit of Local 305 of OPSEU. We are a 160-bed facility that is now filled. Our facility houses two "locked" wards and two open wards and our residents range from those needing physical

assistance to people coping with mental deterioration. Our membership covers positions from dietary staff, to housekeeping, to those responsible for medications. Our employer, the District of Muskoka, requires employees to have an educational background with supporting documents (i.e food handlers course for the kitchen, PSW, RPN). There are 60 full-time and 81 part-time positions with varying casual or call-in positions.

The biggest concern in our local is staffing. There have been several big changes in the nursing and dietary departments. Our members also find it hard to get vacation time and statutory holidays.

We need to build interest in the union, increase turnouts for union meetings and hear from members about their concerns, questions or ideas. With a recent move to a new building and new union reps in place we are hoping to learn from our mistakes and from the mistakes of others. Local 305, The Pines is getting ready for new contract negotiations.

Notes from the vice-chair

By Carol Bonnis, Local 305

On Nov. 22 and 23, 2005, the first meeting of the newly elected sector executive was held. With this meeting we cleared up business from the previous executive. We also set the agenda, assigned the phone tree and set meeting dates for 2006.

Debbie MacDonald returns for another term as chair of the Long Term Care Sector.

With Debbie as the only retuning

executive member, this meeting was a learning experience for the other members of our executive.

Notes from the Chair

By Debbie MacDonald, Local 439

Our first meeting of 2006 was very full! All the health sectors met with the Health Care Divisional Council Feb. 2. Included in the discussions was what direction we wanted the HCDC to focus on over the next two years. With workload and health and safety major concerns we also discussed LHINs. All involved seemed to agree we need to focus on organizing the unorganized since this would not only benefit all workers in health care, it would also deter for-profit companies from getting involved in our workplaces.

For more on the LHINs see:

www.protecthealthcare.ca

BPS Planning

Welcome to our two new units Post Inn Village and Creekway Village!

A huge task has begun to create and complete a database that will list all BPS grievances by the 2006 Convention (April).

We have started planning for the 2007 BPS conference and beyond in our sector.

In Sept. 2006 the sector executive plan a dry run presentation of the presentation Facing Management, to fine-tune and ready it so it will benefit all our members.

We hope to organize coordinated bargaining and common language in all our contracts. Keeping



Members of OPSEU say "NO" to LHINs along with members of ONA, CUPE and SEIU

members up to date through newsletters and FYIs will continue.

Contact us

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