



# Canadian Health Professionals Secretariat

**Meeting Report**

Ottawa

October 26-27, 2006

## Participants

### **AAHP**

Ken Bulger  
Sharon King

### **HSAA/NUPGE**

Lynette McAvoy

### **HSABC/NUPGE**

Cindy Stewart  
Hans Brown  
Reid Johnson

### **HSAS**

Chris Driol  
Kevin Glass

### **MAHCP**

Wendy Despins  
Lee Manning  
Tom Walus

### **MGEU/NUPGE**

Lois Wales

### **NAPE/NUPGE**

Gilbert Butt  
Christina Kennedy

### **NBUPPE/NUPGE**

Debbie Lacelle

### **NSGEU/NUPGE**

Michael Pronk  
Lynette Johnson

### **NUPGE**

Mike Luff  
Louise Trépanier

### **OPSEU/NUPGE**

Patty Rout  
Michele Dawson Haber  
Anthony Morabito

### **PEIUPSE/NUPGE**

Carol McInnis

## Guest Speakers

David Robbins, Campaign Coordinator, Canadian Health Coalition

Larry Brown, NUPGE National Secretary-Treasurer

Anne-Marie DeLorey (BCGEU/NUPGE), Canada Project Coordinator, PSI Migration and Women Health Workers Project

## **Welcome and Introductions**

Meeting Date: October 26-27, 2006  
Location: Ottawa, Ontario

Cindy Stewart and Mike Luff, Co-chairs, welcomed the participants to Ottawa and the eighth meeting of the Secretariat. The report of the previous meeting was adopted. The agenda for the current meeting was reviewed and approved.

## **CHPS Communications Activities**

Co-chair Luff reminded participants that a main objective of CHPS is to raise the profile of health science professionals and the challenges they face.

He reported on two new leaflets that NUPGE/CHPS has developed on the issues of health care wait times and the shortage of health professionals in Canada. He encouraged participants to order copies and to distribute them to members.

He also briefed participants on the diversity of issues covered by CHPS public relations activities since the last meeting. Participants were urged to continue sending new releases to Luff so they can be disseminated nationally and across the country.

## **Participant Reports**

The 11 reports focused on government climate, collective bargaining, strikes, campaigns and communications, staffing and other major developments. Copies of the reports were included in the binders and are available by contacting Co-chair Luff.

Co-chair Stewart facilitated a discussion during which each union reviewed the highlights of their reports and answered questions. The participants were able to share strategies and information on key developments, challenges and concerns across the country.

Participants were reminded by Co-chair Stewart to send their collective agreements to NUPGE in order to keep the CHPS collective agreement database updated.

It was agreed that reports at all future meetings should also cover important grievance and arbitration decisions.

It was also agreed that for the next meeting it would be helpful if participants could report on two other issues: (a) the breakdown of employment status (full-time, part-time, casual etc) for their membership; and (b) the type of pension plan (e.g. defined benefit, defined contribution, etc.) that members belong to.

## **Guest Speaker: David Robbins, National Medicare Campaign**

David Robbins, a campaign coordinator with the Canadian Health Coalition, presented an overview of the coalition's current "Medicare Works" national campaign to defend and strengthen Canada's public health care system. The campaign has been financed and organized by a number of civil society groups and unions, including NUPGE.

The main objective of the campaign is to put public health care back on the political agenda for the next federal election. With the possibility of a Harper majority government, it is essential that public health care advocates continue to mobilize and make their voices heard.

The campaign consists of 32 town hall meetings that have been organized across the country. Each town hall meeting features a range of speakers including health policy analysts, health care workers, patients and community activists. The top priority issues to be discussed include reducing wait times through innovation within the public system; addressing health human resources shortages; and extending public Medicare to include prescription drugs and home care.

The first town hall meeting took place on October 19 in St. John's (NF&L) with actor and writer Mary Walsh speaking. The turnout was tremendous and press coverage so far has been excellent.

Participants were encouraged to get involved in the campaign through their provincial health coalition. Robbins left participants with campaign materials including a leaflet and a list of the locations of future town hall meetings.

A question and answer period followed Robbins' presentation. More information and regular updates on the campaign are available on the Canadian Health Coalition website at [www.healthcoalition.ca](http://www.healthcoalition.ca)

## **NUPGE Report: Larry Brown, National Secretary-Treasurer**

NUPGE National Secretary-Treasurer Larry Brown presented an overview of recent public sector labour relations developments across the country. He congratulated several CHPS constituent organizations for their recent achievements in collective bargaining in light of the political climate and health care restructuring in some provinces. He noted the potential implications that impending elections in many provinces may have on several key issues that CHPS' constituent organizations will confront over the next year.

Brown presented highlights of recent NUPGE Component conventions in New Brunswick and Manitoba, and a recent Union Education School in Atlantic Canada.

He described several public policy campaigns which NUPGE is working on in the areas of health care, labour rights, climate change and pensions. He noted that the following new NUPGE publications have been released:

- An updated, second edition of the NUPGE study called: *Collective Bargaining in Canada: Human Right or Illusion?*
- A policy primer on climate change entitled: *Keeping our cool – facing the climate change threat.*
- A paper on pensions called: *No Pension Panic: The real pensions crisis - it's all about coverage, not funding.*

Brown concluded with an overview of NUPGE's recent efforts to develop a response to, and be more involved with, government activities related to pandemic planning.

A question and answer period followed Brown's presentation. All of the publications and campaign materials that were mentioned in Brown's presentation are available by contacting Co-chair Luff.

## **Pandemic Planning in Canada**

The outbreak of SARS in Canada in 2003 took the lives of 44 Canadians, including some health professionals. Many more people and health care workers were infected. NUPGE and its Components, working with other unions and community groups, immediately stepped up efforts to pressure governments to strengthen abilities and capacities to protect the health and safety of workers and all Canadians. More recently, these efforts have focused on preparing for the next influenza pandemic.

Co-chair Stewart briefed participants on a new publication produced by NUPGE on pandemic preparedness called: *Canadian Pandemic Planning*. The paper provides an overview and analysis of the most recent draft of the Canadian Pandemic Influenza Plan (CPIP), including the priority groups for the allocation of vaccine and antivirals. It also outlines gaps in the pandemic planning program, next steps and further action.

Stewart noted that Dr. Arlene King, Director General, Pandemic Preparedness, Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), recently gave a presentation to the NUPGE National Executive Board. Participants received a copy of Dr. King's presentation and Stewart provided an overview of the handout.

Co-chair Stewart also noted the PHAC is also hosting a "Scientific Working Meeting on Occupational Influenza Prevention and Control in Health Care Settings" in Toronto on October 26 & 27. A number of national unions, including NUPGE, have been invited to participate in the conference. Co-chair Luff committed to ensuring participants received a report from NUPGE's delegates attending the meeting.

Participants reported on the extent of pandemic planning underway in their provincial jurisdictions. There was a very good discussion about health and safety measures that can help protect the public, patients and health care providers from exposure to the virus during a pandemic. More specifically, participants discussed appropriate protective equipment for health care workers, such as the N-95 respirator/mask.

It was agreed that CHPS and NUPGE should continue to monitor pandemic preparedness at the national level and pressure the PHAC to recommend that provinces legislate the provision and use of N-95 respirators/masks, and the proper training of workers to ensure they can protect themselves and patients from exposure to a pandemic influenza. Participants agreed to monitor provincial governments to ensure the national pandemic plan is being fully and effectively adopted.

### **Guest speaker: Anne-Marie DeLorey, Migration and Women Health Care Workers Project**

Public Services International (PSI) is a global union federation of public sector trade unions. PSI represents some 650 affiliated trade unions in about 150 countries. NUPGE is affiliated to PSI.

PSI currently has a project on migration and women health care workers in sixteen sending and receiving countries of migrant workers. The Canadian Coordinator for this project, representing NUPGE and its Components, is Anne-Marie DeLorey, a staff member of the BC Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU/NUPGE).

DeLorey explained that it is the serious concern about the negative impacts of migration on neglected health care systems in developing countries, and its impact on women health care workers, that prompted PSI to establish this campaign project in 2002.

Her presentation provided an overview of the causes, the costs and the barriers related to the migration of women health care workers. She explained that a main objective of the PSI project is to promote workers' rights by providing migrant women health care workers with proper information, so they can make informed decisions and actively engage in union activities which improve workers' lives.

A question and answer period followed DeLorey's presentation and campaign literature was distributed. For more information on the project, visit: [www.world-psi.org/migration](http://www.world-psi.org/migration)

### **National Health Policy Advocacy Issues**

Co-chair Luff briefed participants on several national health policy initiatives which CHPS and NUPGE have been working on since the last meeting, including:

- the Final Report of the Federal Advisor on Wait Times;
- the latest progress report on a National Pharmaceutical Strategy;
- the annual meeting of the Canadian Medical Association and the election of Dr. Brian Day as president-elect.

Materials on each of these items were included in the meeting binders.

## FYI Items

Co-chair Luff gave a brief summary of several important and relevant issues raised in the media recently:

- An October 16, 2006 CBC news article on a Newfoundland and Labrador job action organized by pharmacists and their union (AAHP).
- A June 1, 2006 Edmonton Journal article by Larry Johnsrude on Alberta pharmacists who will be allowed to prescribe some drugs under new health regulations adopted by the provincial government.
- A September 27, 2006 Saskatoon Star Phoenix story by James Wood, regarding the shortage of health professionals in rural, northern areas in Saskatchewan.

## Follow Ups

<b>Issue</b>	<b>NUPGE/CHPS responsibility</b>	<b>Constituent Union responsibility</b>	<b>Task completed</b>
Report of the meeting	Draft and circulate	Provide feedback	✓
Contact sheet	Update and circulate contact sheet for CHPS participants		✓
Pandemic planning meeting in Toronto on health and safety issues	Collect and circulate relevant documents		✓
OPSEU presentation on emergency preparedness legislation	Collect and circulate		✓
Consultant hired for classification review in Alberta	Collect and circulate the contact information		✓
SOS Medicare Conference	Collect and circulate notice of the conference		✓

New CHPS Medicare leaflets	Print and distribute copies to unions that place an order		✓
HSABC workload tool	Collect and circulate		✓
HSABC terms of settlement	Collect and circulate		✓
Market adjustment premium for pharmacists in BC	Collect and circulate document		✓
New NUPGE pension paper	Circulate		✓
New NUPGE climate change paper	Circulate		✓
Second edition of labour rights study	Circulate		✓
Update CHPS collective agreement database	Update and circulate	Send new agreements to Brenda Hildahl in the NUPGE office	