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**November 9, 2018**

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## **Tentative agreement reached for Health Science Professionals**

BURNABY—After almost 10 weeks of bargaining, a three-year tentative agreement has been reached between the Health Science Professionals Bargaining Association (HSPBA) and Health Employers Association of BC (HEABC) that is remarkable for the range of improvements included.

Highlights of the proposed April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2022 agreement include a general wage increase of six per cent over three years for all health science professionals, improvements to address workload, appropriate compensation and job classification, recruitment and retention, and occupational health, safety and violence prevention issues, as well as long-awaited improvements to leave provisions.

The union negotiating committee focused on achieving a collective agreement that addressed years of erosion in the health care system. The committee focused on critical issues of concern to members, including unsustainable workloads, chronic shortages and vacancies of critical members of the health care team.

“This agreement reinforces the value of the critical work that health science professionals do for our public health care system,” said CUPE bargaining team member Sheri Moy. “Working together with the employer under a progressive mandate, this bargaining experience was more productive and collaborative than we have ever seen in previous rounds. This approach allowed us to address some of the longstanding concerns we have wanted to resolve for quite some time.”

CUPE bargaining committee member Jennifer Kassimatis said the agreement is good for all British Columbians. “These improvements will benefit not only our members but the public health care system as a whole,” said Kassimatis.

The tentative agreement covers more than 19,000 health science professionals who deliver health care services in B.C. hospitals and communities. The majority of HSPBA members are represented by the Health Sciences Association of BC (HSA). Along with CUPE, the other unions represented at the bargaining table are BCGEU, PEA, and HEU. The current collective agreement expires in March 2019.

The HSPBA bargaining committee agreed unanimously to accept the tentative agreement. Each of the member unions will consider the recommendation of the bargaining committee as they prepare to take the agreement to a vote by members covered by the contract.

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