



June 22, 2021

Premier Iain Rankin
PREMIER@novascotia.ca



Dear Premier:

I am writing on behalf of the Nova Scotia Council of Healthcare Unions regarding current health care negotiations. Over the last year and a half health care workers have answered the call and provided outstanding service to protect and care for all Nova Scotians through three waves of the COVID-19 pandemic. These 7,500 health care workers are currently at the bargaining table attempting to reach a fair collective agreement with their employers, Nova Scotia Health (NSH) and the IWK.

Bargaining has been slowed by the NSH and IWK cancelling seven bargaining dates in April and May due to the third wave of the pandemic. While the Council of Unions understood the need to postpone dates, the Council argued that the employers should set new later dates which could again be postponed if required. After waiting two weeks for the employers to provide alternate dates, the Council decided to refer stalled bargaining to conciliation. Dates for conciliation have been set for next week, June 28th, 29th and 30th.

Following seven years of wage austerity, wages for Nova Scotia health care workers have fallen below where they should in comparison to other provinces. Recent wage settlements in other provinces have left the vast majority of the wages for Nova Scotia health care workers among the lowest in the country. The health care workers represented by the Council of Unions are simply looking to be fairly compensated and as things presently stand these workers are headed towards an impasse with their employers which could ultimately lead to a province wide strike.

As Nova Scotia emerges from the pandemic, we would like to extend an offer that would avoid having these workers go on strike. Too many medical services have been curtailed and Nova Scotians need their health care system running at full capacity. To avoid service disruption the Health Care Council of Unions proposes that issues not agreed upon during conciliation be sent to an arbitrator to be decided.

I look forward to your earliest reply.

Sincerely,

Jason MacLean, President
NSGEU

Les Duff, Acting President
CUPE Local 8920

Linda MacNeil, Atlantic Director
UNIFOR

c. Hon. Zack Churchill, Minister of Health – Health.Minister@novascotia.ca