

March 9, 2010

Alberta Health Services signals desire to work with Alberta's nurses on priorities of improving patient care, safety and quality

EDMONTON – Provincewide negotiations between Alberta Health Services (AHS) and the United Nurses of Alberta (UNA) began with an exchange of opening proposals on March 8, 2010.

AHS has resolved to work with the nurses union to address the issues important to Albertans – primarily working together to improve patient care.

“We believe we are offering a very fair and competitive proposal that will support our nursing workforce. Our goal is to keep the nurses we have working and to ensure that those nurses are able to spend more time with patients,” says Andrea Robertson, Senior Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer, Nursing Strategies. “We value RNs and the important skills they provide in caring for Albertans every day. We want to continue to enhance their role in the health care system to improve patient care.”

During the first day of negotiations, AHS tabled an initial offer that respects Alberta's nurses and also recognizes the fiscal realities of the health system.

“The offer on the table raises a number of issues for discussion between the bargaining teams. These are early days of negotiations and we will not be negotiating in the media,” says Shannon Larkins, spokesperson for AHS.

The collective agreement between AHS and UNA expires on March 31, 2010.

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