

# NEWS Bulletin UNA

United Nurses of Alberta

## Nurses Stage Charlottetown 'DIE-IN'

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from UNA staff

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#### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# RESPECT, RETAIN, RECRUIT - our message to employers, government and Albertans

■ **IN** a few days, fall will be upon us. We have already enjoyed the Labour Day weekend, the last long weekend of the summer season, and the rituals of a new season of work and school will now begin.

Nurses do so knowing we face a challenging fall and winter, and likely a difficult year in 2024 as well.

Recent years have not been easy for health care workers. It is one of the cruelest ironies of the COVID-19 pandemic that it made clear the harm done to Canada's public health care system by governments determined to cut costs, cut health care workers' salaries, and treat health care as if it were a business.

We started 2020 still facing government plans to lay off hundreds of Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses. Then came the pandemic and a different kind of fear and exhaustion. Both contributed to the shortage of medical professionals, particularly nurses, that is rife throughout Alberta, Canada and the world.

For many, recent months have been challenging too. Alberta nurses have faced, literally, fire and flood, sometimes in quick succession. Hospital evacuations because of environmental events are real and challenging, as are service disruptions and closings resulting from staff shortages and other stresses on the system.

Now we are on the cusp of 2024 and, if anything, it is clear there are no immediate solutions to the staffing crisis in health care.

It is also clear many provincial governments in Canada see privatization of public health care services as a false panacea. This will sow administrative chaos in

Alberta Health Services, which is only going to make the current situation worse.

So nurses, already exhausted and disillusioned, can expect to be called upon to go *once more unto the breach* to save health care in the face of these challenges.

But there is hope. We are entering a year of bargaining, which, while a tough job, has the potential to build a better future for nurses of all kinds – to ensure that Registered Nurses, Registered Psychiatric Nurses, and Licensed Practical Nurses are all treated with the respect they deserve.

I urge all UNA members to attend your Local's meetings and make it clear to your elected local representatives what *you* see as the priorities for the upcoming round of bargaining. Your views will help us set the bargaining proposals we will take to employers in 2023 and 2024.

Visit UNA's free smartphone app or its websites – **UNA.ca** for union business and **NeedNurses.ca** for our awareness and engagement campaigns – to stay in touch with bargaining and health care issues.

Rest assured, we will do our best in negotiations to ensure the message of the Three Rs – Respect, Retain, Recruit – is impressed upon employers in bargaining.

From this can come a better future, with more nurses on the front lines, better pay and benefits, acknowledgement by employers of our professional responsibilities, better results for patients, and safe and healthy workplaces.

Heather Smith  
President, United Nurses of Alberta

# UNA Negotiations Committee elected; tough round of bargaining expected in 2024

■ **PREPARATIONS** for what is expected to be a tough round of bargaining the key Provincial Collective Agreement in 2024 have commenced.

The provincial Negotiating Committee has now been elected, and the Labour Relations Officers who will assist the team in the negotiations have been appointed.

While 2024 bargaining is expected to be demanding and challenging, President Heather Smith said, “this round has the potential to create a better future for nurses, ensuring that they are treated with the respect they deserve.”

She urged all UNA members to attend their Local’s meetings and communicate their priorities to their Local executive. “Your views will help us set the bargaining proposals we will take to employers,” she said.

Smith and Labour Relations Director and Chief Negotiator David Harrigan will lead the Negotiating Committee. Committee members in 2024 are:

## North District

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- Kerrie Bradshaw – Local 37
- Jan Robinson – Local 17

## North Central District

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- Orissa Shima – Local 85
- Rachael Schiller – Local 73



A Demand Setting meeting is scheduled to take place in Edmonton on November 21, 22 and 23

## Central District

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- Gail Pederson Todd – Local 38
- Tanya Beniuk – Local 28

## South Central District

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- Bernadette Brocal – Local 121
- Kevin Champagne – Local 115

## South District

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- Trudi Bennett – Local 23
- Margie Emes – Local 120

LRO Blair Bukmeir has been assigned to assist the bargaining team.

Meanwhile, the process of collecting and assessing bargaining proposals continues. A Demand Setting meeting is scheduled to take place in Edmonton on November 21, 22 and 23.

UNA will request dates for bargaining in December and negotiations are expected to commence in February 2024. 🇺🇸

## CORRECTION

United Nurses of Alberta’s Demand Setting Meeting will take place November 21-23 in Edmonton. Due to an editing error, incorrect information appeared on page 2 in the Summer 2023 edition of UNA NewsBulletin. The incorrect information has been corrected in the online PDF edition posted to UNA’s website. 🇺🇸

# Fixing nurse staffing crisis should be new health minister's top priority

■ **UNITED** Nurses of Alberta congratulated Health Minister Adriana LaGrange upon her appointment to cabinet by Premier Danielle Smith on June 9.

"Nurses have solutions to the staffing shortage..."

- Heather Smith

"We look forward to meeting with Minister LaGrange to ensure the front-line knowledge and experience of Alberta's nurses is drawn upon to improve the quality of public health care," said UNA President Heather Smith in a statement published that day.

A first meeting with the minister and Smith, UNA First Vice-President Danielle Larivee, and UNA Labour Relations Director David Harrigan was held in Edmonton on June 22 to discuss solutions to the nurse staffing shortage and how patient care could be improved in our publicly funded and publicly operated health care system.

LaGrange was re-elected as MLA for Red Deer-North on May 29 and sworn in on June 9. She previously served as minister of education.

The alarming increase in use of agency nurses contracted by private-for-profit staffing companies to fill the gaps created by the nurse shortage in public hospitals is a growing area of concern, the UNA leaders told LaGrange. Agency nurses can cost more than double the pay received by staff nurses.

As of June 8, more than 355 agency nurses were working at more than 70 Alberta Health Services-operated hospitals and health care centres across Alberta, including 33 at the Red Deer Regional Hospital.

"As an MLA from Red Deer, Minister LaGrange will understand the enormous pressure and challenges the nurse staffing shortage has put on hospitals like the Red Deer Regional Hospital," Smith said in UNA's June 9 statement.

"Nurses have solutions to the staffing shortage, and it starts with retaining, recruiting, and most importantly, respecting nurses and health care workers." 🍷

Newly appointed Health Minister Adriana LaGrange, at left, meets with UNA President Heather Smith and First VP Danielle Larivee on June 22.



Photo: UNA

## UNA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SET FOR OCTOBER 17-19

### Dr. Brian Goldman of CBC's *White Coat, Black Art* to address delegates

■ **UNA'S** Annual General Meeting will be held on October 17, 18 and 19 in Edmonton. Including delegates, observers, staff, and representatives of other unions and organizations, about 1,000 people are expected to attend the event at the EXPO Centre.

While this is not UNA's first in-person AGM since the end of pandemic restrictions, the disruption caused a change in the dates of some elections from their previous schedules, which has now been made permanent. Elections will be held for first vice-president and secretary-treasurer, as well as for representatives in all regional districts.

In addition to the normal business of the AGM, delegates will hear from a number of speakers, including keynote speaker Dr. Brian Goldman, an Emergency Room physician in Toronto who is host of the award-winning CBC Radio current affairs series, *White Coat, Black Art*.

He is also the author of a book describing his experiences as an ER physician, *The Night Shift: Real Life in the Heart of the*



Photo supplied by Dr. Goldman

*ER*, published in 2010, and books on *The Secret Language of Doctors* (2015), *The Power of Kindness* (2018) and *The Power of Teamwork* (2022). Goldman is scheduled to speak on the morning of Thursday, October 19.

Dr. Brian Goldman of CBC's *White Coat, Black Art* is scheduled to speak to UNA's AGM on October 19.

Information on delegate entitlement will be emailed to locals this month. 🍷

### Young Workers Caucus launches at AGM

■ **UNITED** Nurses of Alberta members under the age of 35 are welcomed to participate in the UNA Young Workers Caucus. The YWC has been launched to promote the inclusion and participation of young workers through advocacy, mentorship, and leadership development.

The caucus aims to provide a space for young workers to identify issues and barriers affecting them and provide recommendations and advice to UNA on the development of education, events, and policies include young workers' perspectives.

The Young Workers Caucus plans to hold its first meeting during the UNA annual general meeting, October 17-19 in Edmonton. More details will follow.

Other UNA Equity Caucuses include the Ethnically Diverse and Indigenous Workers of Alberta – EDIWA Caucus, the Mental Health Caucus, and the Pride (LGBTQ2S+) Caucus.

Visit [www.una.ca/about/equity-caucuses](http://www.una.ca/about/equity-caucuses) to learn more. 🍷





CANADIAN  
FEDERATION  
OF NURSES  
UNIONS

# Nurses are strong, united, and demanding change

■ **ALL** nurses are key to healthy communities across the world. We provide care and leadership during health challenges everywhere, often at a great personal risk.

Yet despite our invaluable role in society, governments have treated us as a second-class profession, ignoring our calls for support and warnings about the crisis at hand.

Nurses are powerhouses, but we are not angels of mercy to be taken for granted.

Across the country and around the globe, nurses are rising up and demanding better from our governments. Together, we are working to ensure that when world leaders meet, the crisis facing nursing is the top priority – not an afterthought.

This year the International Council of Nurses launched the Charter for Change, urging governments to value, protect, respect and invest in our nurses for a sustainable future for nursing and health care. The charter pushes for policy actions that governments and employers must take to care for our nurses and our future. Our global goals align with our goals in Canada: protecting and investing in the nursing profession; ensuring nurses have safe and healthy working conditions where their rights are respected; advancing strategies to recruit and retain nurses so we can end workforce shortages.

As we face a global nursing crisis, solidarity amongst nurses is as important as ever. Just as one province can't solve a national health crisis at the expense of another province, we can only address the global nursing shortage crisis if governments work together.

While internationally educated nurses are an undeniable asset to our health workforce, we must ensure recruitment of IENs is ethical and not drawing resources from

poorer countries facing similar nursing shortages.

In a country as wealthy as Canada, we can and must invest in sustainable solutions to the poor working conditions and staffing shortages plaguing our health systems. Canada must take a leadership role and invest in our nursing students and programs so that we create stronger streams for people to enter nursing. Improving working conditions in our public health system will fix the hole in this leaking bucket and help put an end to the staffing shortages hurting us all.

I know that for many of you, nursing does not look the same today as it did when you started. Nurses early in their careers are not getting the mentorship and support I had when I first became a nurse.

When I went into nursing, it was one of the best jobs in our communities. This is what we need to do now – in the wake of staffing shortages across our health care systems, we must do everything we can to make nursing and health care jobs the best jobs in our communities.

There are clear paths forward. We know safe staffing improves patient care. Health systems with ratios in place, as in California, see improved outcomes for patients and higher job satisfaction. In Canada, British Columbia is working to implement nurse-to-patient ratios, and the CFNU is urging all premiers to follow the path B.C. is blazing.

Unsafe hours of work is one of the key challenges facing nursing, and we are fighting to address the unsustainable hours nurses must work. We have rules around the hours truck drivers and pilots can be forced to work, but nurses have no such safeguards. With all due respect to other professions, nurses are responsible for the most precious cargo of all.

□ CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



By Linda Silas  
President, Canadian  
Federation of Nurses Unions

This year the International Council of Nurses launched the Charter for Change, urging governments to value, protect, respect and invest in our nurses for a sustainable future for nursing and health care.

WHEN KNOWLEDGE MEETS KNOW-HOW



Photo: UNA

Participants in the June 9 'die-in' in Charlottetown.

## Hundreds of nurses in Charlottetown join 'DIE-IN' FOR SAFER HEALTH CARE

Chanting “Hey! Hey! Ho! Ho! Unsafe staffing’s gotta go!” hundreds of nurses attending the CFNU biennial convention marched through the streets of Charlottetown on June 9 to a waterfront park, where they lay down on the grass and enacted a mass “die-in.”

“We’re dying for safe hours of work,” exclaimed Edmonton RN Pauline Worsfold in one of her last official acts as CFNU’s secretary treasurer before her retirement at the end of the biennium.

At her cue, hundreds quietly lay down on the grass. Impactful and moving, the “die-in” began with a moment of silence to honour every patient, family, and nurse impacted by the challenges of Canada’s overburdened and understaffed health care system.

As motionless bodies filled the park, nurses from all parts of Canada took to the stage to share their experiences working through the health care crisis – stories of solidarity and struggle, tragedy and triumph.

Above all, speakers addressed the painful impact understaffing has on patients and the desperate need for change to improve health care for everyone and create a diverse and welcoming work environment across the country.

Then they rose up from the ground, shouting for safe nurse-patient ratios, safe staffing levels, and safe hours of work.

“Nurses cannot and will not stop fighting until our patients are safe,” Worsfold told them as they rose. 🍷

Pauline Worsfold



### □ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

In Canada and across the world, nurses have practical and evidence-based solutions to face the challenges in our health care systems head on. Nurses are a global

force, and together we can create a better future for nursing and strong, healthy communities everywhere. 🍷



Linda Silas



# Linda Silas acclaimed to 11th term as president of Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions

■ **LINDA** Silas, president of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions for the past 20 years, was acclaimed to her 11th two-year term at the national organization's biennial convention in Charlottetown, P.E.I., on June 9.

A passionate and engaging spokesperson in both of Canada's official languages for nurses' issues and labour rights, Silas was president of the New Brunswick Nurses Union from 1993 to 2003, the youngest nurses' union president in Canadian history.

Born in Dalhousie, N.B., where her father was a leader of the mill workers' union at the Abitibi newsprint plant, Silas is well-known throughout Canada as a champion of public health care, workplace rights, and social justice.

During 40 years as a Registered Nurse and 30 years as a union leader, she has advocated for federal and provincial policies to enhance social equity and the social determinants of health, such as retirement security for all workers, universal child care, national pharmacare and access to public services for Indigenous communities.

"The key to preserving and enhancing Canada's public health care system is for governments to listen to what front-line nurses have to say," Silas said in a statement on the day of her acclamation.

Acclaimed the same day as CFNU secretary treasurer was Angela Preocanin, first vice-president of the Ontario Nurses Association since 2021.

Preocanin has served in various executive positions at ONA over the past two decades and has worked in surgical thoracics, head and neck, urgent care and home hemodialysis. She will also continue in her current role on ONA's executive.

Preocanin replaces UNA's Pauline Worsfold as CFNU's secretary treasurer.

Worsfold, a former president of the Staff Nurses Association of Alberta before that union's merger with UNA, announced her intention to retire from her post with CFNU after 24 years in the spring.

"If nurses stick together, and work together, we can ensure that the changes Canada needs happen," Worsfold told the CFNU convention. 🇨🇦

"If nurses stick together, and work together, we can ensure that the changes Canada needs happen."

- Pauline Worsfold

Scenes from the 2023 CFNU Biennial Convention in Charlottetown, P.E.I.

(Photos: UNA & CFNU Staff)





Meredith Preston McGhie



UNA 1st VP Danielle Larivee



## Value differences, utilize small acts, to resolve conflicts abroad and at home, conflict resolution expert advises CFNU

■ **MEREDITH** Preston McGhie’s mission at the Ottawa-based Global Centre for Pluralism is to make it possible for societies to thrive by valuing their differences, not fighting over them.

Speaking to delegates at the final session of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions’ Biennial Convention on June 9, McGhie said that while Canadians often contribute to this process in conflict zones abroad, we need to engage in the same process to keep what we have at home.

McGhie is secretary general of the centre, an independent charitable organization founded by the Aga Khan, religious leader of the world’s estimated 15 million Isma’ili Muslims, who are scattered through 25

countries around the world and a religious and cultural minority in each.

For the Isma’ili community, said McGhie, “being able to create spaces of community in a broader society is existential.”

From this comes the centre’s often almost impossible goal: getting groups of people who are in conflict and really don’t want to talk to each other into a relationship where they can learn what they have in common.

Whether we’re talking about civil war in Sudan, the invasion of Ukraine, the bitter disagreements among Canadians about COVID-19 vaccines, or figuring how to come to grips with the legacy of colonialism in Canada, “we have to spend more time to bring people around the table.”

□ CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



## RETIREMENT WISHES

# CFNU says farewell to Pauline Worsfold

■ **CFNU** President Linda Silas thanked outgoing Secretary-Treasurer Pauline Worsfold, who had announced her retirement from her CFNU role after 24 years, for her service to Canada’s nurses.

Worsfold, a former president of the Staff Nurses Association of Alberta before that union’s merger with United Nurses of Alberta in 1997, has played huge roles

in SNAA, UNA, the Canadian Health Coalition, and CFNU. She will continue working at the University of Alberta Hospital and for another year on the board of the CHC.

She also found time to raise two sons, Colin and Jesse, and to race stock cars with her boys. 🍷

Top left: Pauline Worsfold addresses participants in the CFNU ‘die-in’ on June 9. Top right: The presidents of CFNU’s affiliate unions honour Worsfold for her service.



The UNA Caucus at the the CFNU convention

Photo: Daniel St. Louis, CFNU



# Workshop explores ideas on how to bolster support for public health care



Stephen Staples, Anne Lagacé Dowson and Tracy Glynn of the Canadian Health Coalition.

to identify specific problems confronting health care, set them out for politicians, journalists and the public, and propose solutions.

“By the end, everyone’s going to have a personal political action plan,” he promised the lively workshop attended by about 30 delegates on June 8. That’s a necessity, he added, because “we are the front lines of the protection of our health care system.”

The workshop covered such topics as identifying the spectrum of allies and opponents, picking targets, and mapping out who is most likely to be able to help and who can be moved to a more favourable position, and defining goals, strategies and tactics for a lobbying effort.

Lagacé Dowson described how nurses’ knowledge and experience can be used to create compelling stories that will engage the interest of media – after all, she told the delegates, “media is showbiz.”

The workshop involved role playing based on real situations in which participants had a chance to try their persuasion skills and arguments – as well as learn how to improve them.

As the workshop drew to a close, Staples told participants “you now have before you a pretty good idea of your personal, political action plan. Hopefully you feel like you’re in a position to try it out in real life.” 🍷

■ **IT’S** not all doom and gloom, but faith in Canada’s public health care system is slipping after years of hospitals being hit hard by COVID-19 and chronic staffing shortages, Stephen Staples of the Canadian Health Coalition told a group of CFNU Biennium delegates.

“The numbers are starting to shift and confidence is down,” said the coalition’s director of policy and advocacy, but there are things that can be done by nurses and other supporters of public health care to help reverse that trend.

With CHC Media Director Anne Lagacé Dowson and National Operations Director Tracy Glynn, Staples offered tips on how

“We are the front lines of the protection of our health care system.”

- Stephen Staples

□ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

“Canada in the world needs to play a role,” she told CFNU delegates, but “we need to play the same role at home.”

She described herself as a believer in “the power of small acts, the power of the middle ground, and the power of belonging.” Small acts, she explained, give each of us an opportunity to be peacemakers;

finding the middle ground allows us to see communities with which we may be in conflict as human beings; and being able to belong to our own community gives us agency and safety.

“Pluralism is a muscle we have to exercise,” she said. “It reflects on us the need to work with our community partners.” 🍷



## Nurses build resiliency and rediscover inner strength through movement and dance

By Dave Cournoyer  
UNA Communications Advisor

■ **OUTSIDE** in Charlottetown, it was cloudy and raining, but under the glimmering chandeliers of the grand Georgian Ballroom of the Rodd Charlottetown Hotel nurses danced one afternoon away in one of the most energetic workshops of the CFNU biennial convention.

Anyone who might have entered the “*joy through movement and dance*” workshop with a hint of skepticism showed little sign of hesitancy by the end of the afternoon as the sound of laughter and shuffling feet filled the room.

Facilitated by dance and movement therapist Patricia Capello, the experimental workshop guided more than 60 nurses from across Canada to recognize themselves as they explored simple individual and communal creative dance exercises.

Capello was a Senior Dance/Movement Therapist and Acting Team Leader for the Therapeutic Activities Service at Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn, New York. She served for more than 16 years on the Board of Directors of the American Dance Therapy Association. Recognizing that nurses feel constant pressure to put the needs of patients and co-workers ahead of themselves, Capello encouraged nurses to make a conscious effort to focus on their own bodies.

“You all work with peoples’ bodies all day long and sometimes we neglect our own bodies because we say we’re going to power through it,” Capello said. “We just met each other, we got up and danced together,” she added after the nurses finished a room-wide dance-off. “What did people notice when they looked around? Oneness. Smiling. Being together. Trust.” 🌸



Dave Cournoyer



Photo: Dave Cournoyer

# Longest serving UNA employee, Marilyn Vavasour, LRO, set to retire after 42 years



■ **OVER** her 42 years as a United Nurses Labour Relations Officer, Marilyn Vavasour remembers, “the best compliment I ever got from my colleagues was that if they ever got in trouble, they wanted me as their rep!”

She is UNA’s longest serving employee. When Vavasour fully retires – she’ll remain on the casual list for a spell – her experience, knowledge and tactical savvy will be sorely missed.

Not to mention her determination – the quality that made other LROs and union officials acknowledge that she was the representative they wanted should trouble ever come their way.

“You could say Marilyn walked quietly but carried a big stick,” President Heather Smith observed. “You underestimated her at your own risk. It’s hard to imagine UNA advocacy without her.”

“Marilyn always advocated forcefully for members when they felt the most vulnerable and unsupported,” Smith added. “Her wisdom and insight into the real world of front-line nursing and the pressures that prey on the wellbeing of nurses has saved innumerable members and their careers. I’ll miss her warm smile and her contributions to UNA will leave an everlasting legacy.”

Jeannine Arbour, Labour Relations Manager in UNA’s Southern Alberta Regional Office in Calgary, where Vavasour was based, agreed. “Marilyn will be missed at UNA for her in-depth knowledge, tactical brilliance and her ability to let the latest overly eager Employer Counsel of the day burn themselves out.”

“In those 42 years, she has serviced nearly every Local in the southern part of the province, bargained numerous collective agreements, run countless hearings and labour board disputes all while giving the individuals she has represented the benefit of her singular determination to hold employers accountable,” Arbour said.

A lawyer, called to the bar in Ontario in the spring of 1981, the Ottawa native was hired as an LRO by UNA that summer. She spent 30 years as an LRO responsible for providing union services to locals. For many years she was the LRO assigned to Local 1 at the old Calgary General Hospital – some of them during the time Labour Relations Director David Harrigan was president of that local.

Harrigan remembers those years fondly. “Marilyn was the Labour Relations Officer assigned to the local. Her wisdom and doggedness were obvious and impressive



Marilyn Vavasour, UNA's longest-serving employee, poses ready to retire with her daughter and one of her grandkids at left; Marilyn as she looked when she joined UNA in the early 1980s; and as she looks today.

(Photos: supplied by Marilyn Vavasour)

she helped everyone keep focused on the issue at hand,” Olson said. “She taught me a lot as a Local Executive and when I later took on the role of an LRO myself, she became my mentor and supported me as a co-worker. I’m truly lucky to call her my friend!”

In the past decade, Vavasour has been responsible for representing nurses facing actions by CARNA, as the Registered Nurses’ regulatory college was then called, and later she was assigned the counsel role at SARO. “The nurses I took through were desperately looking for help,” she recalled. “That involved a lot of termination cases, which was very tough, and very stressful.”

Vavasour says that in retirement, she plans to resume her travel plans (like the African safari) that were interrupted by COVID and add in the fun with her two grandchildren, who arrived in 2019 and 2021. She is even hoping to finally get some home renovations done, “if there’s time for that.” 🍷

“With her positive nature, strong sense of justice; keen listening and analytical skills, she helped everyone keep focused on the issue at hand.”

- Tanice Olson

then, and they have continued throughout her years at UNA.”

Tanice Olson, a long-time UNA activist and LRO, who retired on June 7, called Vavasour “a strong advocate of nurses and nursing” as well as a friend and mentor.

“With her positive nature, strong sense of justice; keen listening and analytical skills,

## CRNA renewal now open

■ **REGISTRATION** renewal with the College of Registered Nurses of Alberta is now open, the regulatory college says.

Registrants can find the application on the CRNA website’s home page of their College Connect account.

Current permits expire on Sept. 30, 2023.

Other key dates include:

- To practice after October 1, 2023, registered nurses, nurse practitioners, certified graduate nurses, graduate nurses and graduate nurse practitioners must renew their status.

- Applications close on September 30, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. MDT. Incomplete applications will be closed on October 1, 2023, at 12:10 a.m. and all application progress will be lost.

In an email to stakeholders sent at the end of July, CRNA also noted that employers are responsible for ensuring their applicable employees are practicing with a permit at their site. Employers can check the status of their employees using the employer lookup tool.

Registrants who do not renew will move to lapsed (cancelled for non-renewal). Only applicants who meet the requirements will receive a permit.

The average processing time for an application is 48 hours; however, it can take up to four weeks.

The courtesy register is *not* eligible for renewal. CRNA’s non-practicing register and lapsed individuals must use the return-to-practice application to be eligible for practice.

Renewing registrants require professional liability protection separate from their permit, which is no longer available through the CRNA. Protection through the Canadian Nurses Protective Society can be obtained directly from the CNPS or through the Alberta Association of Nurses, which provides its members with a discounted rate. 🍷



# PRC process, change in managers, help successfully resolve numerous concerns in Rimbey

■ **THANKS** to the hard work of the Local 412 Professional Responsibility Concern (PRC) Committee and a change in management at the Rimbey Hospital and Care Centre, eight PRCs have now been resolved.

Among the problems addressed by the PRCs were seriously inadequate staffing, excessive mandatory overtime for many remaining nurses, and outdated equipment. All have been resolved.

In June, staff at the hospital reported that there had been zero mandating of overtime since May, that 14 new nurses were brought on board in addition to several temporary nursing staff members, and a full-time position that had been vacant for a long time was split into two 0.5 FTEs and both were filled. In addition, a “Grow Your Own” collaboration with the Drayton Valley Hospital and Care Centre will include nine nursing students, starting in the fall of 2024.

Weekly meetings with the new site management have improved communication and transparency, the local reports.

New equipment has been ordered and weekly meetings with the new site management have improved communication and transparency, the local reports.

In addition, there were serious security concerns at the rural central Alberta facility. Thanks to a PRC taken to Step 6 – a meeting with senior AHS leaders – security concerns at the hospital, while not fully resolved, have been prevented from getting worse. The PRC committee thanked former PRC advisor Josh Bergman, now an Occupational Health and Safety advisor, for his work on that file.

While the PRC committee was not successful in its request for 24-hour security at the site, the Step 6 plan did manage to stop an Alberta Health Services plan to reduce security coverage in Rimbey.

“It has been a sigh of relief for us to finally hear from management that they welcome new PRCs to identify issues and work towards solutions,” said Local 412 President Kelly LeBlanc. “Our postings are going up quickly and capture all of the great things about rural nursing.

“Most of all, our members are so, so grateful for minimal mandating and the bed closures to help get us through this super rough patch.”

And it was a good thing the committee took the security concerns to Step 6, she added. “We were asking for 24 hour security coverage and it’s lucky we did or we would have lost the 12-hour coverage we had during COVID. We were slated to go down to eight hours security coverage again in April, now we have 12 hours security coverage permanently.” 🍷



# Check out UNA's fall workshop schedule

■ **UNA'S** fall workshops dates have been selected and are available on DMS for registration.

## *For All UNA Members:*

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- Boundaries & Self Care (half day) via zoom.
- Dealing With Abuse (full day) provincially funded for eligible members.
- Know Your Rights (full day) provincially funded for eligible members.

## *For Unit/Office Representatives & Local Executives:*

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- Engagement & Support (full day) provincially funded for eligible members.
- Taking Action (full day) provincially funded for eligible members.

## *For Committee Members:*

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- PRC Workshop (full day) provincially funded for eligible members.
- OHS Basic (full day) provincially funded for eligible members.
- OHS Advanced (full day) provincially funded for eligible members.

## *For Local Executives:*

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- How to Run a Local: Administration (full day) provincially funded for eligible members.
- How to Run a Local: Finance (full day) provincially funded for eligible members.
- How to Run a Local: Labour Relations (full day) provincially funded for eligible members.
- Local Budget Q & A

Full-day workshops are provincially funded (salary replacement/LOA) for eligible members who have not attended the workshop previously. For workshop descriptions and funding information, visit [www.una.ca/memberresources/education](http://www.una.ca/memberresources/education).

Using their UNAnet login, members can register online in UNA's Data Management System (DMS) under "Events." For an up-to-date workshop schedule, go to "Events" in DMS or view the events calendar at [www.una.ca/events](http://www.una.ca/events).

Get your name in early as workshops fill up quickly!

Stay tuned for a new Intro to PRC workshop aimed at educating and empowering the general membership as they engage with all steps of the PRC process; from identifying and reporting a PRC to PRC Committee discussions and beyond.

You can also participate in some self-directed study or find other UNA resources through UNA's education website; <https://education.una.ca/>

Contact [education@una.ca](mailto:education@una.ca) with any questions related to workshops or registration. 🍁

Get your name in early as workshops fill up quickly!



[education.una.ca](http://education.una.ca)



# UNA believes LPNs provide front-line nursing services, should be part of 'Direct Nursing' bargaining unit

■ **IN** mid-June, in response to an application by a group of Licensed Practical Nurses to be recognized as part of the direct nursing bargaining group in public health care, UNA issued a statement indicating it supported the bid by the LPNs to be formally recognized for their work as members of a regulated profession that provides direct nursing care.

Since the passage by the Alberta Legislature in 2003 of a law creating large “functional bargaining units” in health care, UNA has disagreed with the assignment of LPNs to the “Auxiliary Nursing Care” bargaining unit, UNA said in the statement.

The union noted it has been aware of the effort by the group calling itself LPNs for Change since 2022.

UNA stated that it “believes LPNs clearly provide direct nursing care and belong in the ‘Direct Nursing’ bargaining unit, along with Registered Nurses and Registered

Psychiatric Nurses, who also provide direct nursing care.”

“Since 2003, LPNs’ practice has steadily increased and overlapped with RNs’ practice in Alberta’s health care system,” the UNA statement continued. “If there was an argument in 2003 for including LPNs in the Auxiliary Nursing care bargaining unit, it is clearly no longer valid.

“While UNA did not initiate the application by LPNs for Change or encourage LPNs to pursue it, we believe LPNs deserve recognition for their skill and education and the fact they provide direct nursing care.

“We believe inclusion of LPNs in the Direct Nursing bargaining unit would provide them with the recognition and representation they deserve.”

In March 2023, UNA’s Executive Board passed a resolution stating, “That UNA acknowledges that LPNs’ provide direct nursing care.” 🍷

“We believe LPNs deserve recognition for their skill and education and the fact they provide direct nursing care.”

UNA statement

## Steps must be taken to provide labour and delivery service for Pincher Creek hospital

■ **STEPS** must be taken at once to ensure safe labour and delivery services, including surgical supports, continue in Pincher Creek, United Nurses of Alberta members working in the Southern Alberta community say.

Concerns for maternity care in Pincher Creek have been mounting for months since the only surgeon able to perform caesarian section births in the town of about 4,000 people 100 kilometres west of Lethbridge gave notice he would no longer support labour and delivery services after May 31.

“UNA’s labour and delivery nurses are ready and willing to continue to provide this essential service within this community and region,” Local 23 President Trudi Lee Bennett said in early June.

UNA President Heather Smith agreed. “This is not a problem that our members working in the community can resolve, and it must be treated with appropriate seriousness by the authorities who do have the ability to do something,” she said.

□ CONTINUED ON PAGE 19

Pincher Creek Hospital



# UNA responds to AHS lifting continuous masking mandate in hospitals and health facilities

■ **UNITED** Nurses of Alberta encouraged members to remain vigilant and use the precautionary principle after Alberta Health Services removed the continuous masking requirement for employees in hospitals and health care facilities in mid-June.

The AHS policy change also applied to employees of Covenant Health, Capital Care and Carewest.

In a statement published on June 16, UNA said it believes the policy should not have been hastily lifted in a blanket fashion without further consultation or evidence to support the decision and a plan for reinstatement should transmission rates rise.

“We are concerned that the change falsely sends a signal to health care workers and the public that precautions against viruses like COVID-19 are no longer necessary,” the statement said. According to AHS, 352 patients were hospitalized with COVID-19 in Alberta at the time.

AHS’s removal of the masking requirement in no way diminishes the obligation of health care workers, including nurses, to use every means possible to reduce risk to themselves and their patients. The

UNA-AHS Joint Statement on COVID-19 and Personal Protective Equipment remains in effect. A copy of the statement can be found on the UNA website.

The statement, agreed to by the parties in December 2021, outlines PPE standards, including access, point of care risk assessment, supply, and minimum requirements for front-line health care workers in Alberta.

Respiratory protection should continue to be used based on the hazards presented by the workplace. Mandatory PPE use is still required in situations where direct patient care is provided. Employees should refer to the joint statement for all PPE decisions.

Protecting the health and safety of nurses and their ability to provide high-quality care to Alberta patients is UNA’s top priority. PPE was a key factor in protecting the health and safety of nurses during the COVID-19 pandemic by helping to prevent exposure to and transmission of the virus.

UNA will continue to press AHS to ensure policies following best practice for use of PPE in the workplace are implemented, including monitoring the impact of removing the continuous masking mandate. 🍷

“We are concerned that the change falsely sends a signal to health care workers and the public that precautions against viruses like COVID-19 are no longer necessary.”

- UNA Statement June 16

## □ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

“Our concern is the safety of patients,” Smith added. “It is not appropriate to state that it will be ‘status quo’ for staff or the public.”

“If the issues between physicians, AHS, and the government remain unresolved, AHS must provide clear direction, including contingency plans to ensure patient safety,” Smith concluded.

In 2020, nine physicians practicing in the town threatened to discontinue their services, citing decisions made by the Alberta government.

The CBC reported at that time that giving birth 100 kilometres away is “the new normal” for Pincher Creek moms.

AHS said in mid-August that it has one international medical graduate hoping to start in the coming months, along with two offers for family doctors and a physician assistant anticipated to start work in September.

There were 67 babies delivered at the Pincher Creek hospital in 2022. According to Alberta Health Services, there are now an average of about five deliveries a month in Pincher Creek, including one caesarean section. 🍷

“If the issues between physicians, AHS, and the government remain unresolved, AHS must provide clear direction, including contingency plans to ensure patient safety.”

- Heather Smith

# International Solidarity



Janelle Dewarle



## UNA grant supported RN's role in Edmonton Grade 9 students' volunteer trip to Belize

■ **WITH** high humidity and temperatures between 34 and 38 Celsius every day, a major focus of Registered Nurse Janelle Dewarle's visit to Belize in April with a class of Grade 9 students from Edmonton was preventing exhaustion and heat stroke.

Being outside for long days meant heat-related ailments, blisters, headaches, stomach aches, sprains and strains (not to mention homesickness) were a risk, Dewarle remembered in her report to United Nurses of Alberta, which provided a \$1,000 International Solidarity Grant for her visit with 28 students, six parents and four teachers from Edmonton's Meadowlark Christian School.

The young people helped paint a school in Orange Walk Town, in the northern part of the Central American country southeast of the Mexican border, and built an aquaponics system for the local school. After

the day's physical labour, she said in her report, "we spent the other part of the day visiting schools or communities to interact with the kids through reading, singing, playing games and sports with them."

Dewarle's three kids attend the school, which is part of the Edmonton Public Schools system, and her daughter was among the Grade 9 students on the trip.

"I feel so thankful that I had this opportunity to see a new country, try new foods, enjoy a new culture, and serve the people in Belize," the Local 196 community nurse wrote in her report. "The UNA international solidarity grant is an amazing way to make these humanitarian trips a reality."

Dewarle's trip is another example of how UNA's ability to support humanitarian work abroad is returning as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic eases. 🍷



Scenes from the trip to Belize by a group of Grade 9 students from Edmonton, accompanied by Janelle Dewarle, a Local 196 Community nurse from Edmonton.

Photos: Janelle Dewarle

## UNA International Solidarity Grants support nurses' humanitarian assistance efforts

■ **UNITED** Nurses of Alberta International Solidarity Grants assist members in their efforts to engage in missions abroad that provide humanitarian assistance of capacity-building to a host community. Offered twice each year, UNA provides a maximum of 10 grants of up to \$1,000 each.

Members must apply through UNA's Data management System (DMS) prior to travel and selected applicants will be contacted through their @una.ca email address. Successful applicants must confirm receipt of that email by replying within 30 days of its receipt.

Funds will be disbursed following the submission of a written report to UNA's second vice-president. The report must be submitted within 60 days of completion

of the humanitarian work. Selection criteria includes the strength of the application with preference given to first-time recipients.

### Important deadlines:

- Applications are due on December 31 and May 15 of each calendar year
- For travel between January 1 and June 30, applications must be received prior to December 31 of the preceding year
- For travel July 1 and December 31, applications must be received prior to May 15 of the year in which travel occurs
- Applications are reviewed by UNA's Membership Committee at the first Executive Board Meeting following each deadline. 🍷

UNA provides a maximum of 10 grants of up to \$1,000 each.



[dms.una.ca/forms/22](https://dms.una.ca/forms/22)

# VIOLENCE IS INCREASING IN HEALTH CARE WORKPLACES:

## you have the right to a safe and healthy workplace.

By Dewey Funk and  
Josh Bergman  
UNA Occupational Health  
and Safety Advisors

■ **AS** we come out of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are seeing increasing levels of violence toward nurses and all health care workers, including very serious and disturbing incidents of physical violence resulting in long-term physical and psychological injuries. Alberta's Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act defines violence as "the threatened, attempted, or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause physical or psychological injury or harm and includes domestic or sexual violence."

In UNA's 2023 general membership survey, almost 40 per cent of nurses reported experiencing physical violence at work in the previous 12 months. This number reaches almost 70 per cent when you include other forms of violence such as name-calling, insults, threats, or intimidation.

Almost half of survey respondents reported that both physical and non-physical forms of violence have increased in the last year. According to a 2019 Standing Committee Report to the House of Commons on *Violence Facing Health Care Workers in Canada*, health care workers have a fourfold higher rate of workplace violence than any other profession. Violence in

health care has been normalized as just part of the job.

We cannot accept this reality and UNA will continue to call on the Alberta Government and health care employers to do more to protect health care workers and to ensure their safety at work.

However, it's also important for you to be aware of your rights and your employer's responsibilities as it relates to preventing and responding to violence in the workplace. First and foremost, it's your employer's responsibility to provide you with a safe and healthy workplace. Article 34.01 of the Provincial Collective Agreement states: "*The Employer shall be responsible for providing safe and healthy working conditions.*" Alberta's OHS Code requires your employer to have a violence prevention policy and procedures, which must outline the process for reporting, documenting, and investigating incidents of violence and the procedure to be followed to implement measures to eliminate or control the hazard of violence that has been identified as part of the investigation. The violence prevention procedures must also outline how a worker can obtain immediate assistance when an incident of violence occurs. Familiarize yourself with these policies and procedures.



Dewey Funk



Josh Bergman

If you experience violence in the workplace, it's very important to report the concern to your employer using their reporting process or system (For example, Alberta Health Services uses MySafetyNet; Covenant Health uses the Reporting Line.)

This does not need to be done immediately but should be done as soon as possible. Your manager can also report the incident on your behalf if you are unable to do so. Your employer's violence prevention policy and procedure should clearly outline how to report such an incident. If the incident causes an illness or injury (including psychological), report that injury to your employer, your doctor or other health care provider, and to WCB. You can make a WCB report online at [wcb.ab.ca](http://wcb.ab.ca). Reach out to UNA for support and representation. You are entitled to union representation at any meeting with the employer regarding investigation of the incident you have reported. UNA can also help support you through the WCB process if need be.

UNA will continue to advocate to health care employers to take meaningful action to prevent and reduce the incidence of workplace violence in Alberta, which includes holding them to their obligations under the Collective Agreement and OHS legislation.

Both AHS and Covenant Health are in the process of implementing the Behavioural Safety Program, which is a clinical practice standard for identifying and communicating the safety risk and safe care strategies for patients who may display harassing or violent behaviours. UNA continues to advocate to AHS that this needs to be implemented in a much timelier fashion. AHS recently announced additional resources to assist with the implementation of this program across the province.

UNA has also recently advocated to AHS that they need to be more transparent with the public when their employees experience serious violent incidents. The public needs to understand the reality of what health care workers are facing when they go to work, that this type of behaviour will not be tolerated, and that health care workers have a right to feel and be safe at work.

Workplace violence is preventable. But preventing it requires all of us to speak up and report it when it occurs and it requires health care employers to take meaningful action to prevent it.

Remember: *you have the right to a safe and healthy workplace.* 🍷

In UNA's 2023 general membership survey, almost 40 per cent of nurses reported experiencing physical violence at work in the previous 12 months.



## UNA members must OPT IN to receive Nurse Planner after 2024

■ **THE** UNA Nurse Planner will continue to be distributed to members of the union in 2024.

After 2024, however, UNA members who wish to *continue* to receive a Nurse Planner will have to opt in using UNA's Data Management System (DMS) to receive a copy of subsequent editions of the 2024 Planner.

With member interest in the Nurse Planner booklets decreasing each year as members transition to electronic calendars on their smartphones and computers, UNA last

year introduced an option for members to stop receiving the Planner permanently.

The opt-out option has been retained for 2024.

UNA is responding to declining interest in and use of this legacy service by members while still providing the service for those members who find a printed pocket calendar useful.

To reduce waste in the future, UNA hopes members will reuse the plastic covers. 🍷

MOCK UP ONLY



# UNA LAUNCHES 3Rs Digital Campaign

By Camelia Guthrie  
UNA Communications Advisor



Camelia Guthrie

■ A pressing reality confronts us: four in 10 nurses contemplate leaving their profession due to the weight of the current staff shortage. Escalating workloads and a scarcity of staff have become the catalyst propelling nurses towards an exit.

United Nurses of Alberta has launched its 3Rs digital campaign – Respect, Retain, Recruit – aiming to shed light on the critical health care and nursing challenges within the province. This isn't just about awareness; it's a call for immediate, tangible solutions.

Harnessing the dynamic power of digital media, the campaign consists of an array of compelling transit and airport ads,

a monthly email newsletter called *The Pulse*, enlightening videos, and social media posts. These tools serve as a conduit to inform and ignite a shared desire for change.

The campaign commenced on September 5. Albertans are encouraged to stand alongside Alberta's nurses by proudly displaying a 3Rs lawn sign on your property or window.

Join the movement, sign up for updates via our mailing list at [www.neednurses.ca](http://www.neednurses.ca), and join us in creating a future where nurses are respected, retained, and consistent recruitment is a top priority. 🍷

This isn't just about awareness;  
it's a call for immediate, tangible solutions.



RESPECT RETAIN RECRUIT

## UNA congratulates members who ran in May 29 provincial election

■ ON May 30, the day after the 2023 provincial election, United Nurses of Alberta thanked members who voted in the May 29 Alberta provincial election and congratulated candidates who put their names on the ballot.

In particular, UNA thanked the three members who stepped up to run and stand by their convictions as candidates in this election: Danielle Larivee in Lesser Slave Lake and Diana Batten in Calgary-Acadia, both of whom ran for the NDP, and Myles

Berry in Edmonton-Gold Bar, who ran for the United Conservative Party.

Nurses play an important role in the public health care system and in our communities as leaders and it is vital that the voices of nurses who understand the challenges and realities of what's happening on the front lines of the public health care system be heard in an election.

Of the three, only Batten won the day – defeating former health minister Tyler Shandro by 25 votes. 🍷



Diana Batten RN, MLA

# NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY: UNA celebrates the huge contribution of Canada's first peoples



■ **UNITED** Nurses of Alberta celebrated the contribution of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples to our union, our province, and Canada on National Indigenous Peoples Day, June 21.

“We recognize the heritage, history and diverse cultural traditions of the Indigenous peoples whose land we share in the part of Turtle Island we call Canada,” President Heather Smith said in a statement.

UNA is proud to represent many nurses of Indigenous heritage, including those employed by the Blood Tribe Department of Health in Stand Off, near Cardston, and by Aakom Kiyii Health Services of the Piikani Nation, at Brocket.

As an organization deeply concerned with the determinants of health as well as the health care system, UNA believes the resolution of the longstanding lack of access to clean water in Indigenous communities and lands must be treated as an urgent national priority.

In co-operation with Indigenous organizations, the Government of Canada chose

June 21, the summer solstice, for National Aboriginal Day, now known as National Indigenous Peoples Day.

For generations, indigenous peoples and communities celebrated their culture and heritage on or near the longest day of the year. UNA members were encouraged to take part in National Indigenous Peoples Day events in communities across the province.

National Aboriginal Day was proclaimed by then governor general Romeo Leblanc in 1996 and was renamed National Indigenous Peoples Day in 2017.

The Canadian Constitution recognizes three distinct groups of Indigenous peoples with unique histories, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs: First Nations (still referred to in federal legislation as Indians), Inuit, and Métis.

National Indigenous People's Day is a statutory holiday in the Northwest Territories and Yukon. It is an observance in Nunavut and the 10 provinces. 🍷

“We recognize the heritage, history and diverse cultural traditions of the Indigenous peoples whose land we share in the part of Turtle Island we call Canada.”

- Heather Smith

## UNA proudly stands with LGBTQ2S+ members during Pride Month and year round

■ **JUNE** is Pride Month and June 2023 was an opportunity for United Nurses of Alberta members to celebrate LGBTQ2S+ communities in our union, our province, our country, and around the world.

UNA is committed to fighting prejudice in all its forms so that LGBTQ2S+ people always feel safe, valued, loved and welcomed, especially in the workplace and when seeking care.

UNA's Pride (LGBTQ2S+) Equity Caucus provides a safe space for UNA members, where open dialogue can occur on issues and challenges that affect members that identify as LGBTQ2S+.

Caucus members strive to empower and aid LGBTQ2S+ members and their allies.

For more information about the Pride Caucus, please contact: [pride@una.ca](mailto:pride@una.ca). 🍷



# UNA members at Dr. Vernon Fanning Centre ratify new contract with Carewest

■ **MEMBERS** of United Nurses of Alberta employed by Carewest at the Dr. Vernon Fanning Centre in Calgary voted in early August to ratify their first collective agreement. The employer has also ratified the contract.

The one-year agreement was rolled into the existing Carewest contract with UNA, which expires on March 31, 2024. The new agreement includes a salary schedule matching that of the already existing Carewest contract plus a 2-per-cent salary increase as of April 1, 2023.

Improvements included in the first contract include:

- Four Personal Leave Days, continued until the ratification of the next agreement.
- Inclusion into the new supplemental benefits plan 90 days post-ratification, including:
  - Occupational Therapy: \$50 a visit to a maximum of 20 visits per year (separate category)
  - Physical Therapy: \$50 a visit to a maximum of 20 visits per year (separate category)

- Massage Therapy: \$50 a visit to a maximum of 20 visits per year and removal of physician's order
- Chiropractic: \$50 a visit to a maximum of 20 visits per year
- Chartered psychologist: no visit cap to a combined maximum of 3,000 per year.
- Team Leads at the sites will be brought into the bargaining unit and roles, responsibilities and pay scales will be AHS level.
- Employees may choose to opt into a Tax Free Savings Account (TFSA) plan. Employees may change their allocations every second year.

UNA congratulates and thanks the Local and bargaining team members for their hard-work and solidarity during these negotiations. UNA recognizes the hard work that the members did to get the word out and canvass their coworkers during this process.

The bargaining unit of 123 Registered Nurses voted to join UNA on April 13, 2023. 🍷

Dr. Vernon Fanning Centre



photo from www.albertahealthservices.ca



[www.una.ca/1425/nurses-at-carewest-dr-vernon-fanning-centre-vote-to-join-una](http://www.una.ca/1425/nurses-at-carewest-dr-vernon-fanning-centre-vote-to-join-una)

## UNA board continues sponsorship of ALBERTA DREAMS

■ **THE** United Nurses of Alberta Provincial Board is proud to continue its sponsorship of Alberta Dreams with a \$10,000 donation.

Over the past 35 years of sponsorship, Alberta's nurses have helped Alberta Dreams, formerly known as the Rainbow Society of Alberta, raise funds in support of their programs, which grant wishes to

children throughout Alberta who have been diagnosed with life-threatening or severe chronic medical illnesses. 🍷



For more information about Alberta Dreams and their programs, visit: [albertadreams.ca/](http://albertadreams.ca/)



# DON'T FORGET TO CLAIM YOUR 2% RRSP OR TFSA SUPPLEMENT!



Report from  
Director of Labour Relations  
David Harrigan

■ **UNITED** Nurses of Alberta strongly recommends that all members under the Provincial Collective Agreement act to take advantage of the employer's agreement to contribute to a supplemental pension plan in the form of a Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) or Tax Free Savings Account (TFSA) contribution.

This is a benefit that you cannot receive without taking specific action to enroll.

Employees who choose not to act, though, will go without a 2-per-cent retirement income supplement to their salary that they are entitled to receive under the collective agreement.

Employees who choose not to act, though, will go without a 2-per-cent retirement income supplement to their salary that they are entitled to receive under the collective agreement.

Article 29.05 of the Provincial Collective Agreement states:

- (a) The Employer shall provide a supplemental pension plan in the form of a Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP). The Employer shall also provide a Tax Free Savings Account (TFSA). Employees shall determine the allocation of contributions to either the RRSP or the TFSA. Employees may change their allocation effective April 1st of each year.
- (b) *Effective on the Employee's date of enrollment, a Regular Employee shall have the right to contribute up to 2% of regular earnings into either the RRSP or TFSA:*
- (i) *Employees may contribute into the RRSP until December 30th of the year the Employee turns 71. The Employer shall match the Employee's contributions into the RRSP; or*
  - (ii) *Employees may contribute into the TFSA. The Employer shall match the Employee's contributions into the TFSA.*
- (c) *Regular Employees who, by virtue of their age, no longer qualify under Article 29.05(b)(i), shall have the option of reallocating contributions to the TFSA as per Article 29.05(b)(ii) or receive an additional 2% of their regular earnings. Employees may change their allocation between participating in the TFSA and receiving 2% of regular earnings effective April 1st of each year.*
- (d) *"Earnings" as defined in Article 29.05(b) above, will include WCB earnings until such time that the Employee exhausts accrued sick leave credits and is deemed to be on sick leave without pay.*

The agreement requires that employees contribute 2 per cent of their salary for the employer to match. In addition, employees must enroll in the program for the employer to contribute this money.

No UNA member should go without funds for their retirement that their employer has agreed to contribute. 🍷

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your UNA Local Executive or Labour Relations Officer at 1-800-252-9394.

# R RESPECT

# R RETAIN

# R RECRUIT



#neednursesAB

## Show your support with a '3Rs: Respect, Retain, Recruit' lawn sign

Insufficient staffing levels and high workloads resulting from the current staffing shortage are forcing nurses to leave the profession. Our health care system cannot survive without nurses.

Support Alberta's nurses by putting a "3Rs: Respect, Retain, Recruit" lawn sign on your lawn or in your window.

Anyone can order a lawn sign by going to: <https://neednurses.ca/action/request-a-lawn-sign/> 

