

NEWSBULLETIN

Bill 124 Court Challenge | Staffing Crisis | Dave Murphy retirement

Bill 124 Court Challenge

40 unions, including CUPE, were in court last week asking it to strike down the Ford government's Bill 124 which limits wage increases to 1% a year. A decision is expected in the spring.

Bargaining Consultations Begin

Consultations have begun with local union leaders about the plan for bargaining the 2023-25 contract. A membership survey will be circulated in February and a bargaining conference held in April to establish priorities.

Arbitration Decision Expected

The arbitration board that will decide the contract terms for members of CUPE is expected to issue an award in the next few weeks. A leadership call immediately followed by a membership teleconference will be held to review the details of that decision.



Kevin Cook (VP), Dave Murphy, Sam Forsythe (786), Susan Thornton (786), Santo Cimino (786) and Robyn Chaston (1605) celebrate Dave's retirement, September 24. Dave Murphy has been an outstanding leader, in Hamilton at local 7800, and for health care workers across Ontario

Ontario cuts hospital budgets by \$116 million, LTC by \$26 million

The August provincial budget announced cuts to hospital spending of \$116 million. Long term care is being cut by \$26 million.

There can be no solution to the health care staffing crisis if budgets continue to be cut. The independent Financial Accountability Office predicts 5 years of cuts ahead to Ontario's hospitals. Mobilizing for real funding increases is vital now.



Dave Verch, OCHU First VP, at the Ottawa Hospital in September

Media blitz with paramedics highlights staffing crisis

Faced with a hospital attrition rate of 15% a year, Ontario needs to hire 46,000 hospital staff.

A joint media tour between OCHU-CUPE and CUPE's paramedics (CACO) this summer highlighted this problem and the shortage of ambulances and paramedics. OCHU VP Dave Verch spoke for OCHU.

Dave Verch highlighted that hiring and retaining hospital staff is IMPOSSIBLE when the government is cutting our members real wages.

The only real solutions to the hospital staffing crisis are to:

- SCRAP BILL 124
- Raise real wages
- Incentivize people not to retire
- Bring back staff who have retired through incentives



Sharon Richer, OCHU Secretary-Treasurer, speaks to violence experienced by hospital staff at Queen's Park in August

Public awareness campaign reinforces NDP Bill to protect workers who speak up about violence at work

France G linas, NDP member for Nickel Belt, has introduced a private member's bill that would protect workers who speak up about the problem of violence at work.

This bill was reinforced by a summer campaign by OCHU-CUPE which highlighted the high level of physical, sexual and racially directed violence directed against health care workers.

OCHU has sent every Member of Provincial Parliament a copy of the book *Code White* which highlights the problem of violence experienced by Ontario health care staff. We have encouraged all MPP's to support the private members bill.