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June 11, 2024

Dear IUOE 942 Health Members

In light of the recent incentive agreement that Health PEI has reached with PEINU, IUOE Local 942 would like to acknowledge that we have also been involved in talks with Health PEI regarding incentives for our members. We have recently received feedback from numerous members expressing that all members of our union should benefit from any agreements made with the employer. This is currently our focus as we negotiate our own deal.

IUOE strongly believes that every staff member at Health PEI does work that is vital to our healthcare system. We are happy to see our peer unions receive incentives for their hard work and will continue to fight to get the best deal possible for our own membership as well. We have made a strong push and negotiated in good faith over the past several years to ensure that financial incentives are distributed fairly and equitably throughout the healthcare system in our province.

As our peer unions have acknowledged, the employer has an extensive track record of offering incentives and implementing them in a way that causes divides. This division is seen between unions, between departments, and between co-workers within the same department. With each divisive incentive offer, these divides widen, causing unneeded stress to our members and dealing a blow to the morale of a system that already has its back against the ropes.

It is important to us that our union members are able to be granted, and to enjoy, their hard-earned vacation, as is their collectively bargained right. Continued and foreseeable staffing shortages in numerous departments across the healthcare system have resulted in that not always being the case. During our last set of negotiations, our union collectively bargained from the position that these shortages existed and were worsening, only to be flatly told we were wrong. Since then, the employer has continued to demonstrate an inability to recruit new staff to our healthcare system to alleviate the pressures on staff who are already overburdened in trying to fill those gaps.

Contrary to what was reported by CBC on June 11, 2024, this most recent offer of incentives was not brought forward to IUOE in March of this year. It was brought forward in the last week of May, after summer schedules were due to be finalized and dozens of vacation days were denied across our union membership. The last-minute offering of incentives to only a portion of our members is disappointing and fails to address the lack of fairness that has been a staple of this employer over the past few years.

We continue to negotiate a deal that will address the needs of the employer but, most importantly, the needs of our diverse membership. The Premier and Health Minister are both on record seeking collaboration from stakeholders and having all the money in the world to fix healthcare. It is time that our input is seriously considered to come up with a solution outside of their largely exclusive incentive packages they continue to put forward. It is time for them to stop saying they can't afford to treat us fairly.

In Solidarity,

Tracy L. Robertson

IUOE 942 President