

NEWSBULLETIN

Cuts: North Bay/Royal Ottawa/Perley Health/HHS & St. Joe's Hamilton/UHT

Hospital & long-term care cuts as funding slashed

Campaigns have begun in North Bay, Ottawa & Hamilton as job cuts are announced.

Funding for hospitals and LTC will be well under the costs of delivering services this year and for 2026 & 2027.

Locals at North Bay, UHT Toronto, Royal Ottawa, Perley-Rideau Veterans', St. Joe's and HHS hospitals in Hamilton are planning to push the provincial government to increase funding. Rallies are planned in North Bay Dec. 22 & in Ottawa Jan 7 at the Perley and Jan. 12 at the Royal Ottawa Hospital. Please support these rallies.



CUPE 139 President Mike Turgeon announces campaign against 40 job cuts at the North Bay Regional Health Centre

New 3-year Contract Ratified by 78%

Wage increases of 2.25% for 2025-26, 2% for 2026-27 and 1.75% for 2027-28 have been negotiated for you.

The 5th and 6th weeks of vacation will come sooner. Standby, standby pay on a holiday and charge nurse premiums and safety footwear allowances will all increase.

Bereavement leave will increase and a spouse's immediate family is now included for bereavement.



*RPN Committee Chair
Angela Hodgson and Dr.
James Brophy*

Nurse to Patient Ratio Report and RPN Conference

The RPN Committee released a study with the University of Windsor this fall on the benefits of nurse-patient ratios. RPNs Angela Hodgson and Rachel Flemming held 12 media conferences across Ontario and an MPP breakfast with report author Dr. James Brophy.

An RPN conference was held Dec. 1 and a campaign to push for nurse-patient ratios was developed there. It will include a postcard campaign, a second research study and a lobby of MPPs.

There are many more improvements. Details are on pages 3 and 4 of this newsletter.

Employees can now collect overtime pay and shift and weekend premiums. Previously this was not allowed.

Your new contract has been ratified by a vote of 78.5%. In electronic voting that took place on Dec. 6. It was unanimously recommended by your bargaining committee.

Retroactivity will be paid to you by March 15, 2026 on wages and any premium increases owing to you for hours worked from September 29, 2025.

The new vacation improvements also apply to part-time employees, who receive the vacation as a percentage of pay, in addition to the percentage in lieu of benefits (14%).

Bereavement leave has also increased and the scope of relatives has increased also.

RALLY OUTSIDE MPP VIC FEDELI'S CONSTITUENCY OFFICE
Help stop the cuts at North Bay Regional Health Centre!

Monday, December 22
10 a.m.

Vic Fedeli's Office – 219 Main St E, Unit 101, North Bay

The Grinch Who Stole Our Health Care: Frontline staff and community members demand the Ford government fully fund our hospital to protect patient care and ensure safe staffing levels.

CUPE139 OCHU • **CUPE**
ONTARIO COUNCIL OF HOSPITAL UNIONS
UNIONED UNDER ONE VOICE

UNION BARGAINS NEW CONTRACT

*CUPE has negotiated a **3-year collective agreement** with Ontario hospitals. The agreement is unanimously recommended by your provincial negotiating committee. Voting will be held electronically on **December 6**. All CUPE members will receive an email with voting information.*

Retroactivity:

Any retroactivity owing will be paid within ninety (90) days of the date of ratification.

General Wage Increases

- 2.25% effective September 29, 2025
- 2.00% effective September 29, 2026
- 1.75% effective September 29, 2027

Note that wage adjustments for RPNs, Trades and other classifications are bargained locally in addition to the general wage increases.

Vacation

- 5 weeks after 11 years of service (from 12 years of service) effective September 29, 2025
- 7 weeks after 25 years of service (from 28 years of service) effective September 29, 2025

Benefits

- Increase orthodontics to \$2500 effective date of ratification
- Increase implants, crowns and bridgework to \$2500 effective date of ratification
- Increase dentures to \$2500 effective date of ratification
- Increase mental health coverage to \$900 effective date of ratification Increase mental health coverage to \$1000 effective September 29, 2026

Premiums

- Increase standby to \$3.45 effective September 29, 2025
- Increase standby on a holiday to \$5.05 effective September 29, 2025
- Increase charge nurse premium to \$4.00 effective date of ratification

Allow an employee receiving overtime pay to also receive any shift or weekend premium

Allowances

Increase safety footwear allowance for full-time and regular part-time employees required to wear them to \$160 effective September 29, 2026

Health and Safety

Substantial improvements to employee's health and safety rights.

Bereavement Leave

Increase to 4 days for spouse, child or parent or a member of their immediate family. "Immediate family" means parent, brother, sister, spouse, son, daughter, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, grandparent, grandparent of spouse, or grandchild. Spouse as defined in the Family Law Act, including partner of same sex. Immediate family now includes listed relatives of spouse.

Domestic or Sexual Violence Leave

Defined as intimate partner violence, child abuse or sexual violence, including but not limited to, disruptive phone calls, harassing emails, threats, inappropriate visits, violent confrontations, violent offences between current and/or former partners, regardless of cohabitation. Support will include work accommodations to schedules or duties, safety planning, training, referrals and protections, risk assessment and or health benefits and other, as appropriate.

Understanding the new Personal Support Worker (PSW) Federal Tax Credit

The federal government just announced a new tax credit for eligible personal support workers (PSWs). PSWs are healthcare professionals who provide essential care and support, assisting individuals with the activities of daily living.

PSWs do critical work, and they deserve fair compensation for it. This tax credit is a step in the right direction. It will provide eligible members with some relief, but it's only temporary, and not a proper substitute for living wages.

CUPE will continue pushing to get real, permanent wage increases for PSWs – but in the meantime, here's what we know about the new tax credit.

How does it work?

- The credit is temporary, it will be available for 5 years, from 2025 to 2030.
- Eligible workers can claim up to 5% of their eligible earnings, to a max of \$1,100 per year.
- It's a refundable tax credit – so you can still get the money even if you don't owe anything when you file your taxes.
- Your employer(s) must confirm your eligibility and how much you can claim. They'll do this by submitting a specific form to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA)

Who is eligible?

- Be a health care worker who "ordinarily provides one-on-one care and essential support to optimise and maintain another individual's health, well-being, safety, autonomy, and comfort".
- Provide care as "as directed by a regulated health care professional or a provincial community health organization".
- Have main duties that include "helping patients with activities of daily living and mobilization".
- Work for a hospital, nursing or residential care facility, community care facility for the elderly, a home health care establishment, or "other similar regulated health care establishments".
- Have filed your taxes.

Does it count if I have the same/a similar job with a different title?

Yes, if you meet the other criteria above.

As long as your job duties meet the definition provided, and your employer confirms your eligible earnings, you should be able to claim this credit.

What are “eligible earnings”?

- Taxable employment income (wages, salaries, benefits, overtime pay, shift premiums, etc.) earned working at an eligible health care establishment, certified by your employer.
- Also includes taxable benefits specifically related to your employment as a PSW, and any similar tax-exempt income you may have earned on a reserve.
- You cannot count any income you made from:
 - o non-PSW jobs
 - o unregulated facilities
 - o private, cash-based care without a “proper employment structure”
 - o self-employment that’s not tied to regulated PSW duties
 - o working as a PSW or related occupation in BC, Newfoundland and Labrador, or the Northwest Territories

Quick math: if you made \$18,000 in eligible earnings, you could receive a \$900 tax credit; if you made \$22,000 or more, you could receive the maximum of \$1,100.