

Community Support

Component 15

Update

your table officers

Component Director:
Marlene Hrechka

Local 103, NOR-MAN CS
President: *vacant*
Vice-President: Patrick O'Connor

Local 104, Parkland CS
President: Lisa Johnston
Chief Steward: *vacant*
Vice-President: Genny Stan

Local 105, Brandon CS
President: Judy McClelland
Chief Steward: Marlene Hrechka
Vice-President: Kathy Smitzniuk

Local 108, Central CS
President: Jolene Stevenson
CS: Christina Overton
Vice-President: Jacqueline Paton

Local 109, Interlake CS
President: Doris Hofer
Chief Steward: Chelsea Boyce
Vice-President: Shirley Russell

Local 110, North Eastman CS
President: Lena Gauthier
Chief Steward: Sharon Sirois
VP: Christine Kowalchuk

Local 111, South Eastman CS
President: Aganetha Unrau
Chief Steward: *vacant*
VP: Michelle Lafournaise

Local 112, Burntwood CS: *vacant*

Local 113, Home Care/Support Wpg
President: Curt Penniston
Chief Steward: Anita Lewis
Vice-President: Lisa Tarko

Local 114, Winnipeg Proctors
President: Orville White
Chief Steward: *vacant*

Local 115, Families First Wpg
President: *vacant*
Chief Steward: Lisa Schmatkow
VP: Shirley Halipchuk

Local 305, Assiniboine CS
President: Winona Buckle
Chief Steward: Debbie Good
Vice-President: Debbie Cook

CHANGE/REVIEWS DOMINATE FIRST MONTHS OF 2012



Marlene Hrechka

Since ratifying our contract, we've been working hard to get our achievements at the bargaining table up and running.

As you'll recall, the last round of negotiations was a

long and often frustrating process. Though we were unable to achieve some of our goals, we did make huge gains in other areas. For instance, those of us on the Bargaining Committee came out to Local meetings proud to announce permanent jobs for Home Care Workers, and most Proctors.

Your Committee strongly endorsed acceptance of the agreement, trusting that there was a mutual desire to create "real jobs" for these workers. Many of you will remember the MGEU TV ads that showcased how vital it was we no longer be considered "casual" employees. In the end, the Province agreed that home care has evolved into an essential part of our health care system and in order to recruit and retain workers, they must create a permanent workforce, or **equivalent full-time positions (EFTs)**.

Needless to say, change is never simple, and things are always easier in theory than in practice.

In the last year or so, we've been **striving to roll out EFT positions** in a number of regions and the process has not been without its challenges. Some employers are clearly more committed to the process than others, and it's become very obvious to us where the Home Care program has been well-managed, and where there have been real recruitment and retention issues.

In some regions, "task times" have become a point of contention and the debate over quantity versus quality has become a real focus.

While implementing EFTs has dominated much of our time over the last several months, we've also continued our efforts on a number of other fronts. **Families First Home Visitors**, for instance, have been meeting regularly regarding the **classification review process** that the employer agreed to last round.

The **influx of bed bugs in Manitoba** is affecting a wide range of MGEU members whose work takes them into people's homes — paramedics, Family Services and Manitoba Housing workers — but few are at as great a risk as those of us in Community Support. I've been following closely what the government and your union are doing to tackle this crisis and you'll find more about that inside this Update.

If you have any questions or comments about this Update, please contact me through the MGEU Resource Centre at 1-866-982-6438.

How will the recently-announced RHA changes affect us?

The Province has already begun the process of amalgamating Manitoba's eleven Regional Health Authorities into five, and intends to have the mergers complete by this fall. Since announcing the mergers as part of the 2012 budget, they have assured the MGEU that while they expect to eliminate about 35 executive positions, there will be **no** front line job losses.

For Community Support members, the change will mean an eventual amalgamation of Locals:

- the current Assiniboine, Brandon and Parkland RHAs will become the new Western Health Region;
- the current Burntwood and Nor-Man RHAs will become the new Northern Health Region;
- the current Central and South Eastman RHAs will become the new Southern Health Region;
- the current Interlake and North Eastman RHAs will become the new Eastern Health Region; and
- the Winnipeg and Churchill RHAs will merge.

HIGH TIME FOR BED BUG STRATEGY

At a 2011 Board meeting, MGEU Board members voted to create a Working Committee to tackle those tiny bugs that are a big issue for all members working in the community.

"A good portion of our members, from Social Workers to Paramedics to Families First Home Visitors, are dealing daily with the reality of Manitoba's bed bug infestation," said President Lois Wales.

Soon after, Marlene Hrechka, Community Support Component Director, attended a Bed Bug Symposium at Assiniboine Community College and came away with a simple message: while Healthy Living Minister Jim Rondeau talked a good game about a provincial prevention strategy, we must aggressively work to keep him to his promises.

"There seems to be some inconsistencies in their approach, especially in the rural areas," said Hrechka. "So we at the union will have to stay on top of things."

The MGEU Bed Bug Prevention Committee will concentrate on:

- educating members about risks and prevention;
- communicating and sharing resources with similar at-risk groups;
- developing guidelines and strategies in partnership with the employer.

Community Support activists Bev Smith and Anita Lewis have been appointed to the Committee to add the Component's perspective to the discussion and report back to members.

If you have questions or suggestions for the Committee, please contact Bev or Anita through the Resource Centre at 1-866-982-6438.



EFT ROLL OUT UPDATE

Last spring, the MGEU began working with employers to implement EFTs in the Interlake, North Eastman, Assiniboine and South Eastman Regions. Shortly after, implementation began in the Assiniboine South and River East areas of Winnipeg.

"When we moved on to the Seven Oaks and Inkster offices, however, we ran into some significant problems," said staff negotiator Sheila Gordon. "The issues and challenges were such that, after some discussion and debate, the employer agreed to pause implementation in Winnipeg."

Key points of contention in Winnipeg and elsewhere include the number of EFTs created, the size of EFTs, and times allocated for client assignments.

"After much discussion with the WRHA, we have been successful in ensuring that task times remain status quo during the roll-out," Gordon said. "Where they have been reduced in offices such as Fort Gary, Assiniboine South and River East, we are telling members to approach their Resource Coordinator to make the necessary adjustments. If that doesn't work, we encourage members to contact us directly for assistance."

More recently, EFT implementation is underway in Central and has gone live in Brandon. In Winnipeg, the "pause" has been lifted and the St. James office is slated for roll-out in the fall.

"We know this implementation process has been challenging for everyone involved, including workers, resource coordinators, clients and families," Gordon said. "Change is disruptive, even when it's the right thing to do."

Check out a sister on our site!

YOUR BARGAINING COMMITTEE is made up of activists from around the province who represent Community Support's three main classifications: Mental Health Proctors, Families First Home Visitors, and Home Care Workers.

Some of these representatives have been active with the union for years, while others are just starting out. Some are getting close to retirement, while others still have young families. But they all have one thing in common: they've chosen to stand up and work to improve the working lives of their fellow members.

Judy McClelland, Brandon Community Support President, has been featured as part of the MGEU website profiles. Visit www.mgeu.ca and find out what she loves most about her job and why she decided to step up to the plate and get active.



Judy McClelland

Contract Follow-Up...

FOLLOWING UP ON the memorandum established during the last round of negotiations, the Families First Home Visitors Classification Review Committee has been meeting regularly with the employer to discuss appropriate classifications and a report with recommendations has been drafted.

YOUR LOCAL NEEDS YOU! If you look at the list of Community Support activists on the reverse, you'll see that some Locals currently have vacancies. If you live in one of those Areas and are interested in a chance to learn, grow, and make a difference, call the MGEU Resource Centre at 982-6438 (1-866-982-6438).

GOT A QUESTION ABOUT YOUR CONTRACT? Is a particular article not clear to you? Call the MGEU Resource Centre at 982-6438 and they'll help you make sure the employer is living up to the agreement!

MGEU

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and General
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