

# NEWSBULLETIN

Hundreds protest in Kingston/ RPN Poll/Wage re-opener arbitration

## 500 protest in Kingston over private surgical centres

The first of 5 regional demonstrations protesting the Ontario government’s plan to privatize surgeries and diagnostics.

Bill 60 which enables the privatization of these services, passed on May 8.

CUPE, ONA, SEIU, OPSEU and Unifor are sponsoring the regional protests.

Further protests are planned in Hamilton, Toronto, Kitchener, Thunder Bay and North Bay in May and June.



## May 10 Wage Re-opener arbitration hearing

Bill 124, which limited compensation for health care workers to no more than 1% a year for 3 years, was struck down by the courts as unconstitutional in Nov. 2022.

As a result, OCHU-CUPE returned to bargaining in March of this year, without success. An arbitration hearing to resolve these issues will be held May 10.

The union is seeking wage increases that meet the increases in the rate of inflation. It is also seeking wage increases for RPNs, the only classification that is bargained centrally in this round of negotiations.



# RPN Poll

60% of RPNs are thinking of leaving nursing, according to a poll sponsored by OCHU-CUPE and SEIU and conducted by Nanos polling.

Most of the RPNs polled would stay if their wages were significantly increased.

82% are experiencing high levels of stress, including depression, trouble sleeping and anxiety.

The union is seeking a \$4 an hour wage increase for RPNs - the only classification bargained provincially. A hearing on this & other monetary issues will be held May 10.

## Wage re-opener

The union is also seeking increases in evening, night and weekend premiums, benefits and vacation.

It is expected that an arbitration decision will be issued within 2 months of the hearing.

## Bill 124 appeal

Meanwhile, the provincial government is appealing the court decision which struck down Bill 124.

The court hearing will be held in late June.

