

NEWSBULLETIN

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New Study Highlights Morale Crisis for Health Care Workers

A new study in the Journal of Occupational Health and Safety *New Solutions*, released August 12 draws attention to the morale crisis among health care workers in Ontario. Staff shortages, driven by the stress of working in the health care system with the fewest staff of any developed country in the world is driving exhaustion, mental fatigue, depression and a flood of employees to leave the system. Measures to encourage existing staff to stay are key to solving this problem. Find the study at: ochu.on.ca



CUPE Local 145 president, Erica Young, which represents staff at William Osler in Etobicoke, Brampton, Peel and Georgetown

William Osler Contracts Out Cleaning/Portering

William Osler Health Centre is going ahead with plans to contract-out cleaning and portering services at the Etobicoke hospital, despite a spirited demonstration by over 100 members at the site last month, protesting the proposal.

“The staff honestly feels totally disappointed in the hospital due to the fact that they have just gone through COVID where everybody was so nervous, but they worked hard, they focused on patient care,” said CUPE Local 145 president Erica Young, adding that “people were calling me crying” when they got the news that their jobs would be privatized.

“A private company is there for one reason: to make money. It’s not about patients, it’s not about the workers.”



Clarification on Health Spending Account

CUPE has negotiated a **Health Care Spending Account** for active employees at **\$100 annually**. The Health Care Spending Account can be used to pay for an employee's and/or eligible spouses/dependents' eligible medical expenses as defined by the Canadian Revenue Agency, because this account is tax-free.

An employee could use this account to pay the difference where the existing benefit does not pay all of the cost of a claim.

For example, where the cost of a dental procedure or a pair of eyeglasses, for example, is not fully reimbursed.

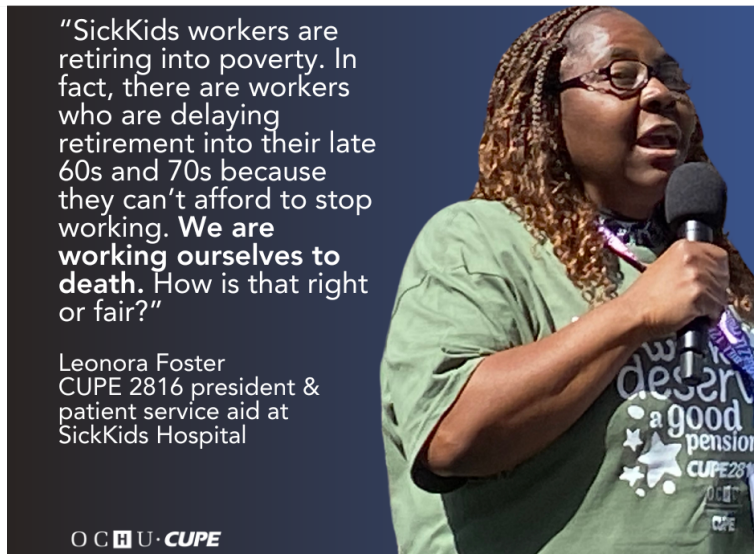
This is a breakthrough provision and we intend to increase the amount of this account to \$500 in the next round of bargaining, which is the industry standard.

William Osler (continued)

Writing about the hospital's contracting-out, the Toronto Star reported that: "Antimicrobial resistant organisms are increasing, which is very distressing, and which means there is more reason to worry about environmental cleaning in hospitals," said Dr. Dick Zoutman, a retired infectious diseases and medical microbiology specialist and former chief of staff at both the Scarborough Health Network and Quinte Health. "The work of environmental services workers saves lives. There's a direct relationship. And we've known that for a long time."

When it comes to outsourcing hospital cleaning services, the union's concerns seem to be borne out in both the academic literature and real-life experience, Zoutman notes."

The union has grieved the contracting out and plans an ongoing campaign to encourage the hospital to reconsider its decision.



Help us to convince the Hospital for Sick Children to bring its members into our pension plan (HOOPP). Join the rally at Sick Kids, September 16 at noon.