

NEWSLETTER

Ebola/Rally at Scarborough hospitals/Protesting cuts at St. Jo's Hamilton

Bill on violence against health care workers goes to committee

A federal bill which would make violence against a health care worker a more serious offence if that assault occurs while they are at work has passed second reading in the federal parliament. The bill will amend the criminal code.

The bill will now go to a parliamentary committee which will consider amendments.

The Ontario Council of Hospital Unions-CUPE has written to the committee asking to appear, along with expert witnesses, about the severity of the violence facing our members in Ontario.



CUPE 5852 president Stacey James at June 1 rally

Scarborough local fights hospital's \$36 million deficit

CUPE at Scarborough held a spirited rally June 1 demanding that the provincial government fund the hospitals \$36 million deficit. CUPE president Stacey James warned that the hospital is already struggling to meet the demands of its aging community. Patients on stretchers in hallways, long waits for admission to a bed and lengthy surgical waits are all symptoms of a hospital struggling to meet demands, she said. \$36 million in cuts will make everything much worse. The leader of the NDP, Local 5852 and OCHU have also written the Premier asking for the deficit to be covered.

The local is planning another rally on July 27.



CUPE local 786 president Rick Rickby at rally against cuts

Protests continue across Ontario over staff cuts

Protests against the Ontario government's funding cuts were held in Hamilton, North Bay, Ajax-Pickering, Stratford and Scarborough in June. The provincial budget in March promised hospitals would get increases of "up to 4%". The Ontario Hospital Association says that hospitals need increases of 6% just to meet their basic costs, so this is a 2% cut. The independent Financial Accountability Office predicts the closure of 2,500 acute care beds and the cuts of 7,500 nurses and PSW's over the next 3-years if the province's cuts go ahead. CUPE plans more rallies in the fall of 2026.

Ebola protections

Outbreaks of Ebola virus in Africa raise the question of what protections staff who work Ebola patients should use. Doctors Without Borders staff working with Ebola patients in the Congo are completely garbed- including hoods, n95 masks, gowns, gloves and boots. ***This is what we recommend.*** Ebola is spread through body fluids but the virus can become airborne. It should be treated as airborne. We ask health and safety committees to request Stryker suits (photo below) boots and N95 masks to be worn by staff working with actual or suspect Ebola cases. **Ebola is highly contagious and has a mortality rate of 50%.**

