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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Release: Health Care provider unions call for COVID-19 wage top-up

(SASKATCHEWAN) The unions representing health care providers in Saskatchewan are calling for the Premier to follow in the footsteps of almost every other jurisdiction in Canada and provide a wage top-up for health care workers.

Quebec, Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta have all taken steps to enhance the wages for health care workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. CUPE Local 5430, SEIU-West and SGEU Health Providers have written a letter to Premier Scott Moe, asking the provincial government to take steps to lift up the wages for health care workers.

“Health care workers in Saskatchewan have answered the call to step up to fight this pandemic and flatten the curve of infection. Our members are cohorting in single facilities, being redeployed to other facilities or communities, answering the call for emergency shifts, volunteering by the hundreds to go to outbreak communities, working long hours and going the extra mile every day,” said Barbara Cape, President of SEIU-West. “We deserve the same recognition and respect as health care workers across Canada.”

Last week, the Scott Moe government announced a wage top-up for front line workers, but health care workers were noticeably absent from the list of eligible employees.

“Our members are taking incredible steps to be where they are needed – and are going above and beyond every day. They are providing professional care and compassion to long-term care residents and acute care patients whose families can’t visit. They are isolating themselves from their families and friends to keep the public safe,” said Sandra Seitz, President of CUPE Local 5430. “Through all of this, they have remained steadfast while working in the midst of an unpredictable, unprecedented global medical crisis.”

The three health provider unions represent over 28,000 front-line health care workers who have been at the forefront of the work being done to flatten the curve of infection during the pandemic.



"Every member of the health care team is a part of the pandemic response and they are working under incredibly tense and stressful circumstances. They have displayed a remarkable amount of professionalism and courage in being the first line of defense in this battle that benefits all Saskatchewan residents," said Tracey Sauer, SGEU Health Providers Bargaining Chair. "Together, our members are ensuring that our health care system will be able to meet the challenge of COVID-19. We know that many of these same members have challenges of their own; it's time to acknowledge them with a wage top up to ensure that they can make ends meet."

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