

# Name the Newsletter Contest

Paramedical Professionals from Niagara Health System &  
Hotel Dieu Shaver Rehabilitation Centre

January 2014 Issue 1

## Working Together to Strengthen our Local

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### General Membership Meeting

Wednesday February 26th, 2014  
The Royal Canadian Legion, Fonthill  
**6pm**

**Pizza, beverages will be served**  
**Door prizes to be won!**

### Name the Newsletter Contest

We are looking for a name for our newsletter. Please submit your suggestions to [brenda.allan@opseulocal215.com](mailto:brenda.allan@opseulocal215.com) by March 31, 2014. The winner will receive a \$50 gift certificate.

### Printed Collective Agreements

The printed copies of the 2011-2014 collective agreements have been distributed for both bargaining units— contact a union steward if you need a copy.

There are still a limited number of pocket calendars— if you would like one...email:

[brenda.allan@opseulocal215.com](mailto:brenda.allan@opseulocal215.com)

### **New in this issue!**

Articles written by OPSEU members during an Editors Training Conference-October 2013

## Membership Update

Your local president and union stewards continue to meet newly hired members to grow our signed membership base.

To celebrate having greater than 650 signed members and a full time local president we held a draw on August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2013. The winners were drawn from all signed members:

### **\$100 prize winner:**

Janice W - Registered Technologist, SCS/NTL

### **\$50.00 prize winners:**

Maria R - Speech Language Pathologist, GNG  
 Sam S - Occupational Therapist, HDS Rehab  
 Katie B - Addiction Worker, PCG  
 Joanne L - Medical Lab Technologist, SCS

### ***Congratulations!***

## 2013 Fast Facts-In Review

- 9 Grievances settled at Step 2
- 4 Grievances settled at arbitration
- 3 Grievances referred and pending arbitration
- 2 Grievances awaiting a Step 2 meeting
- Numerous grievances were resolved at Step 1 conversations.
- Achieved full time President
- First Newsletter published
- NHS & HDS Steward educational offered locally
- 3 Regional Education Weekends attended by local union representatives
- 3 OPSEU members certified for JOHSC
- Labour Management meetings initiated
- Facebook page established
- Website initiated...coming soon.

## Bargaining Update

Visit [opseu.org](http://opseu.org) for updates on our Health Professional Division (HPD) Bargaining; these updates will be posted on the boards at GNG, WHS, SCS.

Nov 29-30/13– Provincial demand set for central issues occurred; our issues went forward.

Jan 21-24/14 — bargaining began

Feb 11-13/14 — continued bargaining

March 7-10/14— mediation dates if required

**LOCAL Bargaining**– dates to be established in late April and/or May.

### ***The Right Care — All the time***

## OPSEU Convention

The annual Convention convenes May 8th, 2014 at 9 am and adjourns on Saturday May 10th, 2014 at noon at the Toronto Metro Convention Centre. The business includes : Financial statements, budget, Resolutions, Constitutional Amendments and the report of the Executive Board.

It is important that our local is represented to vote in our best interests as decisions made at the convention impact our day to day operations and finances. At our GMM on Feb. 26th we will elect our delegates, alternates and observers. Please come out!

## **Antibullying day/Pink Shirt Day– Feb 26th**

### **Join other employees in wearing a pink shirt on Wednesday February 26th in support of a National Antibullying**

**day.** The ‘pink shirt’ idea came from 2 incredible high school students from Nova Scotia who were sympathetic toward a new Grade 9 student who was being harassed for wearing a pink shirt. They took a stand against bullying and protested against the harassment by arranging that all the boys in their school wear pink shirts. This stopped the bullies! The boys *Travis Price & David Shepherd* learned 1 or 2 people can come up with an idea, run with it and it can do wonders! Finally someone stood up for the weaker kid”.



### **How does OPSEU define bullying?**

Offensive, intimidating, malicious, insulting, or humiliating behaviour, abuse of power or authority which attempts to undermine an individual or group of employees and which may cause them to suffer stress.

- ⇒ Spreading rumours
- ⇒ Verbal abuse
- ⇒ Aggressive behaviour
- ⇒ Favouritism
- ⇒ Exclusion

### **What can we do?**

There is workplace relations and violence prevention legislation (and related policies) which the employer can use to discipline employees....we all are expected to be respectful of one another.

- ⇒ **24 hour rule**– Are you upset about something? Writing and email or responding to an issue in the heat of the moment can be harmful to yourself. You may want to draft an email and go back the next day to review it before sending it. Avoid capitalizing or bolding the entire email as this is interpreted as “yelling”.
- ⇒ **Put yourself in the other person’s shoes and** consider their point of view– If you disagree with someone, ask them questions to understand their point of view. This will lead to a better result.
- ⇒ **Never assume**– assuming to know why a coworker speaks or acts a certain way can lead to greater workplace relations problems.
- ⇒ **Perform random acts of kindness and/or offer compliments on any given day** ....all to often we miss the opportunity to make a positive impact on our hectic day.

# Returning to Work

## For Injuries/Illness that take place outside the workplace

**1. At what point am I required to provide a sick note?** *The employer can request a sick note for any absence to certify a member's sick absence or ability to return to work. Your manager should not receive this personal health information - it should be submitted directly to occupational health and the employer must cover the cost of this documentation.*

*\*\*Note that if you are absent for 5 days or more, an Attending Physicians Report (APR) is required to clear you to return to work.*

**2. I returned to work on a modified work program but after a few weeks I was told I could not continue...why? I really want to be at work.**

*The expectation is that you would progress to full duties within a time limited program. Sometimes programs end or are put on hold if progress is not occurring or if further medical documentation is required.*

**2. Will I be an "extra" staff person?**

*The goal is to adapt the work so that you can perform the essential duties of your job without bringing in extra staffing. Modifying your work is easier in some departments than others, depending on your restrictions. Speaking to your union is best if you have questions.*

**4. How long will my modified work last?**

*There isn't a fixed timeframe. For many members it typically lasts 6-8 weeks. This can depend on how long you were away from the workplace and how you progress.*

**5. I am full time and after a few weeks of modified work, I was not paid for the hours I did not work. Why?**

*Returning to modified work within the first 15 weeks following your illness/injury counts towards*

*the 15 week short term benefit period if you are a full time employee. If your program extends beyond the 15 week period, you are paid for the hours worked and you may qualify for income top up through employment insurance.*

**6. Is it fair that my clinical caseload or work hours are changed when another member returns on a modified work program?**

*The employer has a duty to accommodate work for an employee in certain circumstances that fall under the Human Rights code. There are 14 "grounds" which include disability. Sometimes this means reassigning workload within a department (on a temporary basis) to help the modified worker transition back to their position.*

*Accommodated work— the obligation to offer accommodated work may be based on disability or 1 of the other 13 prohibited grounds of the Ontario Human Rights code. The accommodation is validated by the employer and the union with a signed agreement which is reviewed on a regular basis. The goal is to ensure all members have equitable access to work.*

**\*\* It is always recommended to consult the union about your specific situation\*\***

## NHS Return to work Program

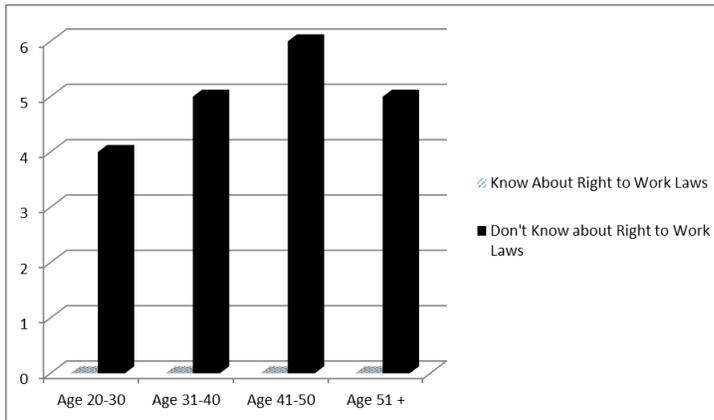
Return to Work information pamphlets have been drafted by the RTW committee. The goal is to inform and support members on this process.

Another goal of the NHS pilot project was to make a link to preventing workplace injuries. If you have ideas that would prevent injuries in your department, please share them with your manager, union and/or Health and Safety member. Ideas could involve the way in which you go about doing your work or it could involve modifying tools and equipment in the environment.

# What is the *Right to Work Law*?

Written by Sherri Haley

During OPSEU's *Editors' Weekend* held in Toronto October 25-27th 2013, I set out to the streets of Toronto to see if anyone had even heard of this legislation. The results were not surprising!



When asked the question "Are you aware of the Right to Work Laws passed in the USA?" 100% of the respondents said "no". When asked to take an educated guess as to what the title of that legislation might mean most respondents replied that they thought it was something to do with their right to be employed; only 10% of the respondents came close to correctly guessing what the legislation meant. Why is that? **The title of the legislation is misleading! Branding this idea as a worker friendly initiative is the key to making this legislation attractive to the uninformed voter.**

**The *Right To Work Laws* passed in the USA** prohibits union security agreements between employers and unions and doesn't require members to pay union dues but members are still afforded the rights negotiated by the union. **It would be the same as not paying our taxes and still expecting to receive the same quality of public services...! We could lose union hours to work on our behalf and support us with questions, concerns and grievances.**

Tim Hudak and the Progressive Conservative Party advocates for this legislation as he says it will "modernize" labour laws. OPSEU disagrees.



We need to educate ourselves and those around us on the implications of the *Right to Work Laws* and Tim Hudak's plan that will only prove to attack the middle class, drive down wages and broaden the gap between the rich and the rest of us....by providing the **right to work for less**...(part time, for minimum wage and/or work with reduced union representation).

We can't afford to ignore what the PCs have in mind. That's why our union produced the documentary video ***Made In The USA***. You can watch this video which takes you to the USA to hear how this type of legislation has affected them. It can be found via the link below or speak to your union rep about offering a viewing of this video.

[Click here to watch "Made in the USA" Video](#)

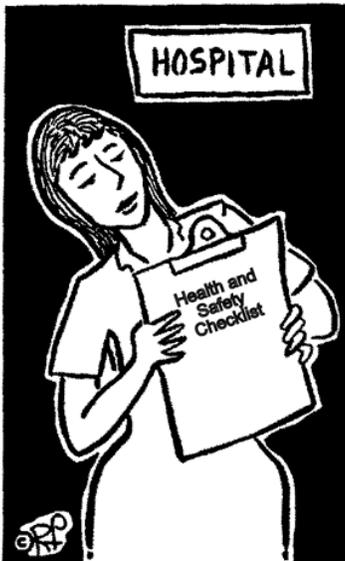
Or visit :

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pbrxe3X04OE&feature=youtu.be>

## Hazards in a New Workplace

*Written by John Dennis, Local 205*

*John Dennis is a Health and Safety specialist with over 10 years experience. He has expertise in Return to Work programs and work place assessments*



Starting a new job? Moving to a new location? The most recent data from the Workplace Safety Insurance Board shows that new workers are almost twice as likely to be injured at work.

As many of our members have moved to their new work site at the St. Catharines Hospital, they need to consid-

er the changes to their work environment. Any worker starting a new job or moving to a new location should evaluate the new workplace for hazards.

Our employer has a duty to provide information on the hazards in the workplace. Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act spells out the employer's duties which includes providing information on physical, chemical, and ergonomic hazards and the measures and procedures to eliminate these hazards from the workplace.

Some specific things to consider as you start a new job or move to a new site/location:

- Look around and see if there is any new equipment or devices that you have not used previously. Ask for training and assistance if you are unfamiliar with the new equipment.
- Know the emergency procedures for your new workplace. Learn what you should do in case of a fire or other emergency.
- Find out what are the hazardous chemicals in the workplace and where can you find information, typically Material Safety Data Sheets, about these hazards.
- If you are required to use safety equipment such as specialized gloves, respirators, or clothing, know where they are stored and how to wear them correctly.
- Finally, know your Health and Safety Committee members. They are a resource for safety information about your workplace.

Whenever you start a new job or move to a new location, take some time to consider the workplace and you will benefit from knowing what to do when faced with unique or new hazards.

Want more information?

Go to the OPSEU HEALTH & SAFETY PAGE  
[www.opseu.org/hands/htsindex.htm](http://www.opseu.org/hands/htsindex.htm)