

February 9, 2016

Health Sciences Association of BC
180 East Columbia Street
New Westminster, BC V3L 0G7

ATTENTION: Jeanne Meyers, Executive Director

Via email: jmeyers@hsabc.org

Dear Ms. Meyers:

We write to draw your attention to a February 4th Health Sciences Association (HSA) bulletin entitled “Job application process fully open to HSA members after BC Nurses union tries to restrict access to jobs.”

The substance of your bulletin makes claims that the British Columbia Nurses’ Union (BCNU) attempted to restrict jobs from RPNs who are members of HSA. The assertions made by the HSA are untrue. In fact, HSA knew or ought to have reasonably known that HSA’s published statements on this matter are false and misleading.

Prior to the publication of your bulletin, senior members of your organization had been provided copies of each bilateral hiring agreement as well as given a full opportunity to ask any/all questions with full cooperation by the BCNU. Mr. Randy Noonan, HSA in-house legal counsel asked questions in relation to this initiative and was provided with fulsome information by Mr. Umar Sheikh, BCNU General Counsel.

In your bulletin you state:

After continued pressure by HSA and two rulings from the Labour Relations Board, all nurses now have access to apply for some of the new permanent jobs announced by the government last month.

This assertion is false. The agreements with the employers specify that hiring is for both RN and RPN positions. Union affiliation is never considered or discussed as criteria. There was never any impediment of access to positions for nurses who are members of the HSA. In fact, the only time union affiliation was discussed was following your complaint to the British Columbia Labour Relations Board (LRB).

You further state:

The job application process is back open to HSA members after HSA was forced to complain to the Labour Relations Board to ensure the BC Nurses (sic) campaign to award only nurses who belong to that union access to jobs announced as part of the 2012 Nurse Bargaining Association collective agreement.

This assertion is false and misleading. The job application process was never closed to HSA members nor did the BCNU try to deny any nurses access to these positions. As an outcome of your complaint to the LRB, the BCNU changed its web-form for our Hire a Nurse campaign to redirect non-BCNU nurses to their respective Unions. Prior to this the BCNU did not ask any applicants to indicate their Union affiliation; the intent was simply to forward applications to the employer through an expedited channel. The BCNU was acting, and continues to act, for the benefit of all nurses.

In addition you state:

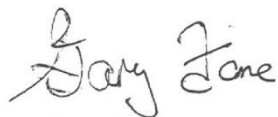
If you are an RPN and a member of HSA, send your application directly to HSA at rpnjobs@hsabc.org so that your union can support you against being discriminated against in the application process.

This is false. The BCNU never discriminated against any nurses regardless of union affiliation. The BCNU represents 98 percent of all nurses in the Nurses Bargaining Association (NBA)- approximately 40,587 nurses. The HSA represents 1.6 percent of all nurses in the NBA- approximately 855 nurses. The hiring of more nurses and providing the workload relief that all nurses so desperately need is of paramount importance to us all. Bulletins which mislead both nurses and the public are extremely counterproductive and detract from our shared goal of providing safe patient care through safe staffing levels.

We ask that you please immediately remove the bulletin and issue a correction based on the true facts of the situation. Should you have any further questions on this matter please contact Mr. Umar Sheikh. He may be reached at usheikh@bcnu.org.

In Solidarity,

BRITISH COLUMBIA NURSES' UNION



Gary Fane
Executive Director

c: Gayle Duteil, BCNU President
Umar Sheikh, BCNU Director, Legal Services

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