



SPECTRUM

Society for Community Living

3231 Kingsway - Vancouver, B.C. V5R 5K3

Wage Equity Update #19 March 28, 2007

To: All Spectrum Employees
From: Susan Kurliak, Director, Communications and Quality Assurance

On February 20th, 2007, the Minister of Finance announced that the 2007-08 provincial budget would include funding increases for non-union social service agencies, to address cost pressures facing these agencies. The money was not designated specifically for wages, but rather as an overall increase to service contracts. Agencies will have the freedom to apply this funding in whatever way they choose.

Spectrum Society is committed to fair wages for our employees. We have therefore decided to apply all of this new funding to wage increases. We appreciate the support and patience our staff have shown over the past year as we have worked to ensure that their wages remained competitive with their unionized counterparts in other agencies.

I want to formally acknowledge the efforts of our Executive Director, Ernie Baatz, in leading us to this successful outcome. Quite simply, this deal would not have happened without him. Last spring, when the provincial government announced increases for unionized agencies and nothing for non-union agencies, Ernie launched an ambitious advocacy campaign to pressure the government into recognizing ALL community social service workers. Ernie led a coalition of 25 non-union agencies from across B.C. that met with every MLA in the province and rallied grassroots support from thousands of social service workers, families and concerned citizens. Spectrum employees supported this effort by sending letters and emails to government officials. The coalition spent many long hours in strategy meetings, sought legal advice, consulted with public relations specialists, issued press releases to the media, and sent numerous written briefs to the Minister of Finance, Minister of Children and Family Development, and CEO of Community Living B.C. As the leader of this coalition, Ernie organized countless meetings and maintained a website with up-to-the-minute information on the coalition's progress. He worked tirelessly to keep up the pressure, and in the end his efforts paid off for non-union workers across the province. Our funders have stated that without this pressure, the province would not have set money aside for this funding increase.

How much of an increase will Spectrum be getting? A three-year funding plan has been approved, with 3.2% being added to the total service contract amount on April 1, 2007, approximately 1.6% more on April 1, 2008 and April 1, 2009. Approximately 80% of Spectrum's funding goes toward wages. As we will be applying all of the new funding to wages, this works out to about a 4% wage increase this year, and 2% in each of the next two years (4% X 80% of the total service contract = 3.2% of the full service contract amount).

How will the wage increases be determined? Wage increases could be applied in a variety of ways. This will be determined by Spectrum's Policy Committee on April 18, 2007. Some of the ideas already suggested at the last Policy Committee meeting in January included:

- Across the board increases to each pay rate
- Higher starting wage - less of an increase at the top end
- Lower starting wage - bigger increase to employees with 4,500 hours or more
- Focus some of the increase specifically to the asleep overnight rate
- Compact the wage scale - two increments instead of three, at 1,500 hours and 3,000 hours
- Extend the wage scale - four increments instead of three, at 1,500 hours, 3,000 hours, 4,500 hours and 6,000 hours
- Add more to benefits / less to wages - increase Spectrum's contribution to RRSP to a maximum 4% matching contribution instead of the current 3% matching amount

Will I have any input? A web survey is available for Spectrum employees to give input on which options they prefer. We encourage you to complete this survey before April 18. The survey is available on the Policy Committee website, or [Click Here](#) for a direct link.

Will there be any retroactive increase for 2006-07? We are still waiting for confirmation of the amount we will be receiving as a lump sum increase on the current year (2006-07) operating contracts. This funding increase will be shared with staff as a lump sum payment once we receive it, some time in the next three months.

If you have questions or concerns, please speak to your Policy Committee representative. Thank you all for your support, and congratulations to everyone on our successful advocacy efforts!

Susan Kurliak

Director, Communications and Quality Assurance