



# SPECTRUM

## Society for Community Living

[www.spectrumsociety.org](http://www.spectrumsociety.org)

### Wage Equity Update #5 - November 30, 1999

#### CSW's reach \$14 per hour

Beginning December 9, 1999, the wage for community support workers will reach \$14.00 per hour. This wage has been achieved through a combination of efficiencies and contract negotiations. We still have not received the wage equity increase from the government, and are hopeful that the government funding will be announced soon. The wage equity increase was promised by Lois Boone on October 19<sup>th</sup> at the CSSEA convention and by the Chair of the Public Sector Employers' Council, Bill Adams. While they have made public statements promising a non-union wage increase, we are still actively lobbying government and the media to ensure they keep their promise. As well, we are proceeding with the unfair labour practice complaint against the government.

#### Effective December 9<sup>th</sup>, 1999, the following pay scales are in effect at Spectrum:

Position	Start	1 year	2 years	3 years
Asleep Overnight	7.40	7.70	8.00	8.30
Awake Overnight	11.00	11.75	12.50	13.00
CSW	12.40	12.85	13.35	<b>14.00</b>
Manager	15.40	16.10	16.85	17.60
Coordinator	18.00	18.75	19.50	20.25

#### Unfair Labour Practice Complaint

On November 18<sup>th</sup>, 1999, the Labour Relations Board ruled that our complaint against the Provincial Government would go ahead to a full hearing. This ruling came after a hearing was held September 27<sup>th</sup> before three vice-chairs of the Labour Relations Board. Lawyers from the government and four labour unions argued that the complaint should be tossed out without a hearing as the Labour Board did not have jurisdiction to hear the complaint. The Board ruled that we had made a clear argument that fell within their jurisdiction and ruled that a full hearing would be held as soon as possible. When the hearing is announced, we will inform you through the web page and a newsletter insert.

Over 50 agencies have joined to file the complaint against the provincial government. Our complaint alleges that the government is punishing employees based on whether

they choose to join a union or not. as the only way to secure equitable wages and benefits. The government settled contracts with unions in June, granting substantial wage lifts to unionized social service workers. However, government has been refusing to negotiate with the non-union sector, and is stalling on promised wage lifts for our employees.

## Policy Committee

On October 27<sup>th</sup>, 1999, the Spectrum policy committee members met for their first meeting as a newly elected group. The representatives are:

Taunton: Suzanne Peterson	East 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Andrea Brunskill	East 15 <sup>th</sup> : Paul Bakkelund
Linda's:	Managers: Debra Vining	GaryB's: Millie
Will & Gary's: Kevin Doyle	Daorsey/Shelley's: Janet Ursic	Bert's: Lisa Warren
Chris's: Glenn Brown	Barb/Veronica's: Tula Psihas	Michael/Jim's: Leslie Zakrocki
Candice's: Kyla Hodgins	Mark/Manuel's:	Leigh's: Millie
Kathy's:	Paul Tymkiw	Ernie Baatz

The first question at the policy committee meeting was "what about wage equity?" The policy representatives reviewed the mediators' agreement that outlines wages and benefits for unionized employees at DDA and Mainstream and wondered how Spectrum's benefits compared. Many of the new benefits in the collective agreement already existed for Spectrum employees, such as the Group RRSP and 100% coverage of premiums for medical benefits. The vacation benefits in the collective agreement now are pretty similar to Spectrum's benefits. We debated whether future funding increases should go to new benefits or to wage increases. Areas where the collective agreements will be ahead of Spectrum's benefits are: 1. Group RRSP's - the collective agreement allows employees to select either 1%, 2% or 3% of their gross wages and the employer will match their contributions. Spectrum currently provides 1% whether the employee matches or not. 2. Long Term Disability Premiums - the collective agreement proposes that the employer will pay the full cost of this benefit by the end of the agreement. Spectrum employees pay for Long Term Disability so that if they make a claim, the benefits are tax-free. If Spectrum paid the premiums, the benefits would be taxed.

Policy Reps agreed that the first government funding increase should go to wage increases. Further increases could then be targeted to the benefits most desired by Spectrum Employees. Your Policy Rep will survey your team for input on which benefits would be most desirable, or if wage increases should still be the priority.

The Policy committee also serves as the Safety committee and reviews patterns of injuries and safety practices at people's homes to ensure employees are safe at work. Watch for safety bulletins in newsletters for information on ways to work safely.

Use your policy rep as an information source. If you want to know why a certain policy exists, or how a decision is made, ask your policy representative and they will either give you the answer or know who to call to get the answer. Other people have used their policy representative as a support during a conflict resolution process.

Please call Ernie if you have any questions regarding the Policy Committee and your representatives.

### **Annual Spectrum Forum**

Stay tuned for the annual Spectrum Forum early in the New Year. This forum gives everybody an opportunity to discuss the direction for Spectrum in the coming years. We hope to see you there!