



# Ontario Health at Home Newsletter

## Your December Update

### Wow, What a Year

For CUPE Ontario Health atHome members, 2024 has been a year of building power, strengthening our voice and coming together as a unified group, demonstrating solidarity and our collective muscle.

### Strong participation by CUPE Ontario Health atHome in survey share thousands of comments

Participation by CUPE Ontario Health atHome members from across the province in a CUPE survey probing key issues was resoundingly strong. Hundreds and hundreds took the time to write in thousands of comments about how the constant restructuring of work and changes in health care delivery are adversely affecting them.

What's clear from the survey responses is that the uncertainty of restructuring is causing exhaustion and anxiety among the OH workforce. The uncertainty must end.

### What the survey told us

Job security, privatization, the return to work in the office, and wage harmonization are all identified as key issues.

You can find a report on the survey results here: <https://oh-home.cupe.ca/>

We will review the survey again in a town hall meeting in February. Comments and questions from you will help us begin to prepare for bargaining a new collective agreement with Ontario Health atHome.

## 2023-2024 recap ...and what's to come

### OCTOBER

**In October**, shortly following the 2023 Health Care Workers' Coordinating Committee conference, the Ford government took another hit at the HCCSS workers by introducing Bill 134, the Convenient Care at Home Act. The Act received Royal Assent in December. Essentially, this Act consolidates all the 14 HCCSS agencies into one service organization named Ontario Health atHome.

### DECEMBER

**On December 6<sup>th</sup> 2023**, all the CUPE HCCSS locals' bargaining committees were at the negotiating table. Our focus was a wage reopener, as well as launching the **Fair Wages Campaign** on December 7<sup>th</sup>.



## JANUARY

Members worked extremely hard to get 1700 signatures on a petition calling for better wages by **January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023**. On this day, HCCSS members, along with CUPE Ontario Secretary Treasurer, Yolanda Mclean held a media conference on the grounds of the Ontario Legislature (Queen's Park). They spoke with the media about the impact of Bill 124 on CUPE HCCSS members and their challenges to pay bills and buy groceries during a time of high inflation and low wages.

**On January 24, 2024**, over thirty HCCSS members along with the Executives of our CUPE HCCSS locals, travelled from across Ontario for a second day of wage reopener bargaining. The expectation was fair treatment and similar wage offers made to other health sector workers. Unfortunately, what they received was the same inferior and insulting wage offer from December 2023.

**The next day**, in response CUPE HCCSS members organized a protest in front of the Ontario Treasury Board directly across the street from Queen's Park. Members chanted, marched and made their voices heard. So much so, that we made the provincial media and turned up the heat on the government to treat us fairly.

The employer did not offer any further bargaining dates, so members from each of the CUPE locals created a sub committee to launch the next phase of our campaign: **Families Can't Wait**, demanding the employer return to the bargaining table for the wage reopener and the next round of bargaining.

The focus of the **Families Can't Wait** campaign was on building member power and reaching a goal of majority participation among members in campaign actions. Everyone rolled up their sleeves, got to work on phone banks to speak with their members one-to-one about the wage reopener and the importance of participating in the next campaign step: **Rolling Days of Action**.

## MAY

**In May**, Rolling Days of Action began with HCCSS members, calling on the Ford government to return to the bargaining table to negotiate fair wages. These actions took place across Ontario starting in Windsor and ending in Nepean.

### Big wins

**On May 24 and June 7**, the bargaining committees were able to negotiate 2% for 2021 and 3% for each year, 2022, 2023. Moreover, they were able to negotiate a one-year collective agreement for the 2024 year to carry them through the proposed merger of the HCCSSs under the Public Sector Labour Relations Transition Act [PSLRTA].

The transfer date and **merger of the 14 HCCSS's took place on June 28, 2024**. The employer filed an application under the PSLRTA on **October 10, 2024**.



The employer proposed 2 province-wide bargaining units; one representing the professional group and the other representing the administrative, support services and IT both under the umbrella of OHatHome.

**All 5 unions that represent OHatHome workers will be at the Labour Board on Jan 21, 2025**, addressing the PSLRTA application. There will most likely be union representation votes in the coming months - early 2025.

## From Brett Geneau – CUPE Ontario Health atHome organizer/rep

We have much to be proud of as 2024 comes to an end. Let's reflect on all the hard work we've done engaging members and building a stronger union.

2024 began with all of us together, fighting for fair wages. We unified and showed our solidarity to achieve a better contract than what was originally proposed by the employer.

We flexed our muscle by uniting to get all the CUPE members in our sector to sign on to signature boards that we presented MPPs across Ontario. We not only built member engagement, we built community engagement.

Some members stepped up to become leads for their locals to do member organizing for the upcoming PSLTRA (representation) vote. A special member organizing training was held in October for these leads who have since put that knowledge and tools they learned to work.

We launched a survey and due to the hard work and commitment and dedication for a stronger union, with over a thousand members giving their time to fully complete the survey. **This action not only shows unity amongst our group, but it shows the dedication and determination to make change.**

I have been honoured this past year as well to continue representing Ontario Health @Home for the next two years. Truly, it is a privilege to work with all of you and see that we all have the same struggles and are committed to work together for change. It is great to see that we are organized and committed to fight for what we need and deserve.

As we take break to relax and be with our families and friends during the holidays, rest assured preparations have been put in place to kick start the New Year with full steam ahead.

We've come such a long way to unify, engage and build power and this is something we will need to keep moving forward. Build even stronger as we get closer to a union representation vote and our next round of bargaining.

I'm excited about the province-wide town hall we are holding, early in the new year to keep you informed on next steps. So, stay tuned for more info on this.

Wishing you all a restful holiday season.

## CUPE Ontario Health Workers Secure a First Contract

Former LHIN employees moved by government to Ontario Health (OH) have secured a first contract.

It was a tough struggle – only fifty members were moved into an organization of over 2,000 employees.

Initially, the Treasury Board and OH outright refused to make any progress on a fair wage structure. Their policy was union busting. But after a media campaign and a strong show of determination by the fifty members, Treasury and OH changed directions and negotiated a first collective agreement that was ratified by a strong majority of CUPE OH workers.

**Solidarity works!**

## NEXT STEPS

- **Phase Two campaign coming in the new year**
- **Townhall meeting in the new year**



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