

# Changes

to the Paramedical Agreement

imposed by the provincial government

Revised October 2001

## MONETARY ITEMS

### Wages

- April 1, 2001: General wage increase of 2%
- October 1, 2001: Market adjustment increase of 2% for selected professions \*
- April 1, 2002: General wage increase of 2%
- April 1, 2002: Market adjustment increase of 2% for selected professions \*
- April 1, 2003: General wage increase of 1.5% or cost of living adjustment, whichever is greater
- April 1, 2003: Market adjustment increase of 4% for selected professions \*

### Shift premiums

- Effective April 1, 2002:  
Night shift premium increases to \$1.75/hr.  
Weekend shift premium increases to \$1.00/hr.  
*Evening shift – no change*

### \* Explanation of 'market increase' for selected professions

HEABC and the government selected nine professions that are eligible for the market adjustments. There is still some confusion as to exactly who is covered; however, the list created by HEABC and made into law by the provincial government is as follows:

- Physiotherapist
- Occupational Therapist
- Pharmacist
- Perfusionist
- Medical Technologist
- Medical Radiation Technologist<sup>1</sup>
- Nuclear Medicine Technologist
- Diagnostic Neurophysiology Technician<sup>2</sup>
- Diagnostic Medical Sonographer

<sup>1</sup> Radiation Therapists are included in this category.

<sup>2</sup> We are still waiting for HEABC to explain who is included in this category.



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## On-call premiums

Effective April 1, 2001

Increase to \$2.50/hr. for all hours on-call after 72 hours in a calendar month

Effective April 1, 2002

Increase to \$3.00/hr. for the first 72 hours in a calendar month

Increase to \$4.25/hr. for all hours on-call after 72 hours in a calendar month

## Transportation allowance - articles 26 and 28.04

Effective July 1, 2001: increase to \$0.42/km

April 1, 2002: increase to \$0.43/km

April 1, 2003: increase to \$0.44/km

The rate differentiation between community and facility employees has been eliminated. The new rates apply to all employees covered by the paramedical agreement.

## Health and welfare coverage - extended health care

July 1, 2001: Elimination of Pharmacare “tie in”  
*Prescriptions previously not covered because of the “tie-in” will now be covered*

April 1, 2002: Provision for the Extended Health Direct Pay Card similar to “Bluenet”  
*This is a convenience that will reduce the necessity of saving receipts and sending in forms. It operates much like a debit card. It does not change any benefits or deductibles.*

April 1, 2003: Add a “Medical Referral Transportation Benefit”  
*Provides coverage for out-of-town travel for an employee or dependent who is referred to a specialist or for medical treatment*

*These provisions were negotiated previously at other tables. The Paramedical Association was not provided with details. We will pass on further information as we obtain it.*

## Levelling

Commitment of necessary funds to complete the reclassification claims that was part of the levelling process so that all employees covered by this agreement can achieve the full classification benefits.

## Education leave fund - highlights

- Establishes an education leave fund of \$1 million on October 1, 2001. Interest income accruing from the investments forms part of the fund.
- Establishes a committee of two union and two employer representatives to administer the fund. The committee appoints a neutral chairperson.
- Fund available only to regular employees.
- To be eligible, an applicant must have been employed five years or more as a paramedical professional in BC with an employer who is party to the collective agreement, and have been employed with their current employer for two years or more.
- Minimum leave period must be greater than one week. Maximum leave is one year.
- Leave granted under this fund will be paid at two-thirds of the employee's posted regular FTE. Negotiated salary increases will not be considered for the purpose of calculating the two-thirds salary.
- Leaves of absence are granted subject to the approval of the employer. Once leave is approved by the employer, the application is forwarded to the committee for review. Applications must be received six months prior to the anticipated date of the beginning of the leave for leaves longer than two weeks, and two months prior for leaves between one and two weeks' duration. *The committee, once formed, may have some latitude on these dates.*
- Employees granted leave greater than four weeks must return to work for the same employer or another employer covered by the Paramedical Professional Collective Agreement for one year subsequent to the completion of the education leave, or repay the total cost of the educational program, including wages, to the employer.

These new education fund stipulations are a huge onus on the employee. Applicants need to be very aware of this provision and of their intended future. The repayment costs could be enormous. Example: Grade one physiotherapist takes one year leave at  $\frac{2}{3}$  salary to pursue Masters Degree and does not complete one year employment with current employer after the leave year. Repayment cost of wages alone equals approximately \$37,000.

## NON-MONETARY CHANGES TO THE AGREEMENT

- Parental Leave has been amended to comply with federal statute to allow for one year leave of absence.
- Wage Schedule will now be limited to two decimal places instead of the original five
- Probation Period extended for part time employees: 469.8 hours worked (*number of full time hours in three months*) or six calendar months, whichever comes first. *This makes the probation period for part-time employees more consistent with other employees.*
- Changes to 6.01 – Medical Examination and Immunization to allow for the employee's choice in physician and for their physician to contraindicate certain tests and immunizations.
- Change in Article 38.03 – Employee Safety providing for a role for the OH&S committee in identifying infectious risks and possible immunizations.
- Continued funding for the Healthcare Labour Adjustment Agency
- Minimal changes that delay entitlement to health and welfare coverage for new hires:
  - Medical Coverage begins 1<sup>st</sup> of the month following the date of hire.
  - Extended Health begins 1<sup>st</sup> of the month following 30 days from the date of hire.
  - Dental Care was not changed and is the same as extended health.
- Changes to Article 17.04 – Employer Requested Education Leave – Employees attending employer approved education programs where the employer or the HLAA pay 156.6 hours or more for the employee to participate, must return to work for that employer or another employer covered by this agreement for a period of one year or repay the employer for all costs.

Employees should now be very careful about accepting employer or HLAA education opportunities. The repay provision could be extremely expensive, to the tune of thousands of dollars. Reference Education Leave Fund in monetary items on previous page.

**Term of the Agreement from April 1, 2001 to March 31, 2004**