



## **Poll Shows Strong Public Support for Independent, Binding Arbitration**

**Saskatoon (May 24, 2011)** - A province-wide public opinion poll conducted on behalf of the Health Sciences Association of Saskatchewan shows **67.5%** support for independent, binding arbitration to settle the current contract dispute between specialized health care professionals and health care employers, Health Sciences President Cathy Dickson announced.

"The message is clear: the people of Saskatchewan want the Wall government to agree to independent, binding arbitration to help end this lengthy contract dispute between Saskatchewan's specialized health care professionals and health care employers," Dickson said.

"Like the specialized health care professionals represented by Health Sciences, the public has grown tired of health care employers and the Wall government stonewalling meaningful contract negotiations for more than two years. At the same time, no one wants to see endless strike action, which impacts health care services that are already hard-pressed by chronic understaffing. That's why the public, like our members, see independent, binding arbitration as a reasonable alternative to break this stalemate," Dickson said.

"The province-wide poll shows 67.5% support the use of independent, binding arbitration while only 21.4% oppose this option. The public, like our members, just doesn't buy the various excuses put forward by the Wall government and health care employers to try to avoid independent, binding arbitration. If the government and employers truly believe they have presented our specialized health care professionals with a fair and reasonable contract offer, they should have nothing to fear from an independent third party reviewing the positions of both health care employers and the union, and then setting the terms of a new contract," Dickson added.

"The province-wide poll conducted for Health Sciences also shows that Saskatchewan people see the Wall government's Essential Services legislation as a hindrance to the successful negotiation of new contracts. When asked if they thought Essential Services legislation has helped or hurt contract negotiations in the health care sector, **40.6%** of respondents say the legislation has hurt negotiations, while only 23.7% say it has helped," Dickson noted.

The province-wide telephone poll of 812 Saskatchewan residents was conducted by Points West Consulting from May 16-18. A survey of this size has a Margin of Error of +/-3.4% to a 95% Confidence Level.

Health Sciences represents more than three-thousand specialized health care professionals from more than thirty health care professions. The union's members include: Emergency care workers like Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics; Acute care workers like Hospital Pharmacists, Perfusionists, and Respiratory Therapists; Rehabilitation professionals like Physical Therapists and Speech Language Pathologists; and Community-based professionals like Public Health Inspectors, Psychologists and Social Workers.

### **For Further Information Contact:**

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*Full poll results can be found at the Health Sciences website: <http://www.hsa-sk.com/>*