



## **SAHO Revised Offer Perpetuates Double Standard, Chronic Under-Staffing**

**Regina (March 11, 2011)** - On the same day the Saskatoon Health Region admitted that its CEO will be making more than \$414-thousand this year - a 40% increase over two years - health care employers offered the three-thousand specialized health care professionals represented by Health Sciences a 7.5% wage increase over four years, Saskatchewan Health Sciences President Cathy Dickson said.

“SAHO and the government continue to display a double standard when it comes to health care negotiations, with huge increases in salary and benefits for senior health care managers, and non-competitive increases for the professionals who actually provide health care services for Saskatchewan families,” Dickson said.

“In addition, the revised SAHO contract proposal will do little to improve the chronic under-staffing of our specialized health care professionals or efforts to recruit and retain these professionals. Health care employers seem determined to ignore these issues, which have harmed the quality and accessibility of health care services for Saskatchewan families,” Dickson added.

“The revised SAHO contract proposal, presented at the bargaining table earlier today, does represent some small progress, since health care employers have at least moved off the insulting offer they made to us on January 27<sup>th</sup> - an offer that was rejected in a strike vote by 88% of Health Sciences members. However, while this new proposal is at least a starting point for further negotiations it is far from adequate,” Dickson noted.

“This revised proposal would still see specialized health care professionals in Saskatchewan fall further behind their counterparts in Alberta. It would also fail to close the gap between our specialized health care professionals and other Saskatchewan health care providers, including Registered Nurses. The revised SAHO proposal still contains no maternity leave benefits for Health Sciences members, and no improvement to the Stand by wage rates for EMS workers, who currently are paid less than half Saskatchewan’s minimum wage for Stand by hours,” Dickson said.

“In the days ahead, we will continue to explain and expose the double standard that SAHO and the government have displayed in these negotiations, and we will continue to reveal how chronic under-staffing of our professionals has resulted in longer waiting lists and reduced access to needed health care services for Saskatchewan people,” Dickson concluded.

Health Sciences is the union which represents more than three-thousand specialized health care professionals from more than thirty health care professions. Members include: Emergency care workers like 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:**

Cathy Dickson, President, Health Sciences  
**306-361-5655**