



## **Health Sciences Raises Concerns about Potential Health Care Layoffs**

**Regina (October 25, 2011)** – Do the provincial government and health care employers have a plan to lay off health care professionals after the November 7<sup>th</sup> Provincial Election, asks Health Sciences Association of Saskatchewan President-Elect Karen Wasylenko.

“The potential for health care layoffs was first raised in an October 4 notice letter to our union from the *Saskatoon Health Region*, which asked for a meeting, as required by our collective agreement, to discuss the layoff of an Addictions Counsellor from the region’s Mental Health and Addictions Service for children and youth. When we responded to set a meeting date, we were told the health region was **not allowed to discuss the layoff until after the provincial election!**” Wasylenko noted.

“Since when do workplace decisions about the jobs of health care professionals take a backseat to politics? What are the provincial government and the health regions trying to hide? Are more layoffs of specialized health care professionals planned for after the election?” she asked.

“This proposed layoff seems totally unjustified, since the *Saskatoon Health Region* was advertising vacancies for a variety of Addictions Counsellor positions in the days prior to issuing its layoff notice, and even **two days after** the layoff notice was received! Even worse, children and youths with addictions problems have at least a one month wait for their first meeting with an Addictions Counsellor. With unfilled positions, and a significant waiting list for services, why on earth is *Saskatoon Health Region* proposing this layoff?” Wasylenko asked.

“Our specialized health care professionals and the people we serve are left to wonder if this layoff notice in the *Saskatoon Health Region* is an isolated case or not. We note that just over a year ago dozens of specialized health care professionals were laid off in a number of health regions, when the government directed health regions to reduce their budgets,” Wasylenko said.

“We encourage the government and all health regions to come forward with a clear public statement immediately to confirm whether layoffs of health care professionals are planned for the coming months. If they deny there are more layoffs coming, then the *Saskatoon Health Region* needs to explain now, not after the election, how it justifies this particular layoff notice, when there are waiting lists for services and unfilled positions still being advertised,” Wasylenko concluded.

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

Karen Wasylenko

President-Elect, Health Sciences Association of Saskatchewan: **1-306-260-9360**

**News Editors:** A copy of the October 4, 2011 Notice from *Saskatoon Health Region* concerning the proposed layoff is attached

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



SASKATOON HEALTH REGION  
STAFFING & BUSINESS PROCESSES



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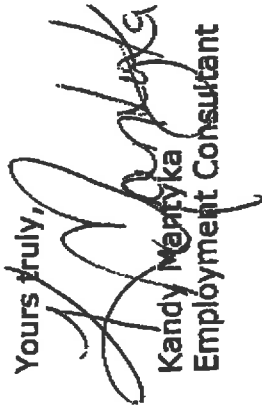
October 4, 2011

Kate Robinson  
Health Sciences Association  
#42 - 1736 Quebec Avenue  
Saskatoon, SK  
S7K 1V9

Dear Kate:

I am writing to provide official notice as required under Article 26 of the SAHO/HSAS collective agreement regarding the potential for layoffs of Health Sciences staff.

Please contact myself at 655-0106 to provide your availability to meet to discuss the reduction of one Addictions Counsellor - Diploma from Mental Health & Addictions Services.

Yours truly,  
  
Kandy Mantyka  
Employment Consultant

KM/ws

- c. Mike Northcott, Director, Employee Relations (Interim)  
Tim Greenough, Manager, Mental Health & Addictions Services - Child & Youth