

***Wednesday June 20, 2012 MAHCP met with
Minister of Family Services and Labour, Jennifer Howard***

President Wendy Despins and Executive Director Lee Manning met with Jennifer Howard Minister of Family Services and Labour and Assistant Deputy Minister Dave Dyson. This meeting doubled the efforts that MAHCP has been making to engage government and followed up on a similar meeting held with the Minister of Health in early March. Again the focus of the meeting was to highlight the impact of trends in previous rounds of collective bargaining and the impact those trends have had on the Technical Professional Paramedical membership of MAHCP.

The meeting was a discussion of why these trends in bargaining have not been working for MAHCP membership. President Despins explained several issues that have come to light through three rounds of collective bargaining regarding impacts of market driven adjustments for Technical Professional Paramedical employees.

Despins highlighted the narrow margins that the recent collective agreements were ratified by and that the MAHCP membership needs to see significant improvements in their collective agreements.

MAHCP found the Minister receptive to the discussion as to why collective bargaining is not working. And all parties were able to have a very candid discussion. MAHCP was very clear with the Minister that the intention was to discuss bargaining and that the MAHCP President and Executive Director were not there to negotiate. MAHCP wished to prepare the groundwork for 2014 bargaining by reviewing some of what has occurred during the past three rounds of negotiations.

Technical Professional Paramedical bargaining must look at a broad spectrum of criteria when considering wages, pay scales and classifications. A standardized or “cookie cutter” approach cannot be applied to the more complex Technical Professional, Paramedical Bargaining units. MAHCP spoke to a number of points unique to our membership citing examples throughout various sites, regions and occupational groups. Executive Director Manning showed Minister Howard an example of a current health care practice using expensive out of province solutions. Mr Manning and Mrs Despins suggested an alternative solution. MAHCP would rather work with government to keep valuable jobs in the province.

Minister Howard gave the impression that she appreciated MAHCP’s approach, one that is based on internal and/or external education, as well as other considerations. MAHCP showed how low the wages of specific occupational groups had fallen because of market based bargaining and that, in and of itself, needs to be rectified. MAHCP

emphasized that all occupational groups need to be looked at and considered. There was a consensus to bring these professional groups to future meetings.

Technical Professional Paramedical occupations are key players in the primary care model. MAHCP discussed both the concerns and the enthusiasm of the affected professional groups.

As with the outcome from Minister Oswald, Minister Howard also agreed to regular on-going meetings with MAHCP.