

Complications related to Bill 29 abound

It feels like the only thing I have written about over the past year or so is about Bills 28 and 29. Well, this month isn't much different.

MAHCP is a member of the **Partnership to Defend Public Services**, which has taken the Pallister government's Bill 28 to court. Trial dates for this Constitutional Challenge have been set for Nov. 18 – Dec. 5, 2019.

As you recall, Bill 29 is the Health Sector Bargaining Unit Review Act. I have had numerous conversations with members over the past few weeks, so let me go back to the beginning if I can. The original reason for the bill was that there were supposedly far too many collective agreements in Health Care in Manitoba. The original text of the Bill indicated that there can only be one bargaining agent per sector, per Employer. That meant at the time that each of the Regional Health Authorities would only have one union within each sector. The Sectors laid out by the act are:

- Nurses
- Physicians
- Medical Residents
- Physician and Clinical Assistants
- Professional/Technical/Paramedical
- Facility Support
- Community Support

That is a total of seven sectors. At the time of the bill, if there were five RHAs as the employers, that would have resulted in no more than 35 collective agreements.

However, the introduction of **Shared Health** has drastically complicated the matter. We now have a sixth Employer. And the complications don't end there. Government has amended the original act so that all Provincial entities will be considered under one umbrella for the purposes of this Bill. We know that services like EMS, the former Diagnostic Services Manitoba, most of Diagnostic Imaging in Winnipeg, and virtually all of Health Sciences Centre will be part of Shared Health. CancerCare Manitoba will remain a separate Employer, but we believe will be forced into the same collective agreement as Shared Health members.

MAHCP, along with the other unions who make up the Manitoba Council of Health Care Unions have been meeting over the past number of months with the appointed Commissioner as well as the Provincial Health Labour Relations Services (PHLRS). Consensus has been reached on issues like voter eligibility. Broadly speaking, it won't matter if a member is on any type of leave – as long as there is a relationship with the Employer, you

will have vote in this process.

There are many items still outstanding, such as some of the Sector definitions being proposed by the PHLRS (ie which professions fall under Professional/Technical/Paramedical). Where we can agree, we will and where we cannot, we can make our case directly to the Commissioner. That work is ongoing right now.

We anticipate the votes will occur in **the spring of 2019** and that it will most likely be an electronic vote.

MAHCP will be launching our newest campaign shortly after the new year. We will be holding numerous information meetings across the province, please stay tuned.

Until then, I'd like to wish our members, staff and board a happy holiday season.

In solidarity,

Bob Moroz
MAHCP President