

# Friday

# CANADIAN FEDERATION OF NURSES UNIONS 30<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY IN THE PEG

Convention Newsletter June 17, 2011



GREETINGS FROM PREMIER.



NURSES SHOW SOLIDARITY WITH POSTIES.



PRESIDENT LINDA SILAS GIVES OPENING REMARKS.

patient Expectations:

## Patients' Report Call Nurses an A+

...ed by the Canadian Federation of Nurse  
...Canadians overwhelmingly approve of the  
...and are very aware of the nursing short  
...es performed in 12 benchmark areas;

CANADIANS GIVE HIGH MARKS TO NURSES.



UNDER 30 NURSES GIVE THEIR REPORT FROM A SPECIAL WORKSHOP SESSION YOUNGER NURSES HELD ON ISSUES THEY FACE IN NURSING. PHOTO: JOHN MACLENNAN.



CANADIAN FEDERATION OF NURSES UNIONS WAS FOUNDED 30 YEARS AGO AS THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF NURSES UNIONS IN WINNIPEG MANITOBA.



# President's Message

## Better staffing Nurses improving care for Canadians

**L**inda Silas focused on the future and ways nurses can improve the lives and care of Canadians in her address at the opening of the business meeting Thursday morning.

She picked up on lessons on change from Australian nursing leader Brett Holmes, who spoke the day before.

“When nurse staffing levels in California hospitals increased substantially after mandated nurse-patient ratios, we know that reduced workload was associated with lower patient mortality, lower nurse burnout and better job satisfaction. We need strong language for decent staffing... as Brett said, why not in Canada? And I say, yes, it’s about time.”

Before she went on to talking about what nurses can do, Linda addressed what she called two shames in Canada.

“In this rich country, the way we treat our aboriginal people is a shame, from their health care system, their housing to their education system. We have a second shame: the way we treat our seniors in this country. Our long-term care sector is a mess and we need to fix it.”

But the core of Linda’s message to Canadian nurses was about making improvements.

“We need to support a national pharmacare program...we need drugs for everyone for who needs them not only those who can afford them,” she said.



LINDA SILAS WAS ACCLAIMED TO A FOURTH TERM AS  
PRESIDENT OF CFNU.

Silas said nurses are going to focus on primary health care. “Never mind a doctor for every Canadian. It should be a nurse for every Canadian and finally we would focus on prevention.”

“We know we need to address the over-capacity in our hospitals and the under-capacity in our workforce. We need to address the flaws in our medicare system and at the same time protect it and expand it.”

CFNU is important, Linda Silas pointed out “as the national voice of the working nurses in Ottawa to promote solidarity with all health care workers and to leverage changes in Ottawa.”

“My mission is to move from being the sickest



# The National Patients' Report Card gives nurses an A+

## New national poll shows very high patient approval of nursing performance despite understaffing, national nursing shortage

**A** new national poll shows that Canadian patients overwhelmingly approve of treatment they receive from the nation's nurses, despite the clearly visible nursing shortage in hospitals.

The poll, conducted by Vector Poll in early June, for the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) for its 30th Anniversary Biennial Convention being held in Winnipeg, showed that nurses get a great report card from their patients.

The National Patients' Report Card on Nurses found:

- 88 % of respondents who saw a nurse the last time they needed health care said they were listened to carefully and had their questions answered;
- 84 % of respondents say the nurse treated

them with respect and they felt the nurse cared about them;

- 83 % say the nurse knew and understood their health needs;
- 82 % say the nurse addressed their needs quickly.

“Poll results showed Canadian patients respect and value the care they receive from nurses, clearly seeing evidence that nurses are health care professionals with superior knowledge – and the ‘caring touch’ that those who are ill need,” said CFNU President Linda Silas, RN. “The poll also showed that one third of patients noticed that the facility in which they sought treatment was understaffed with nurses, making the high approval ratings even more significant.”

Respondents also rated nurses very highly for being technically competent, for explaining procedures to patients, for helping patients understand their conditions and for quickly addressing their needs. Four in 10 of those polled gave nurses a perfect score.

For some of the benchmarks of good care measured by the poll, nurses were more productive and responsive than the public expected – especially with the nursing shortage.

“Patients give the highest marks to nurses working in facilities with what they view as ‘the right number’ of nurses,” noted Silas. “Nurses working in understaffed facilities rated the lowest, yet they still gave nurses high marks for their efforts when they’re overworked. In fact, 34 % of respondents say they noticed the facility they used had too few nurses for the amount of work that had to be done.”

Full poll results are available on the CFNU's website at [www.nursesunions.ca](http://www.nursesunions.ca).



CANADIAN  
FEDERATION  
OF NURSES  
UNIONS

### Canadian Nurses Exceeding Patient Expectations:

## The National Patients' Report Card Gives Nurses an A+

Results of a poll commissioned by the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU) shows that Canadians overwhelmingly approve of the work that nurses are doing – and are very aware of the nursing shortage.

The poll measured how nurses performed in 12 benchmark areas; highlights include:

- |     |                 |   |
|-----|-----------------|---|
| 91% | of patients say | nurses seem comfortable with the equipment and procedures needed for their treatment or care. |
| 88% | of patients say | nurses listen to them carefully and answer their questions.                                   |
| 84% | of patients say | nurses speak to them with respect and make them feel cared for.                               |

# The pin queen

TRADING PINS AT CONVENTION CAN BE A LOT OF FUN, AND NO ONE HAS MORE FUN WITH IT THAN KAREN TERLINSKI, WHO'S FROM MANITOBA.



## Overtime for nurses equals more than 11,000 full-time jobs

Information from a new study shows that in 2010, registered nurses and nurse supervisors publicly employed in Canada's health care and social assistance sector, worked a total of 20,627,800 hours of overtime, equivalent to 11,400 full-time jobs.

On average, 14.5% of nurses worked unpaid overtime in 2010, up from 12.9% in 2008. Nurses reporting unpaid overtime worked 4.4 extra hours per week. This is 0.5 hours higher, on average, than in 2008.

For every week in 2010, 19,200 public-sector health care nurses, on average, were absent due to illness or disability. Full-time nurses top all other occupations in rates of illness and disability-related absenteeism.

"We are not surprised by most of these figures, unfortunately," said Linda Silas, president of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions. "They replicate a pattern established in a similar study covering 1987 to 2008. What is alarming is that though the percentage of nurses working paid overtime has decreased, from 21.4% in 2008 to 17.3% in 2010, the percentage of nurses working unpaid overtime has increased. This represents a further squeezing of labour from a workforce which continues to face layoffs."



LEFT: LINDA SILAS TRIES HER HAND AT DRIVING AN AIRPORT BAGGAGE TRACTOR IN THE SHORT VIDEO WELCOMING DELEGATES TO WINNIPEG.



# Solidarity Rally

## Linda Silas tells striking Posties and Air Canada workers Nurses and all Canadian trade unionists stand behind you

**M**ore than 180,000 unionized Canadian nurses stand behind locked-out postal workers and support Air Canada's union members in their struggle, Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions President Linda Silas told a crowd of more than 1,000 trade unionist and their supporters at Winnipeg's main post office Thursday.

"Air Canada is playing hardball. Canada Post is playing hardball. They will hear from the unionized workforce in this country," Silas vowed. "We're not going to allow privatization. We're not going to lose our pensions. And we don't need any more part-time jobs!"



Working people understand that the back-to-work legislation brought forward by the Conservative government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper has the

goal of unravelling Canada's public sector, she told the crowd. "And we know we can't let it happen!"

Addressing members of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, she said, "Don't worry, the CLC is behind you, the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions and all other 65 unions in this country are behind you."

And with reference to the deal just negotiated by Air Canada employees represented by the Canadian Auto Workers, she told the CAW members at the rally, "Finally we can reschedule 800 trips we had to reschedule on other airlines. We're going back to Air Canada! Congratulations!"

"I have nurses from every part of the country here," Silas said to the cheers of the crowd. "I have nurses from Quebec. I have nurses from Nunavut. I have nurses from Ireland, from New South Wales in Australia, saying, 'Solidarity Forever!'"

# Hundreds of nurses join CUPW line



LOCKED OUT POSTIES WERE THRILLED WITH SUPPORT WHEN HUNDREDS OF UNION NURSES SHOWED UP ON THEIR PICKET LINE OVER THE LUNCH HOUR OF THE FIRST CONVENTION BUSINESS DAY.



# Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger

## Manitoba premier announces LTC program funding at CFNU Convention

**M**anitoba will provide \$250,000 in funding to permanently implement the Enhanced Orientation to Long-Term Care Program, a successful orientation and education program for nurses in long-term care facilities across the province, Premier Greg Selinger told delegates to the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions Convention Thursday morning.

This continues the successful Manitoba pilot of the CFNU Research to Action project.

“We need to provide supports so that people can live independently as long as possible,” the New Democrat premier said. “How are we going to do that? By having nurses on the front line.”

The program provides mentoring opportunities and six clinical workshop packages. The seminars are designed so they can be implemented as a series, or adapted for use in different kinds of health care worksites.

Selinger also recommitted the Manitoba government to efforts to improve workplace safety, especially in health care. “Anything we can do to make the workplace safer will be good for patients, good for the system,” he said to the cheers of the more than 800 nurses in the convention hall.



He added that the province is committed to working with health care unions to develop workplace safety legislation that accounts for the special needs of health care workers and addresses the danger of violence in the workplace when there is interaction with the public.

Selinger also acknowledged the key role played by nurses in the health care system, and said his government recognizes the need for adequate staffing levels. “In the Nineties, we saw 1,000 nurses laid off,” he said of the period before 1999, when the New Democratic Party returned to power after an 11-year period of rule by other parties.

“We’ve replaced every nurse that was laid off or fired with three nurses,” he said.



MANITOBA NURSES UNION PRESIDENT SANDY MOWAT HAD KIND WORDS TO SAY WHILE INTRODUCING THE PROVINCE'S PREMIER.



THE BREAD AND ROSES AWARDS

# CFNU recognizes great nurses



AT THE BIENNIUM CFNU GIVES OUT A "BREAD AND ROSES" AWARD FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNIONIZED NURSING. A PUBLIC AWARD AND A CFNU AWARD ARE MADE FOR EACH YEAR, 2010 AND 2011. TOP: PAULA DOUCET-JONES, VICE PRESIDENT, NBNU, CFNU PRESIDENT LINDA SILAS, MARILYN QUINN, PRESIDENT, NBNU AND RECIPIENT OF THE 2011 BREAD AND ROSES AWARD, AND PAULINE WORSFOLD, SECRETARY-TREASURER, CFNU. RIGHT: TOM PATTERSON, RETIRED EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NSNU, RECEIVED THE PUBLIC BREAD AND ROSES AWARD 2010. BOTTOM LEFT: LINDA SILAS, DEBBIE FORWARD, PRESIDENT, NLNU, YVETTE HYNES, PRESIDENT NLNU BRANCH 3, 2010 BREAD AND ROSES WINNER MARY PRIDEAUX, VICE-PRESIDENT NLNU, AND PAULINE WORSFOLD. BOTTOM RIGHT: ALICE EDGE, RETIRED BCNU MEMBER WINNER OF THE 2011 PUBLIC AWARD, DEBRA MACPHERSON, PRESIDENT, BCNU, LINDA SILAS AND PAULINE WORSFOLD.



# Get with the beat Samajam booms...



## Social determinants of health Investing early pays off

In the jigsaw puzzle that health care has become, experts speaking on the social determinants of health Wednesday concurred that healthy public policy should focus on optimizing the health of children, pre- and post-natal, as the single most important optimal return on investment.

According to Darlene Girard, a panelist at the workshop, early childhood initiatives are the most promising way to improve health inequalities in a generation and Canada has a lot of work to do. In a recent study, Canada tied for last place in an international comparison of the 26

TAKING ACTION ON SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH: THE KEY TO HEALTH EQUITY

wealthiest countries in the world in regards to childhood poverty. Panelists were in agreement that social and health care policy across the board should be looked at with an “equity” lens with the view of creating social justice and the equitable distribution of resources.

A tour of community programs and initiatives reinforced the fact that investments in programs which foster the collective will and leadership, reduce child poverty and strengthen communities pay off in the short and long term.

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE  
DARLENE GIRARD EXPLAINS  
HOW EARLY CHILDHOOD  
INITIATIVES CAN PAY HUGE  
HEALTH DIVIDENDS.

