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News Release - for immediate release

Health care unions and Province to begin arbitration process

(Halifax November 18, 2014) The Nova Scotia Nurses' Union (NSNU) which represents 6900 nurses in the province says that mediation, which began on October 17 as a result of Bill 1, *The Health Authorities Act*, ended on November 17th with the majority of key issues unresolved.

Under the legislation nine district health authorities will merge into one as of April 1. The Bill will reduce the number of contracts to be negotiated and impose changes in representation. While in mediation the unions explored several options aimed at avoiding arbitration. However the parties, including the Employers, could not agree on a common solution.

Janet Hazelton, president of the NSNU, who is in Ontario today participating in a nursing union conference, says the health care unions were all in a difficult position and that the legislation has done little to foster good relations within the labour movement.

“We went into mediation in good faith with the other unions and the employers but we did not achieve an option that was agreeable to all parties. I believe that Mr. Dorsey, our mediator, understood the difficult position that we all faced during the process, and the arbitration will be equally challenging,” says Janet Hazelton, NSNU president.

Hazelton says that there are still issues that have to be resolved in the arbitration process before an order will be issued by James Dorsey, the mediator/arbitrator chosen by the Unions and the Employers.

A 45-day arbitration period begins today with Dorsey who is expected to render his decisions by January 1, 2015.

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The NSNU represents over 6700 Registered Nurses, Nurse Practitioners and Licensed Practical Nurses working in hospitals, long term care facilities, and community care (VON and Canadian Blood Services). NSNU represents nurses in acute care setting in all 9 District Health Authorities including the IWK and the following hospitals located in the Capital District Health Authority: Dartmouth General, Hants Community, Cobequid Community Health Centre, Eastern Shore Memorial, Twin Oaks, Musquodoboit Valley Hospital. The NSNU represents nurses in the vast majority of long term care facilities throughout the province. The NSNU is a member organization of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions which represents over 156,000 nurses and student nurses across Canada.

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