

## **PHASE OUT PRIVATE AGENCY HEALTHCARE WORKERS AND INVEST IN THE LEGITIMATE HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE**

The Prince Edward Island Union of Public Sector Employees, in solidarity with the International Union of Operating Engineers, is disappointed that the King Government did not support the Opposition's Motion to provide healthcare workers, who have not yet received retention incentives to date, their due incentive. Karen Jackson, UPSE President, said "healthcare workers were our heroes throughout the pandemic, and they are still working every day in challenging conditions to provide care for Islanders. We simply can't afford to lose more healthcare workers because the government won't agree to treat them fairly."

From the beginning, UPSE has advocated that these incentive programs be applied to all healthcare workers not only in our Union but also in IUOE and CUPE. Why should all healthcare workers not be valued and treated the same under this incentive program?

Jackson explained that the "government is spending millions on exorbitant wages for private healthcare through its use of agency nurses, including Licensed Practical Nurses. This is not a solution. It's not affordable, will continue to get more expensive, and it creates division among healthcare workers on the frontline. The government needs to put a plan in place to phase out agency healthcare workers, and properly invest in the legitimate healthcare workforce who have been and continue to hold the system together."

**Karen Jackson,  
UPSE President**