

MEMORANDUM

To: Clinical Directors, Health Service Managers and Clinical Unit Based Teams

From: Kathy MacNeil – VP People and Paula Bond – VP Acute Care – Person Centred Health

Date: Dec 12, 2013

Subject: Standardizing Approaches to Staff Scheduling – Implementation of Guidelines – Phase I

Good afternoon,

We would like to voice our appreciation to those of you who were able to attend the town halls last week regarding the scheduling guidelines. They were difficult meetings, but sharing information and voicing concerns are critical to tackling the difficult issues that arise as we strive to always put patients first while adapting to a challenging and ever-changing health system.

A number of questions and concerns arose during the town halls that we are confident can be addressed through clarification of the guidelines and in discussions among managers, staff and the advisory group.

As a start, we feel the need to clarify the role of the guidelines. The guidelines are a set of procedures and processes for managers, scheduling committees and staff to use when developing unit and vacation schedules. They are to be applied and adhered to as written. This will help ensure the guidelines contribute to consistency, fairness and alignment with the NSGEU collective agreement. To meet those objectives, the guidelines will be initially implemented as described previously. All clinical areas of the QEII campus staffed with NSGEU nurses are expected to (as of January 1, 2014) use the new vacation guidelines to submit their annual vacation requests for 2014-2015; and (as of April 1, 2014) to implement the full scheduling guidelines. There will be subsequent implementations of scheduling guidelines across Capital Health.

To help encourage discussion and clarification of the guidelines, managers were provided with background and Q&A materials last week for their reference and for distribution to staff. In the coming days and weeks, the advisory group will build on the materials and establish a page on the Capital Health intranet where managers and staff can find scheduling guidelines materials and submit questions.

In the meantime, we are asking managers to engage with staff and to provide their three main areas of concern or three most frequently asked questions so that they can be addressed via the website, email or in person. Please email the top areas of concern or questions to Lori-Anne Jones at lori-anne.jones@cdha.nshealth.ca. We are also establishing an online option where staff can submit questions and concerns directly. The link will be shared as soon as it is available.

Also, advisory group members will be contacting managers with an offer to attend meetings with staff or provide other support to help explain the guidelines and answer questions.

Scheduling guidelines will bring changes across the QEII and then across Capital Health, and we know that such changes can be difficult at a personal level. We appreciate your willingness to be open to working with the guidelines over the next six months to allow for new ways of planning our work schedules to best meet patients' needs.

Best Regards,

Kathy MacNeil and Paula Bond