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SAHO committed to concluding negotiations in the public interest

The Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations (SAHO) is committed to concluding a collective agreement with CUPE. In response to the Minister of Health's challenge earlier today, SAHO advised the unions that it believes it may be possible to sufficiently deal with non-monetary issues to allow the tabling of a total package proposal including a monetary offer as early as July 17.

During meetings with CUPE last week, SAHO provided information concerning the general structure of financial resources available. The financial resources will provide for a general wage increase in each year, an additional amount for competitive market related issues and an additional amount to achieve employer specific issues related to patient focused care or productivity and efficiency gains.

Additional meeting dates have been agreed to by CUPE, and the other provider unions, which should give all parties sufficient time to address the large number of outstanding non-monetary items.

Traditionally, non-monetary proposals are discussed or agreed to by the parties before a financial proposal is tabled. The financial proposal is negotiated at a common table because of the impacts to wages for all three of the provider unions. "SAHO is serious about concluding a collective agreement with CUPE, and all unions. To date, we believe CUPE has not demonstrated that they share the same objectives," said Susan Antosh, President and CEO of SAHO.

Prior to the meetings with CUPE last week, SAHO had withdrawn or amended over 65% of their original proposals. CUPE had withdrawn or amended less than 25% of their original proposals.

Susan Antosh explained, "There are still a lot of outstanding issues that would typically be addressed prior to moving to the common table to discuss financial proposals. As early as December of 2008, SAHO indicated to CUPE that the employers were prepared to move to the common table and deal with the financial proposals as well as everything else as a package if it was desired by all three of the unions. SAHO has not received word that this is how the unions wish to proceed."

SAHO is waiting for CUPE to provide a response to the Minister's challenge.

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SAHO represents more than 40 health care employers in the province.

SAHO is a non-profit, non-government association that provides leadership, advocacy, support and programs for member health agencies throughout the province.

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