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Union walks away from bargaining process

The Health Sciences Association of Saskatchewan (HSAS) walked out of collective bargaining talks with the Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations (SAHO) yesterday afternoon, citing their objection to a statement on the cover page of SAHO's proposal package. It states: *SAHO reserves the right to add, delete or amend any proposals during the period of negotiations.*

SAHO and HSAS exchanged proposal packages on April 3. April 22 was the first day of scheduled face-to-face talks.

The statement in question is consistent with SAHO's approach to bargaining and supports a strong discussion process, according to SAHO President & CEO Susan Antosh. This statement has formed part of previous proposal packages to HSAS.

"In order to come up with something that works, sometimes both parties have to abandon their initial proposals in favour of new or modified proposals," she said. "It's a normal part of the bargaining process." Eliminating the statement would inhibit the employers' ability to come up with creative solutions and respond to emerging issues, Antosh explained.

"SAHO's goal is to reach a strong collective agreement through a productive discussion process," said Antosh. "We hope to get back to the table as soon as possible."

HSAS is a union representing over 2,700 health care professionals in all 12 Saskatchewan health regions in 28 health professions, including social workers, pharmacists, psychologists, therapists and emergency medical technicians.

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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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