



February 24, 2023

Mr. Chris Parsons
Service Officer
Union of Northern Workers
SUITE 400 4910 – 53 STREET
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 1V2

Via E-mail: parsonc@unw.ca

Dear Mr. Parsons:

Grievance # 22-E-GNWT-03007 Agency Nurses

As a follow-up to my response on February 10, 2023, the Union has reached out for a response which clearly outlines our position regarding the use of Agency Nurses and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) from 2004.

While the Employer understands the Union's concerns, as a last resort, the Employer has been utilizing Agency Nurses to avoid the closures of Hospital Units. This is to ensure essential health services are provided to all residents of the Northwest Territories. The Government of Northwest Territories (GNWT) does understand the MOU states the specific scenarios in which agency nurses may be used and the current situation does not fit within the criteria set out in section 2 of the MOU. Therefore, we are granting the grievance and requesting the Union to withdraw this grievance for the following reasons.

Several attempts to hire outside of agency nurses, as outlined in section 1 of the MOU, have been made and the GNWT will continue these efforts to hire casual, indeterminate and term nurses in lieu of using agency nurses. Two competitions to hire nurses for obstetrics and operating room units are currently active and will remain open until filled. These are the same units where we are currently utilizing the agency nurses.

To rectify the situation, the GNWT recommends providing the Union with a list of all actions taken by the department to fill the vacant positions. Given, the MOU was negotiated almost 20 years ago and much has changed in the health and social services professionals' fields, the Employer would like the Union to consider the re-establishment of the Joint Union/Management Agency Nurses Working Group to update and ensure the MOU is applicable.

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In sum, while I am granting the grievance, I believe the above decision remedies the situation. Accordingly, I request that the Union withdraw this grievance.

If you have any questions please contact Camilla Offredi, Manager, Advice and Adjudication at 867-767-9154 ext. 14103.

Sincerely,



William MacKay
Deputy Minister, Finance

- c. Camilla Offredi, Manager, Advice & Adjudication, Labour Relations, Finance
- Brian Potvin, Client Service Manager, Management and Recruitment Services, Finance
- Anne Marie Thistle, Director – Membership Services, Union of Northern Workers
- Kaitlyn Marchiori, Labour Relations Coordinator, Labour Relations, Finance