



# MEDIA RELEASE

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To speak to a representative, please call:

Rosalee Longmoore, SUN President (306)539-6162 (cell)

## **NURSES REJECT SAHO PROPOSAL, DEMAND GOVERNMENT HONOUR SUN/GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP**

<<PRINCE ALBERT>>Ninety-four per cent of SUN members rejected the latest SAHO contract proposal in a member opinion poll released at the SUN Annual Meeting in Prince Albert on Wednesday.

The poll also revealed 91% support from nurses that retention and recruitment provisions from the SUN/Government partnership be included in the collective agreement to ensure that health regions comply with the agreement.

SUN President Rosalee Longmoore says that *“Nurses are outraged that the government has signed a partnership agreement to work collaboratively, and then betrayed that commitment by instructing their bargaining committee to refuse to negotiate exactly the same retention and recruitment provisions that Minister McMorris has already agreed to - this is a good cop-bad cop routine that’s destructive and juvenile.”*

SUN also released a public opinion poll, conducted by Craigilea Consulting, revealing that 77% of those polled supported SUN’s position that the government should ensure the collective agreement between SAHO and SUN includes nursing retention and recruitment initiatives from the Partnership agreement.

According to SUN President Rosalee Longmoore, *“Clearly, the public is well informed about the SUN/Government Partnership, and supports SUN’s position in negotiations - Minister McMorris needs to instruct health regions to sign a collective agreement that commits them to what Government has already committed to.”*

The poll also asked whether health regions, making a commitment in their collective agreement with nurses, would be an effective way for health regions to take action to hire, recruit, and retain more nurses? Eighty-seven **per cent of those polled agreed.**

The public opinion poll also tested who the public trusted most to give them accurate information about the nursing shortage and patient care - SUN topped the list at 55%, followed by health regions at 33% with the Minister of Health only capturing 12%.

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Actual survey questions and results:

- Health Regions should act to recruit more nurses- **86% agree**
- Health Regions should act to retain more nurses that may otherwise leave the province or retire early- **84% agree**
- Should the Saskatchewan Government require health regions to establish and meet specific targets for hiring and retaining more nurses? **-89% agree**
- Among the following, who do you trust most to give accurate information about the nursing shortage and patient care? SUN topped the list:

Saskatchewan Union of Nurses **-55%**  
Health Regions **-33%**  
Minister of Health **-12%-least trusted**

- Were you aware that, on February 28<sup>th</sup>, the Saskatchewan Government signed a partnership agreement with SUN – the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses – that requires health regions to hire 800 nurses? **-53% were aware**
- Currently, health regions can use money from nursing vacancies for capital expenditures, balancing budgets, or salary increases for executives. The SUN/Government partnership would require these funds to be spent on nursing recruitment and retention. Do you support this requirement? **-90% agreed**
- In addition to hiring 800 more nurses, the Partnership agreement requires that health regions hire all new nursing graduates, meet specific recruitment targets, retain experienced nurses, and develop retention and recruitment initiatives jointly with SUN. Do you think that the health regions should be held accountable to implement these measures? **-89% agreed**
- The Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations, or SAHO, is currently bargaining with SUN. Do you think that making a commitment in their collective agreement with nurses would be an effective way for health regions to take action to hire, recruit, and retain more nurses? **-87% agreed**
- In the current negotiations, SUN is asking health regions to honour the Partnership agreement with the government by putting measures into the collective agreement that provide innovative retention and recruitment initiatives, and competitive salaries and benefits, so we can attract nurses to the province. **-73 % agree**

- On a 1 to 5 scale where 1 is “Strongly disagree” and 5 is “Strongly agree,” do you agree or disagree that the government should ensure that the collective agreement between SAHO and SUN includes nursing retention and recruitment initiatives from the Partnership agreement?  
**-77% agree**

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