

# STEWARD ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

## BCNU WORKSITE STEWARDS

Stewards play a crucial leadership role, and act as the face of BCNU at the worksite level. They work actively and proactively, with members and management, to build safe, healthy, and respectful workplaces. They work alongside members to advocate for health care workers' ability to deliver quality patient care. They understand and interpret collective agreements and help members to understand their rights under their contract. They guide and represent members through the grievance process when their rights are not being respected. They support members in dealing with challenges related to health and safety, displacement, return to work, etc.

## BCNU WORKSITE STEWARDS ARE TRAINED AND SUPPORTED TO UPHOLD OUR COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS AND:

- > Work actively to build a sense of relationship between members and their union, through dialogue and communication, hosting of member events and creating meaningful opportunities for members to participate, connect and contribute
- > Develop a respectful working relationship with the employer
- > Encourage and support members to bring patient care concerns forward through the PRC
- > Promote a culture of health, safety and respect at the workplace
- > Educate members on the rights and processes contained in their collective agreement
- > Coordinate, and encourage member leadership and participation in BCNU campaigns
- > Investigate, prepare for and conduct grievance meetings
- > Participate at regional and provincial levels of BCNU

## Once experienced in the role of worksite steward, some individuals choose to further specialize in the following roles:

### OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Stewards play a leadership role in promoting and advocating for a culture of health and safety at the worksite. They support members in a broad range of health and safety areas, in consultation with staff and elected representatives. This involves educating members on their rights, guiding them around processes and timelines and advocating for their fair treatment in relation to illness and disability.

#### OH&S EDUCATION TRAINS AND SUPPORTS STEWARDS TO:

- > Understand the Workers Compensation Act, the OH&S Regulation and collective agreement articles addressing health and safety
- > Advise members about their rights and responsibilities with respect to health and safety
- > Represent the interests of BCNU members on their worksite Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee
- > Support members who refuse unsafe work
- > Support members to report all OH&S hazards and incidents to their employer, even if there is no injury
- > Participate in employer OH&S incident investigations and advocate for corrective actions to protect member health and safety
- > Support members following a workplace incident
- > Investigate workplace hazards and safety concerns and advocate for preventive action in areas of concern
- > Participate in the OH&S risk assessment processes and workplace inspections
- > Participate in worksite visits and inspections conducted by WorkSafeBC
- > Encourage member participation and leadership in efforts to promote health and safety at the worksite, engaging them through education, dialogue and health and safety related events
- > File grievances when the health and safety provisions of the collective agreement are contravened
- > Support members with return to work and duty to accommodate issues (in some workplaces only)
- > Refers members to OH&S Department if they have questions about WSBC/LTD claims or need assistance with appeals

### PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Some stewards are drawn, as advocates and professionals, to promote and support members' use of the Professional Responsibility Process provided for in their collective agreement. The PRF process allows for issues related to workload, patient safety and nurses' ability to practice to standard to be brought forward and heard. PRF stewards play a crucial role in educating members on their PRF-related rights and supporting them to utilize this unique tool to advocate for their patients and their practice.

#### PRF EDUCATION TRAINS AND SUPPORTS STEWARDS TO:

- > Understand the PRF process language in the collective agreement and advise members on their rights and responsibilities in initiating the PRF process
- > Model and advocate for the PRF process guiding principles
- > Educate and assist members to complete PRF forms and support members through the PRF process
- > Track the initiation, progress, and outcomes of PRFs, encouraging good documentation and adherence to process timelines
- > Attend PRF committee meetings as a member advocate and coach members in articulating their concerns and resolutions
- > Help in the establishment of PRF committees, ensuring members are familiar with the committee structure and roles
- > Work collaboratively with management to ensure that the PRF process is understood and implemented