

With the CMS implementation date looming, we're hearing more and more about the pressure our members are feeling. In response, the CEU is striking a committee with representation from each classification. This committee will lead the way when it comes to addressing membership needs in response to CMS. The committee will meet for the first time on March 17, 2009.

Here's what we know so far. Some of our members are suffering in silence. One member told us she broke down at her desk. That member had been working overtime, working through lunch, and doing everything she could to keep up with the training demands and her workload. It wasn't until she broke down at her desk that her manager paid attention and got her some help.

After hearing about this member's plight, Sandra Wright, CEU President noted, "we can collectively take a stand and make sure management is accountable for the work. There's just no excuse for putting that level of pressure on an employee. I've spoken with upper management and they recognize that standards are not achievable when volumes are high. The attempt by some managers to impose strict adherence to standards on employees while pushing them to whip their caseload into shape, concurrent with this time of high volume, time away from their desks for training, and clean-up for CMS just causes more stress for the members. It must stop."

In another situation, a member was told he could not work overtime to catch up on his caseload. Meanwhile, members in the same office were authorized to work overtime, but not on their files, on his files. This type of situation can pit member against member when clearly it's up to management to ensure the workplace is healthy. It's not a healthy workplace when workers perceive that some people are getting preferential treatment.

CEU wants to hear about your experiences on the floor. Please send in what's happening in your area. Be sure to send us the facts, including the date the situation arose, what the issue(s) is, who is involved, and any other relevant facts. The committee will use these fact-based scenarios to determine what our next steps will look like. Let's break the silence and make sure management responds to the working conditions of our membership. Together we can put the pressure for workplace inequities on management. That's where it belongs!

Please forward your experiences to susanep@ceu.bc.ca. In the coming weeks, look for more information about what the committee is doing on the CEU website @ www.ceu.bc.ca

