

HEALTH

Nurses get deal after tough fight

JENNIFER BROWN
Staff Reporter

Nurses say a contract giving them a two-per-cent wage increase is an important step toward encouraging experienced RNs to stay in Ontario hospitals.

The deal was reached Tuesday, after two years of bargaining and a week of intense mediation between the Ontario Nurses' Association and the Ontario Hospital Association.

"Nurses will be satisfied at this time," said Enid Mitchell, vice-president of ONA's central region and a former nurse at York County Hospital. "It shows they are being valued as important providers in the system."

The deal will give registered nurses a two-per-cent raise, retroactive to April 1, 1997, improvements to pregnancy and parental leave top-up pay from 75 to 84 per cent, enhanced job security and layoff language, as well as strengthened severance and layoff packages.

Under the deal, an RN at the top of the grid will see their hourly wage rise from \$27.80 per hour to about \$28.36.

Mitchell said the deal represents a significant gain for nurses, when compared to the OHA's original offer two years ago.

"It's quite an important award when you think back to 1996, when the OHA tabled the equivalent to a 20.3 per

■ Please see page 13 ■

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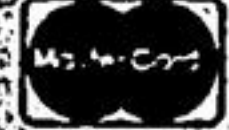
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Reg. \$5.99 ea.

3.99 EACH
THIS WEEK

LOCAL ASPARAGUS

We sell either "thin" which is really delicate or "short" which has pretty much an all-green stem. Further, we not only trim the bottom and display it in water, we store it in water in our coolers. The best care in handling translates into the best eating enjoyment.

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They have the prettiest pink flowers.

10" pots

(4 high)

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ORGANIC SALAD GREENS

You'll love the ease (they're pre-washed), versatility and intriguing flavour of this mixture of greens. They can be used solo or as an addition to your favourite lettuce combination to create delicious salads. We'll have a recipe for you to try using Maple Syrup, pine nuts and apples.

Reg.

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THIS WEEK

TIPS OF THE WEEK!

We have two recipes for you. One for Asparagus with Almond Butter and the other for Maple-Apple Salad Greens with pinenuts. Available in store!

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Hours:

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