

Union Contract Called Good Deal for Both Sides

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Above showing signing of national collective bargaining agreement left to right: : Keith Kelleher-Head Organizer, SEIU Local 880; Andrew Wright-President Addus HealthCare; Andrew Stern-President, SEIU

Palatine-based Addus HealthCare Chief Executive W. Andrew Wright expects the national collective bargaining agreement the company signed with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) covering home care aides to help the company with recruitment and retention of workers.

Under the agreement signed January 20th, which SEIU called the first of its kind for the union, non-economic issues such as work rules and grievances will be handled nationally, and the company has agreed to remain neutral in union organizing campaigns. Addus also agreed to give workers paid time off to participate in lobby days to push for greater reimbursements.

The workers serve seniors and people with disabilities who need assistance with daily living activities, such as bathing, house-keeping and cooking, and who receive Medicaid and state funding.

“This industry tends to have a high turnover rate,” Wright said. “By working with the union and putting our energy into securing better reimbursement rates that then lead to better wages and benefits, that helps us recruit and certainly helps us retain employees. It allows us to be a higher quality provider because we have long term employees that stay with us.”

SEIU President Andrew L. Stern, who came to Chicago to sign the agreement, said talks are under way with other home care and nursing home providers to achieve similar agreements. He said the deal with Addus is an example of how unions and companies should work together.

“In the 21st century, we don’t need labor relations to be about confrontation,” he said. “We need it to be about cooperation and partnership and quality.”



Receiving signed agreement from Keith Kelleher-Head Organizer, Andrew Wright-President Addus HealthCare, and Andrew Stern-President, SEIU is Helen Miller, President of SEIU Local 880.