



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

NEWS RELEASE

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B.C. government must take action to stop credit card emergency care

B.C.'s health minister must act now to stop a for-profit emergency room from opening its doors next week, says the Hospital Employees' Union.

According to media reports, the False Creek Surgical Centre – a for-profit medical venture in Vancouver – will open the emergency room next Monday.

“Every British Columbian needs to know that their family’s access to emergency care will be triaged based on medical need and not on their credit card limit,” says HEU secretary-business manager Judy Darcy.

“The health minister must take action right now to defend the principles of fair access to health care for B.C. families.

“Do we really need to see a cash register in an emergency room before this government acts?”

Last month, HEU called for a moratorium on health care privatization while the province carries out its “Conversation on Health” – a consultation with British Columbians about the future of health care that’s taking place over the next year.

“If this emergency room venture is permitted to open, British Columbians will become even more skeptical about government’s willingness to listen – and more convinced that government has already made up its mind about their direction on health care,” says Darcy.

Darcy says that instead of sitting on its hands while for-profit emergency room ventures open, the province should do more to ease pressure on emergency rooms in public hospitals – especially by improving care for B.C. seniors in their communities.

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