



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

# NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## 90 health care workers to be issued pink slips at veterans' care facility

### *George Derby Centre moves to contract out long-term staff*

More than 90 health care staff at George Derby Centre, the veterans' residential care facility in Burnaby, will be out of work by the end of April, 2013 as the Centre's board of directors moves ahead with a controversial plan to contract out food and nutrition, housekeeping, laundry, clerical and activity workers.

"Contracting out has become the easy way out for facility administrators facing budget crunches, but it comes at a high cost to residents who will lose trusted staff and to the workers who will lose their jobs," says HEU secretary-business manager Bonnie Pearson.

Many of the workers have been at George Derby for more than 20 years and have long-standing relationships with the veteran residents and their families. The loss of familiar, experienced and trusted staff members is traumatic for seniors living in long-term care facilities. Studies have recognized the negative impact that disruptions in continuity of care such as contracting out have on residents.

Contracting out is of such concern to seniors and their families that B.C. Ombudperson Kim Carter addressed this in her February 2012 report, [The Best of Care, Part 2](#), in recommendation (R) 170: "The Ministry of Health work with the health authorities to develop safeguards to ensure that seniors in residential care are not adversely affected by large-scale staff replacement."

Firing in-house staff and contracting out their work to private companies that pay low wages and few if any benefits has become common practice for B.C. long-term care facilities that face reductions in funding from health authorities. The Fraser Health Authority has cut funding to George Derby Centre for the upcoming year.

