



Fighting for Permanent Residency: HEU Calls Out Federal Government's Exploitative Immigration Policies

Hundreds of health care workers in B.C. are facing the difficult decision of leaving the country or going underground due to the federal changes to the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP).

These are the workers who clean, feed, and care for patients in hospitals and long-term care homes across the province. Their work is critical to a well-functioning health care system.

B.C. is at risk of losing more than 500 trained and experienced health care workers in 2025 because these workers' permits are set to expire in the coming months.

These workers took on health care jobs to fill staffing shortages, with the promise that these jobs would lead to permanent residency.

Without warning, the federal government slashed hundreds of PNP spots in B.C. for 2025. This means that many have been left without a choice as their work permits expire and they are forced to leave their jobs in health care, and uproot from the place they've called home for the past few years.

"These decisions are causing unbelievable stress for health care workers doing essential jobs in our health care system, and their families," says HEU secretary-business manager Lynn Bueckert.

"These workers were good enough to be here during the pandemic, but now we're fine to send them home? It's racist. It's exploitative. And it's completely unjust."

HEU is taking action

A group of committed HEU members affected by the PNP changes have taken action to put pressure on the new federal government to restore the PNP spots.

They participated in a rally in April where they shared their stories with the media.

To keep up the pressure, they've met with politicians at both provincial and federal levels, including B.C. Premier David Eby, B.C. Conservative Health Critic, MLA Anna Kindy,

Federal Liberal MP (Surrey-Newton) Sukh Dhaliwal, and Federal NDP MP (Vancouver East) and Immigration Critic Jenny Kwan.

Following the federal election and new federal cabinet assignments, HEU sent letters to Prime Minister Mark Carney; Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Lena Metlege Diab; Minister of Health Marjorie Michel; and Minister of Housing Gregor Robertson, requesting meetings and urging them to reverse a policy that is nothing more than a knee-jerk crackdown on immigrants.

“As a country, we’re only beginning to feel the impact of this loss to our communities. While we watch in horror as deportations in the United States tear families apart, here in Canada we are also seeing people torn from their communities through federal immigration changes,” says Bueckert.

“I want to apologize to our impacted health care workers on behalf of this country,” says Bueckert. “Canada can and must do better. We will not stop until our members are treated with the fairness and respect they deserve.”

What we’re demanding

HEU is calling on the federal government to:

- **Fully restore** B.C.’s PNP allocation to meet actual labour market needs;
- **Reverse harmful temporary foreign worker changes** that restrict spousal work permits and tie workers to specific employers;
- **Create a permanent residency pathway** for essential non-clinical health care workers — including care aides, clerks, cleaners, and food service staff.