



HEU calls for urgent action to address toxic working conditions at Nanaimo hospital

In the wake of a report detailing a working environment at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital that is rife with intimidation, bullying and retaliation, HEU is calling for immediate, meaningful action by hospital management and the Island Health Authority to improve conditions for workers and patients.

“However distressing these results are, this independent assessment fully exposes the extreme dysfunction that has infected the workplace culture at Nanaimo and the toxic environment our members have been coping with for a long time,” says HEU secretary-business manager Jennifer Whiteside.

“Clearly, there exists a deep disconnect between hospital management and those who are delivering care on the front line.”

HEU members, she says, are struggling on a daily basis with short-staffing, heavy workloads and chronic redeployment, which has become endemic throughout the hospital’s operations.

The workplace culture assessment, conducted by independent consultant Vector Group, paints a disturbing picture of a “top-down, heavy-handed, command and control hierarchy” that has bred an atmosphere of fear and mistrust throughout the hospital.

Whiteside says HEU will be requesting an urgent meeting with health authority officials and hospital management. The union will also be working with its members at the hospital to identify the steps that need to be taken to create a working environment where staff are valued and respected for the contribution they bring to the health care team.

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