



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

NEWS RELEASE



MEDIA ADVISORY

July 30, 2008

Health care workers travel to VIHA board meeting in Qualicum today

HEU members join rally calling for reversal of long-term care bed cuts and closure of Cowichan Lodge

Members of the Hospital Employees' Union from across Vancouver Island will gather in Qualicum today to oppose cuts in long-term care beds throughout the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA), and the closure of Cowichan Lodge in Duncan.

HEU president Fred Muzin is among the speakers who will address the rally, hosted by the Mid-Island and South Island health coalitions. Norah Murphy, chairperson of the HEU Cowichan Lodge local, is also scheduled to speak.

More than 170 HEU health care workers have received pink slips as a result of VIHA's unexpected June 20 announcement that it will close 350 long-term care beds in eight public seniors' care facilities in Nanaimo, Duncan, Parksville, Ladysmith and Victoria, over the next few months.

Most residents at these public facilities are being transferred to government-subsidized, private, for-profit facilities.

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