



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

# NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**October 16, 2009**

## Health care workers and allies rally to protect hospital security jobs

Health care workers, hospital security officers and their allies will rally today at noon to protect Royal Inland Hospital Security services from privatization.

In September, more than 28 security officers at Royal Inland Hospital learned that the health authority plans to contract out their work to a Vancouver-based private security firm. Since then many hospital staff, including nurses and doctors, have spoken up in support of the security officers' essential role in the health care team.

"Health care providers face one of the highest levels of violence of any profession, and security in a hospital is critical to a safe working environment and quality patient care," says HEU financial secretary, Donisa Bernardo.

The rally aims to draw attention to the important experience, training and skills that would be lost through contracting out. Community supporters have also come out to protest the loss of decent family supporting jobs, at a time when their local economy needs them most.

"This is a short-sighted move by the health authority that unnecessarily hurts families in our community, takes money out of the local economy and disrupts the work of staff in our hospital," says Bernardo, who comes from the Kamloops Thompson HEU local and will be speaking at the rally.

The IHA has claimed that privatization will mean an annual savings of just over \$150,000. It's an amount that Bernardo calls "nickels and dimes" in the context of the health authority's \$1.6 billion budget.

"The solution to IHA's funding issues will not come from tinkering around the edges of the health care system and privatizing essential health care jobs hospital by hospital," says Bernardo. "Instead, we need comprehensive long-term planning that involves consultation with staff and innovative public solutions."

**What: Rally to protect hospital security from privatization**

**When: October 16, 12:00 pm**

**Where: In front of Royal Inland Hospital**

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