



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

# NEWS RELEASE

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## MEDIA ADVISORY

November 17, 2009

**What:** Interior Health Authority Open Board Meeting presentation  
**When:** Wednesday, November 18 – 9:00 a.m. (presentation begins)  
**Where:** Boardroom 1, 1815 Kirschner Road, Kelowna

## Royal Inland security officers make case to IHA for saving in-house security services

*Hidden costs, reduced services, compromised patient safety top list of concerns raised by the union representing RIH security officers*

On Wednesday, Interior Health Authority board members will hear the case for protecting Royal Inland Hospital's publicly delivered security services.

According to the Hospital Employees' Union, the health authority's claims of \$159,000 annual savings are reduced or eliminated when the full costs of the private security contract are calculated.

For example, services such as "sitter" duties that involve one-on-one monitoring of patients who present a danger to themselves or others, fire safety equipment testing and maintenance, as well as "Code White" responses to violent incidents would either be downloaded onto other health care workers and departments or charged to the health authority as 'cost plus' items.

The union's presentation also includes letters of support from many staff at RIH, including doctors, who are concerned that contracting out will mean a disruption of the health care team, the loss of specialized knowledge and experience, and decreased hospital safety.

As one of the letters points out, RIH has unique security requirements. It is the only hospital in the health authority that has an Adult Psychiatric Ward on the same floor with patients as young as six years old.

In September, Interior Health announced plans to contract out the work of 16 security officers at Royal Inland Hospital. On November 17, HEU staff and security officers also presented the case for maintaining in-house security to health authority management responsible for overseeing these services.

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