



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

NEWSLETTER

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HEU launches ads on state of seniors' care

The Hospital Employees' Union launched a series of ads this week to draw attention to the state of seniors' care in British Columbia, and to urge concerned members of the public to take action to improve the quality and accessibility of these services.

The union's TV and radio ads began airing January 19, and can also be seen and heard at www.standupforseniorscare.ca where concerned citizens can send an email to provincial politicians.

The union is calling on government to address the crisis in seniors' care by building more not-for-profit, long-term care beds; improving access to home support; increasing staffing levels in long-term care, and stopping privatization of seniors' care.

HEU secretary-business manager Judy Darcy says that for many B.C. families and health care workers, the crisis is very real.

"All over this province, daughters and sons are struggling to find a long-term care bed or enough home support hours for a frail parent," says Darcy. "Others are wondering if they can afford the extra fees and charges in private, for-profit facilities.

"Our members who work with seniors are struggling to provide the quality care seniors deserve, because of inadequate staffing levels."

Darcy says that a broken government promise to provide 5,000 new, non-profit, long-term care beds by 2006 has put the entire health care system under pressure.

"Surgeries are being cancelled because hospital beds and emergency rooms are filled with seniors who have nowhere else to go," says Darcy.

"We need to invest in quality, accessible health care for seniors – not in the profits of nursing home corporations – but in increased home support; non-profit, long-term care beds, and enforceable standards for direct care staffing."

HEU represents about 20,000 workers in B.C.'s system of seniors' care, including licensed practical nurses, care aides, rehab assistants and activity aides, as well as support workers who provide clerical, laundry, housekeeping and maintenance services.

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