



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

NEWSLETTER

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HEU responds to health authorities' budget shortfall announcements

Union requests meetings with health authorities, and calls for strategic public solutions to reduce costs and enhance services

Earlier today, B.C.'s health authorities – with the exception of the Northern Health Authority – released memos to staff, outlining the steps they will take to address the funding shortfalls in their 2009/2010 budgets.

These memos were in response to a letter from Health Minister Kevin Falcon that restated the government's hard-line position that health authorities will not receive additional resources, despite growing populations and increasing needs.

HEU issued a statement earlier today about the impact of these cuts to services.

"Our members work in every area of health care – hospitals, seniors' care and in the community," said HEU's assistant-secretary business manager Bonnie Pearson. "They see first-hand the human and financial costs when people are left without the care and support they need."

The union has called on government to review and implement investments in public solutions such as streamlined waitlists, early intervention programs, and improved primary home and community care – which have proven to reduce costs and enhance services.

Copies of staff memos from health authorities are linked to this newsletter online at www.heu.org.

What do the health authority cuts mean for HEU members?

HEU is anticipating meeting with each health authority to review the specifics of how these cost-cutting measures may impact members.

The union will be in touch with members as soon as more information is available.

The health authorities' budget deficits vary, but they have all outlined similar measures that include: reducing administrative and support services, managing overtime, limiting or reducing elective surgeries, evaluating third-party contracts, integrating systems through shared services, increasing revenue fees for parking and some patient services, and more.

Members who have additional questions can contact their local servicing representative or watch the union's website (www.heu.org) for more information.

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