



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

NEWS RELEASE

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Fraser Health's planned cuts to sterile processing shortsighted

HEU says workloads in sterile processing already high and urges health authority to reconsider move in interests of patient safety

The Fraser Health Authority is planning to reduce staffing in hospital sterile processing departments in order to cut costs.

But the Hospital Employees' Union says that sterile processing departments across the region are already at the breaking point in terms of workload, and that staff cuts could put patient safety at risk.

Sterile processing departments clean and sterilize surgical instruments and other medical devices that are used in surgeries, diagnostic testing, and other procedures.

The cuts to sterile processing were announced to staff in an internal bulletin issued Thursday, and affected staff have been notified.

HEU secretary-business manager Judy Darcy says while the work of sterile processing staff is invisible to the public, it is critical to patient health and safety.

"These cuts are shortsighted and can only undermine public confidence in the management of our health care system," says Darcy. "Fraser Health should reconsider their planned cuts in this area."

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