



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

NEWS RELEASE

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The Hamlets at Westsyde plans to fire 140 care staff in February

More bad news for Kamloops seniors as private care home operator moves to contract out

A publicly subsidized care home operator in Kamloops has told 140 of its unionized employees that it will contract out their work just weeks after they reached a first contract.

The company that owns Hamlets at Westsyde says that it will lay off all care aides, LPNs, RNs, assisted living workers and recreation aides in February.

The Hospital Employees' Union, which represents the workers, says the move will disrupt continuity of care for seniors at the facility and is urging Osprey Care Inc. to reverse its plans.

HEU secretary-business manager Judy Darcy says the private company that operates the facility must consider the impact on residents of firing the entire care staff.

"These residents deserve stability of care not chaos, but that's exactly what will result from this reckless move," says HEU secretary-business manager Judy Darcy.

The workers targeted by the layoff provide the bulk of the personal care for the vulnerable seniors at the facility including toileting, bathing, feeding, distribution of medicines and activities of daily living.

HEU has represented workers at the facility since February 2009. A first collective agreement with facility operator Osprey Care Inc. was reached with the assistance of arbitrator Vince Ready in September 2010 after more than a year of negotiations failed to produce one.

Because of the size of the planned layoff, the *B.C. Labour Code* requires the company to meet with the union to discuss its plans. That meeting takes place today in Kamloops.

HEU has also filed complaints with the Labour Relations Board alleging that the company has engaged in unfair labour practices on a number of grounds, including that it engaged

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in bad faith bargaining by announcing its contracting-out plans almost immediately after reaching a first contract.

Osprey Care Inc. is owned by Hendrik Van Ryk who also operates a number of other facilities throughout B.C. from headquarters in the Lower Mainland. He is also the Chief Operating Officer of The Hamlets at Westsyde.

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