



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

# NEWS RELEASE

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**MEDIA ADVISORY**

**JANUARY 18, 2010**

## National tour on seniors' care comes to Burnaby, Kamloops, Victoria this week

*Message to B.C. from U.S. advocate: learn from American experience, avoid privatization in residential long-term care*

Three organizations including the Hospital Employees' Union/CUPE will be hosting the B.C. leg of a national tour on the state of seniors' residential care in Canada with free public forums on Tuesday, January 19 in Burnaby, Wednesday, January 20 in Kamloops, and Thursday, January 21 in Victoria.

The guest speaker is Toby Edelman, a senior policy attorney with the Center for Medicare Advocacy Inc. in Washington, D.C. Edelman will explain how poor staffing and privatization in residential long-term care facilities in the United States have dramatically reduced quality care – and why Canada must avoid going down the same road.

**What:** Free public forum on seniors' residential care

**Burnaby:** Tuesday, January 19  
Vancouver Hilton Metrotown (Tiffany Ballroom)  
6083 McKay Street  
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

**Kamloops:** Wednesday, January 20  
Coast Canadian Inn (Boardroom)  
339 Saint Paul Street  
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

**Victoria:** Thursday, January 21  
The Church of St. John the Divine (Parish Hall)  
1611 Quadra Street  
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Seniors' care is a top-of-mind issue for British Columbians who continue to make it a priority for the provincial government and its health authorities.

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In December, after a comprehensive investigation into seniors' issues which began in August 2008, the B.C. Ombudsman released the first of two reports entitled *The Best of Care: Getting it Right for Seniors in British Columbia*. It contained 10 recommendations including a bill of rights for seniors in residential care and a provincial website with detailed information about each care facility such as ownership, costs, staffing levels and direct care hours.

The national tour is spearheaded by the Canadian Union of Public Employees. The BC Health Coalition, BC Seniors' Advocacy Network and HEU (the B.C. health services division of CUPE) are co-sponsors of the tour in British Columbia.

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*For more information about these events, contact:  
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*To read more about the national tour and CUPE's research on long-term care, visit <http://cupe.ca/long-term-care/tour>.*