



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

# NEWSLETTER

PLEASE POST

## HEU members to assist in responding to marine medical emergency

### *Special notice to HEU members in the Capital Region*

The Hospital Employees' Union has agreed to allow the Vancouver Island Health Authority to implement extended 12-hour shifts in order to staff a special medical unit at Victoria General Hospital that is being opened in order to receive refugees requiring medical attention.

The agreement was made on a temporary "without prejudice" basis in light of the unique operational challenges that are facing the health authority in dealing with an unfolding medical emergency at sea.

A ship approaching the B.C. coast is transporting a number of refugees who have been at sea for many months and includes a number of women and children.

The health authority has re-opened 7 North at Victoria General Hospital as well as the former emergency department in order to receive and treat those who require medical attention.

On 7 North, the health authority has indicated that it will require ten LPNs and two care aides on a 24/7 basis as well as two unit clerks for 12 hours a day.

The health authority will be contacting casuals and part-timers initially to fill these positions and will also deploy regular staff as required. Emergency overtime may also be required.

HEU members employed by Compass Group may also be impacted by the preparations.

VIHA's response to this crisis is in accordance with the Pandemic and Disaster Staffing Guidelines (you can read the guidelines at this link:

[www.viha.ca/NR/ronlyres/A1DB82AA-5A7F-4D8C-A240-D0E8FA4E050A/0/viha\\_pandemic\\_staffing\\_guidelines\\_07oct09.pdf](http://www.viha.ca/NR/ronlyres/A1DB82AA-5A7F-4D8C-A240-D0E8FA4E050A/0/viha_pandemic_staffing_guidelines_07oct09.pdf)

It's expected that the special unit will be in operation for approximately six days.

HEU and other health care unions will be issuing joint bulletins with VIHA providing updates on the situation.

If you have any questions, please contact your shop steward.

Thank you for your assistance in responding to this unfolding humanitarian crisis.

*August 12, 2010*

