



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

# NEWS RELEASE

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**JULY 31, 2007**

## Government advertises misleading wage rates to recruit care aides

*New website whitewashes low wages, lack of job security created by Bill 29 and chronic contract flipping in long-term care*

The Hospital Employees' Union is demanding that the B.C. government correct false and misleading information about care aide wages posted on a new website that seeks to recruit workers. The venture is co-sponsored by the lobby group representing private long-term care operators and the Fraser Health Authority.

The website – [www.bccares.ca](http://www.bccares.ca) – promotes careers as care aides and home support workers and promises a “solid salary” of at least \$17.68 an hour to potential care aides. However, contracting out has pushed wages much lower than this in many long-term care facilities.

In fact, approximately 700 care aides at six of these facilities are currently facing termination after attempting to bring their wages up to levels promised on the website.

At Inglewood Care Centre, for example, care aides will be laid off on September 30 after joining a union and achieving a first collective agreement that increased current wages to \$16.55. The same facility is featured prominently on the new website.

HEU says that instead of falsely advertising higher wages for care aides, government should focus on improving job security and wages in this sector.

“We support efforts to train more care aides but not by promising wages that many long-term care operators and their sub-contractors refuse to pay,” says HEU assistant secretary-business manager Zorica Bosancic.

“If the government is serious about dealing with a care aide shortage it will declare an immediate moratorium on health care layoffs – and direct health employers to stop using Bill 29 to flip contracts and keep wages low.

“As it stands, many care aides don’t know from one day to the next whether they’ll be forced to reapply for their jobs at a lower rate of pay.”

On June 8, the Supreme Court of Canada struck down key sections of Bill 29, the government legislation that expanded contracting out in health care. HEU has called for government to respect the ruling during the 12-month implementation period.

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