



News Release

THE HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

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Compass health care workers on Vancouver Island vote HEU

*British corporation urged to respect workers'
right to choose their own union*

More than 700 dietary and cleaning workers employed by Compass Group at Vancouver Island Health Authority facilities are now members of the Hospital Employees' Union.

Ballots cast by workers in an October union representation vote were finally counted Tuesday night after objections raised by the corporation were dismissed by the Labour Relations Board.

The vote brings to a conclusion an organizing drive that began more than a year ago after VIHA contracted out cleaning and dietary services at its largest hospitals and care facilities.

"Every day, these workers provide critical health care to Vancouver Island residents," says HEU secretary-business manager Judy Darcy. "They deserve certainty and stability in the workplace and we're very pleased that they've chosen BC's largest health care union to represent them.

"I urge Compass to respect the choice made by their employees and to work with us to tackle workload, training and health and safety concerns."

Darcy says the union will form a bargaining committee as soon as possible to sit down with Compass and negotiate a first contract.

The Compass workers join 2000 other cleaning and dietary workers, employed by the corporation's competitors Aramark and Sodexo in the Vancouver Coastal Health and Fraser Health authorities, who have joined HEU over the last two years.

HEU has recently negotiated first contracts with both corporations.

Another 250 Compass staff working in Provincial Health Services Authority are also members of the HEU.

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Workers were asked on the ballot to choose between HEU and the United Steelworkers of America Local 1-3567 (formerly the IWA). They supported HEU by a margin of 56 per cent.

The new HEU members work for Compass through its two brands - Morrison and Crothall - at some of VIHA's largest health care facilities including Royal Jubilee, Victoria General and Nanaimo Regional hospitals.

Compass is under contract to VIHA to deliver cleaning services at facilities from Nanaimo and south Island, and food services at facilities in the Capital region.

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