



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

# NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 19, 2018

## Seniors' care protected as layoffs averted at Coquitlam care homes

*150 seniors' care workers will keep their jobs at Madison and Lakeshore Care Centres*

The Hospital Employees' Union (HEU) has reached an agreement with the Fraser Health Authority and the owner of the Coquitlam-based Madison and Lakeshore care centres which will protect the jobs of staff and maintain continuity of care for residents.

Layoff notices had been issued to 150 workers at the privately-owned, publicly-funded care homes – a move which would have left nearly 200 seniors without their familiar and trusted caregivers.

The planned layoffs were a result of a change in sub-contractors announced after workers joined the HEU in May.

“This agreement is due in part to the courageous workers who stood up for what is right and family members who voiced their concerns for their loved ones,” says HEU secretary-business manager Jennifer Whiteside.

“We want to thank the Fraser Health Authority and Health Minister Adrian Dix for their instrumental roles in resolving this crisis. Fraser Health promised that they would do everything in their power to bring stability to the situation, and they did just that.”

Whiteside says although this is a welcome resolution, contract-flipping and contracting out will continue to put continuity of care for seniors at risk across the province.

“We are encouraged by the BC NDP's platform commitment to deal with the larger issues around contracting out and contract-flipping in the seniors' care sector. They recognize the damaging impact these practices have on relationship-based care.”

“But goodwill and one-off fixes can only take us so far. As long as the current laws are in place, workers' rights and resident care will be at risk,” says Whiteside.

Large-scale staff turnover due to contracting out and contract-flipping has been endemic in the long-term care sector. Legislation facilitating these practices was brought in by the former B.C. Liberal government more than 15 years ago.

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