



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

# NEWS RELEASE

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## More than 150 Nanaimo health care workers sacked by long-term care operator

*HEU says it's time for health minister to clean up his government's mess at taxpayer-funded seniors' facility*

The operators of a seniors' care facility in Nanaimo have cancelled their sub-contract for care services resulting in pink slips for more than 150 care aides, licensed practical nurses, recreation programmers and assisted living workers.

Their union says the move will have a negative impact on the quality of care at the facility.

The news was delivered to workers late this afternoon at Nanaimo Seniors Village by the sub-contractor, CareSource.

The Hospital Employees' Union says the move comes just weeks after workers ratified a first collective agreement following more than a year of negotiations.

HEU secretary-business manager Judy Darcy is placing blame for the layoffs squarely at the feet of the B.C. Liberal government which has put in place legislation allowing health employers to sub-contract out at will, despite the negative consequences for seniors and workers.

"The Health Minister has an obligation to local seniors and their families, as well as to taxpayers, to clean up the mess his government has made," says Darcy. "It's time for government to hold this taxpayer-funded facility accountable for the ongoing chaos at this facility."

This is not the first time caregivers at Nanaimo Seniors Village were laid off.

In 2004, the workers were terminated by the facility operator – Retirement Concepts – and rehired by a wholly-owned subsidiary in an attempt to take advantage of the contracting out provisions in the B.C. Liberals 2002 legislation – *Bill 29* – that rewrote health care contracts.

But since this wasn't sufficiently arm's length, the workers were fired again and then most were rehired by the current sub-contractor, CareSource, in 2004.

"The seniors at this facility deserve to know that they will receive stable, ongoing care. But over the last six years, their caregivers have been fired, hired, fired, hired again and now fired again," says Darcy. "How many times does this need to happen before this government recognizes that the laws they've written are causing chaos in health care?"

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