



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

# NEWS RELEASE

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## Nanaimo nursing home operator issues lay-off notices

A nursing home operator in Nanaimo is bringing in the New Year by issuing lay-off notices to more than 150 local health care workers.

Mississauga-based Chartwell Seniors' Housing REIT – the operator of Malaspina Gardens – today gave six months' notice of layoff to its staff and confirmed that it will contract out their work.

It's a move that will disrupt the continuity of care for the frail elderly and others who receive care at the facility, according to the Hospital Employees' Union.

“Chartwell has decided to lay off this team of committed and experienced health care workers – some with decades of service at Malaspina Gardens – in order to protect its profit margin,” says HEU secretary-business manager Bonnie Pearson.

“It's just one more example of how provincial government policies in this sector have failed seniors and their families and put the economic security of health care workers – mostly women – at risk.”

Pearson notes that Chartwell will continue to receive public funding to operate Malaspina Gardens and will face no financial penalty for lowering the boom on its workers. It will be able to keep any savings that result from contracting out to a low-wage subcontractor.

Since the passage of *Bill 29* in 2002, many care facilities have contracted out care and support services to subcontractors in order to suppress wage costs.

Although the Supreme Court of Canada struck down key provisions of the contract-shredding law in 2007, it did not restore contracting-out protections to health care collective agreements.

Workers impacted by today's lay-off notices include nurses, care aides and clerical workers. About 150 of them are represented by HEU.

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