



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

NEWS RELEASE

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Acacia Ty Mawr Lodge to contract out all care and support staff

*60-day layoff notice to more than 30 health care workers
means disruption and upheaval for residents*

The owner of Acacia Ty Mawr Lodge intends to contract out all the jobs at the Shawnigan Lake seniors' residential facility, putting more than 30 directly-employed care aides, recreation aides, licensed practical nurses, and dietary, kitchen and laundry staff out of work as early as the end of March.

The workers, members of the Hospital Employees' Union since 1989, were taken completely off guard by the January 23 layoff notices. The union says that the move to contract out comes as a complete surprise and is devastating news not only to staff but to the facility's 35 residents – many with complex care needs – and their families as well.

“The loss of decent, family-supporting jobs, especially in a small community like Shawnigan Lake, is not the only consequence of this unexpected move to contract out,” says HEU secretary-business manager Bonnie Pearson.

“Contracting out also means that residents will lose familiar and trusted staff who provide for their personal care and support needs on a daily basis. The resulting disruption and upheaval creates an unstable workforce with high rates of turnover and causes worry and concern for the seniors and their families.”

Pearson says that contracting out reduces wages and benefits for workers which in turn means people have less to spend in their communities. “That hurts local businesses, youth sports and recreation programs, and arts and culture initiatives that rely on citizen participation and support.

“The provincial government talks a lot about its jobs agenda and putting families first, but time and time again, long-serving and dedicated health care workers – particularly those looking after seniors in residential care facilities on Vancouver Island – are being told that they don't deserve decent, family-supporting wages.”

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Acacia Ty Mawr Lodge is the latest seniors' care facility on Vancouver Island to contract out this year. On January 3, Malaspina Gardens in Nanaimo issued layoff notices to 150 workers in preparation for contracting out.

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*Contact: Margi Blamey, communications officer
604-785-5324 (cell)*