



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

NEWS RELEASE

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175 family-supporting jobs at risk as Interior Health seeks to privatize hospital laundry services

HEU will work with affected communities to protect quality jobs and services

The Interior Health Authority will issue bid documents later this week that could result in the loss of in-house hospital laundry services along with 175 family-supporting jobs in 11 communities, workers were told this morning.

The move comes at the end of a 90-day consultation period mandated under the health authority's collective agreement with the Hospital Employees' Union during which alternatives to contracting out were considered.

HEU secretary-business manager Bonnie Pearson says the decision to proceed with plans to privatize laundry services is disappointing, but not surprising.

"Our members deliver an efficient and quality service to hospitals throughout the Interior, and that fact has been acknowledged by the health authority," says Pearson.

"But Interior Health is under pressure to privatize the service in the region, putting good jobs that support local communities and families at risk.

"If the provincial government is really serious about a jobs plan that works for all British Columbians, they need to make the modest investments in the Interior that would protect decent, family-supporting jobs that exist right now."

Pearson says that HEU will work with its members to campaign to build support for the protection of in-house hospital laundry services and jobs.

The plan would affect hospital laundry facilities in 11 communities: Kelowna, Nelson, Vernon, Kamloops, Penticton, 100 Mile House, Williams Lake, Lillooet, Ashcroft, Golden and Princeton.

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