



The Remaining Light viewed by packed audience in Parksville

Community joins Stanford Place workers to talk about seniors

About 150 Parksville and area residents joined with HEU members on January 19 to view the documentary film, “The Remaining Light,” and talk about the impact of contract rollbacks on the quality of seniors’ care in their community.

Stanford Place workers have been rocked with wage and benefit rollbacks imposed on them by an arbitrator last year after the facility’s operator claimed it was experiencing revenue shortfalls.

After watching the film, participants heard from family council advocate Kim Slater and Marcy Cohen, a research associate with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

HEU Sunridge local chair Tina Irvine also spoke about the importance of the continuity of care for seniors living in residential facilities.

“Residents build relationships with caregivers. In many ways we are their family and the only ones they have. These relationships are important to both residents and to the employees of Stanford Place,” said Irvine.

“Feeling these bonds and relationships keep us coming to work feeling like it matters, we matter to someone, and we can make a difference to someone today! We come to work not just for the pay cheque but for the relationships that we develop daily and for the challenges that we face every day.”

Stanford Place is run as a so-called “public-private partnership” and is not covered by the union’s province-wide facilities agreement.

Many of the workers at Stanford Place left jobs in other care homes because they were attracted by the promise of competitive wages and benefits and a brand new facility.

Irvine has worked at Stanford Place since it opened in 2008 as both a care aide and LPN. She said that in the beginning, staff were promised “the best of the best.”

But since wages were cut, many workers have left or have two jobs to make ends meet.

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“Staff had become tired, overworked, frustrated,” said Irvine. “We are now left short-staffed, completely unable to fully staff the building.

“All of this commotion has created an unsettling feeling with the residents. They have been turned upside down.”

The free public event was co-sponsored by HEU and the Oceanside Coalition for Strong Communities.

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