



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

NEWS RELEASE

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Talks at critical stage for first contract at Kamloops Seniors Village

Mediation scheduled for August 10 may yield tentative settlement or essential services plan; 95 per cent voted for job action in July

The Hospital Employees' Union and Retirement Concepts' subsidiary Well-Being Seniors' Services Ltd. at Kamloops Seniors Village will be back at the bargaining table on August 10 in another attempt to reach a first collective agreement for more than 100 health care workers at the residential care facility.

The date was set by the Labour Relations Board (LRB) at the union's request and a board-appointed mediator will assist with the talks. Discussions will move to establishing essential services if no settlement is reached on Tuesday.

On July 6, HEU members at Kamloops Seniors Village delivered a strong strike mandate, with 94.6 per cent voting in favour of job action.

The HEU care aides, licensed practical nurses, recreation aides, and reception and maintenance workers are seeking wage increases and benefit adjustments that will bring their collective agreement in line with HEU members providing the same care and services to seniors at Summerland Seniors Village, another Retirement Concepts/Well-Being facility in the Interior Health Authority.

The union is also seeking no contracting-out language to protect seniors and workers from the contract-flipping that has characterized the company's other facilities.

Workers at Kamloops Seniors Village joined the HEU in August 2009 and served notice to bargain shortly after. Negotiations have been difficult from the start with an LRB-appointed mediator brought in to assist in March 2010. Mediation broke down on June 14, followed by the strike vote and the union's request to the LRB for further assistance.

Retirement Concepts is one of the largest private, for-profit residential care operators in B.C., with 16 assisted living and long-term care facilities located across the province.

Of the 114 complex care beds at Kamloops Seniors Village, 100 are publicly funded. Retirement Concepts received more than \$16 million dollars from Interior Health for the year ending March 31, 2009, the last timeframe for which accounts are available.

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