

Better pay needed for hospital cleaning staff

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Oak Bay New

Letter to the editor

Re: Former housekeeper alarmed by hospitals' current standards, Oak Bay News, April 11.

The regular complaints about hospital cleaning standards described in this article are just as troubling to hospital support staff as they are to patients and members of the public.

Hospital Employees' Union members who work for multinational companies like Compass Group, Sodexo and Aramark know their work is essential to infection control and patient health.

They struggle every day to meet basic standards, despite overwhelming workloads, low wages, insufficient training and supplies and high rates of staff turnover.

In fact, several cleaners at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital recently sounded the alarm after a Compass supervisor instructed them to spot mop their areas as a solution to their workload issues.

Hospital cleaners have also questioned the integrity of the Westech audits.

This system uses visual inspections only and does not include any microbiological testing of hospital surfaces.

It is for these reasons that HEU has launched a Living Wage Campaign calling on the health authorities and government to step in and ensure safe working conditions.

The HEU Living Wage Campaign also advocates that wages for the thousands of contracted-out workers who are a vital part of the solution to clean and safe public hospitals be at a level sufficient to support the families of these workers.

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