



BULLETIN

Speak up

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In April 2015, at a workshop prior to HSA's last convention, Trina Nguyen heard something that startled her.

"It was a workshop on HSA's work to raise awareness around domestic violence," says Nguyen, "and someone told a story about a young woman who was afraid she might have been sexually assaulted after having too much to drink. She went to St. Paul's Hospital, but they told her they didn't have rape kits. And that she should go to Vancouver General Hospital.

"That was it. No support. No protocol. No procedure. Everyone was shocked to hear it."

Nguyen asked around, and was told that rape kits are completely unavailable at a great number of sites across BC.

"Everyone I talked to about it was deeply concerned. And while it's not something that we can change overnight - it takes a lot of resources and training to make a change like this - I thought the least we could do was raise awareness of the problem."

That's when another participant told her to write an emergency resolution for the convention.

"So I spoke with a member of the resolutions committee, and she helped me write it. The committee later passed it.

"This is a perfect example of why I am involved in this union," she says. "As an individual, I spent some time making calls about this problem, and eventually I hit a dead end. But I'm just one person. With the union behind it, with all of us acting together, I know we'll get further. We might make a real change.

"I know some people come to convention and think we're just going through the motions," she adds. "But everyone should know that our union takes our resolutions very seriously. They're an opportunity for us to come together, as professionals, and take action not just on things that affect us in the workplace, but things that happen to ordinary people around the province."

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