



HSA endorses Coalition to Build a Better BC

March 16, 2010

Highlights effects of health and social service cuts

This week, the Coalition to Build a Better BC announced that more than 25 groups have joined together to oppose provincial government funding cuts and to work on real solutions to build a better province. HSA is among the members of the Coalition, which includes groups from the arts community, first nations, health care, community services, organized labour, post-secondary students, youth, environmental and faith groups.

In addition to ongoing staff shortages and commensurate workload, HSA members across the province have been calling attention to cuts to staff and services being implemented by the provincial government, through various health authorities.

HSA President Reid Johnson has repeatedly called for the government to re-examine priorities, pointing out that the cuts are short-sighted and will cost the province more in the long run.

Similar cuts have been occurring throughout various other sectors and communities, giving rise to a growing movement of concerned citizens.

-Cutting intensive therapy programs for children with autism is not the solution. Neither is cutting funding for the coordinating and training offices for infant development, Aboriginal infant development, supported child development, and Aboriginal child development," Johnson said.

-The province must stop cutting services for our most vulnerable: children, seniors, and those living with mental illnesses ... both in health and in community social services," he said.

-For example, in recent weeks, the province cut the only drug and alcohol withdrawal program in the Fraser Valley ... one which had a months-long waiting list. In the same region, many hospital-based social workers were displaced," he said. -As if that hadnt been enough, they also eliminated all spiritual care services in the Fraser Health Authority."

-They have closed an entire, much-needed psychiatric ward in Victoria. Theyve cut 10,000 MRI scans in the Vancouver area alone, delaying thousands of surgeries ... and with every delay, the surgery often becomes more complex, increasing costs both to the health system and in human suffering for the patient," he added.

-Our union has joined the Coalition to Build a Better BC because our members want to send a strong message to health authorities and to the provincial government," Johnson said.

A list of recent cuts to health and community social services across BC is [available on HSA's website](#). Look for news and information on upcoming Coalition events.

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