

news release

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HSA speaks out on government's broken promise to protect health care services

The Health Sciences Association of BC, the union that represents more 15,000 health science professionals who deliver the diagnostic, clinical and rehabilitation services in BC's hospitals and communities, is sounding the alarm about the provincial government's broken promise to protect health care services.

In an intensive province-wide radio campaign, HSA blows the whistle on the cuts to health services – including the reduction of more than 10,000 MRI scans in the Vancouver area alone.

“Before the election, the Liberal government promised there would be no cuts to health care despite BC's failing economy,” HSA President Reid Johnson said. “But here we are, just six months after that election, and we're already seeing devastating cuts to services,” he said.

On July 15, new Health Minister Kevin Falcon instructed BC's health authorities to cut \$360 million from their budgets. The result has been cuts to programs and services – and Johnson predicts the cutting has only just begun.

“It's clear that the impact on patients is severe. Seniors, the mentally ill, and those with addictions issues are hardest hit, but with dramatic MRI reductions and some 10,000 elective surgeries cancelled, everyone will feel the impact,” he said.

Johnson said the cuts appear to sacrifice long-term cost control in favour of temporary, short-term gains, undermining government claims to fiscal responsibility.

“Just because you aren't diagnosed, doesn't mean you're not sick. The longer it takes to get a diagnosis, chances are you will be sicker and require more complex and expensive treatment and rehabilitation. The success of our health care system relies on diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation services and the highly skilled health science professionals who deliver them,” Johnson said.

“HSA members care for patients every day. Our members take their commitment to protecting quality health care seriously. We're blowing the whistle on the government's claim that they are protecting health care services,” Johnson said.

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