

BULLETIN

HSA welcomes Fraser Health Authority decision to drop privatized physiotherapy plan

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Last November, rehabilitation therapists in the Fraser Health Authority were alarmed by the health authority's announced plans to "partner" with private vendors to provide post-surgical physiotherapy.

However, the FHA has recently abandoned those plans.

HSA President Reid Johnson says the health authority is making the right decision. "Currently, the FHA performs between 2,400 and 2,800 arthroplasty surgeries each year, including hip and knee replacements," he said. "The health authority's plans included various alarming elements, including diverting patients covered by extended health plans to obtain private rehabilitation therapy," he said.

When the union learned of the "request for expressions of interest" issued by the health authority to various for-profit rehabilitation service corporations, HSA was immediately concerned.

"The union questioned various aspects of the process, including whether excluding service provision to patients based on their ability to pay violates the Canada Health Act," he said. "Our members who work in rehabilitation therapy were concerned about the potential impact to patients of such a partnership with for-profit rehab service providers," he said.

"HSA will continue to emphasize that publicly provided rehabilitation services remains by far the most rational, cost-effective model. Ultimately, publicly provided rehab delivers the best results for post-surgical patients. That should be the ultimate measure," Johnson said.

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