

BULLETIN

As health care and other public services continue to suffer, Liberal government focuses on tax breaks, says HSA president Reid Johnson of today's budget release

February 21, 2012

HSA President Reid Johnson, in Victoria today for the unveiling of the 2012 provincial budget, said the Liberal government's budget plan has failed to address the needs of British Columbians.

-Instead of trying to kick-start the province's economy with tax credits for a few wealthy first-time homebuyers and promises of less red tape for business, the BC government should have used Budget Day 2012 to come up with real solutions to growing challenges British Columbians face in their everyday lives," Johnson said.

In the budget delivered today by Finance Minister Kevin Falcon, the delivery of quality health care to British Columbians is characterized as a "risk to the fiscal plan." The government also boasts that the province spends the second lowest per capita on health care of any province in Canada.

-It's no secret that this government's approach to health care spending has led to a continuing and growing crisis in the delivery of quality patient care," he said.

-In the health science professions, for example, we continue to see increasing challenges in the recruitment and retention of highly skilled members of the modern health care team. Those health care professionals are absolutely committed to quality care for patients, but without a commitment from government to make BC an attractive place to work, the challenges will continue to grow," he said.

Johnson pointed to the recent announcement of wage rollbacks of up to 14 per cent for BC's hospital pharmacists as an example of a government approach to the delivery of health care that will hurt BC patients. With worldwide demand for highly skilled clinical pharmacists, the wage rollback is expected to precipitate an exodus of pharmacists from BC hospitals, who have options to work in retail settings and other provinces.

Health Sciences Association of BC is the union that represents 17,000 health science professionals who deliver the modern health care services British Columbians depend on for their good health.

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