

# news release

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## **2010 should be a year to showcase health care in British Columbia, not cut the service patients depend on**

Taking a tough stand on health care budgets will hurt British Columbia at a time it wants to shine, says Reid Johnson, president of the Health Sciences Association, the union that represents 16,000 health science professionals who provide the diagnostic, clinical, and rehabilitation services British Columbians count on for your good health.

Just last week, Health Minister Kevin Falcon was singing the praises of the fast-tracked breast cancer diagnosis clinics in the Lower Mainland as a key to early diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer.

But, thanks to Falcon's edict to health authorities released today, health authorities across the province are being forced to plan for dramatic reductions in service – including diagnostic services like lab, x-ray, MRI, ultrasound, CT and nuclear medicine.

“Early diagnosis is a key to prevention. If health authorities cut their diagnostic budgets by as much as one-third, as has been suggested, there will be major repercussions to the health of British Columbians.

“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,” Johnson said.

Johnson called on Falcon and the health authorities to meet with the unions that represent health care workers as soon as possible to consult on alternative approaches to meeting tight budgets, without compromising the health of British Columbians.