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Editor  
Northern News Services Ltd  
BY EMAIL: [editorial@nnsi.com](mailto:editorial@nnsi.com)

**Letter to the Editor: Privatization of Stanton Hospital Facilities Management Services**

Dear Editor:

Last week, a Senior GNWT Labour Relations Officer advised the Union of Northern Workers that Facilities Maintenance Workers at Stanton Territorial Hospital will face lay off. The Stanton Territorial Health Authority plans to replace these workers with contracted-out services. The lay-offs could come as early as June 2015.

At the Hospital Authority's Annual General Meeting October 7 union members and Leadership asked questions and sought facts on this privatization initiative and lay-offs. Questions to the Health and Social Services Minister Glen Abernethy and Stanton CEO Brenda Fitzgerald produced a confusing array of answers on when lay-offs would take place. Facilities management workers who met with hospital management earlier in the week were told the lay-offs could come as early as August 2015.

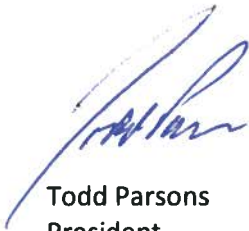
The lay-offs are the latest in a management campaign of health care privatization. Food services and housekeeping have already been contracted out. Since housekeeping and food service were out-sourced, complaints of bad food and poor cleanliness have mounted.

This privatization doesn't just hurt the workers. It will hurt the quality of health care Stanton Hospital provides to citizens across the NWT and western Nunavut. Stanton hospital will lose decades of experience and knowledge on that building that can't be replaced. Corporations are focused on profit and we believe there is no room for profit in publicly delivered healthcare system.

Facilities management at the hospital is an important part of our public healthcare system. With no facilities workers on-site building corners will be cut, and costs will become more important than safety. Presently, Stanton is accountable to the public. When privatized it will be accountable to shareholders. Stanton and the GNWT will lose control of staffing—that contradicts the GNWT human resource strategy of northern hire and good jobs in a strong economy.

The Union of Northern Workers will fight these lay-offs, to defend its Members, and prevent the further deterioration of health care for all NWT citizens. Food service and housekeeping are gone, and maintenance is on the block. What's next? Laboratory services, X-ray and imaging, nursing?

Health care is not a for-profit enterprise and the health of the public is not for sale. The Union of Northern Workers will fight this and any future attempts at hospital services privatization. Everyone who depends on quality health care—that's all of us—should tell their MLA to put an end to health care privatization.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Todd Parsons', written in a cursive style.

Todd Parsons  
President  
Union of Northern Workers