

Health Sciences Association of Saskatchewan

News Release

For immediate release

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Plan endangers lives – health professionals say

The Union which represents over 3,000 health care professionals in Saskatchewan has issued a strong condemnation of the essential services proposals they have received under the Sask Party Government's Essential Services Legislation.

The Health Sciences Association of Saskatchewan today labeled the employers' essential services proposals "substantially flawed and likely to jeopardize lives if implemented by the Wall administration during an industrial relations dispute."

HSAS is particularly concerned about the "draft proposals for essential services agreements" containing obvious gaps and gaffs, such as ranking some health care professionals as relatively non-essential, when these are professional staff who deal with clients in crisis. In their efforts to make it appear that they have not designated too great a number of health care professionals as "essential", Government's plan will place lives at risk.

In some health regions the Government's plan would see large numbers of emergency medical technicians designated as "on call" when the ambulance services are already understaffed with wait times of over an hour.

Some essential services planning missed certain employees entirely. They aren't even mentioned in the government planning. The scheme is badly flawed and we want no part of it, HSAS says in a news release.

The health care system is already in crisis and the Government wants to further erode its capacity by imposing an ill-thought out set of essential services agreements that make health care unsafe and downright dangerous.

"We are simply not participating in any badly conceived scheme which jeopardizes patient safety", said HSAS President Chris Driol. "This is dangerous to the health and wellbeing of our fellow citizens and we want no part of it", Driol said.

"There are better options out there, such as focusing on settling a Collective Agreement which will address the human resource issues necessary to provide a high quality of professional health care provision for the residents of Saskatchewan. This makes far better sense than jeopardizing the integrity of our Medicare system and risking the lives and health of Saskatchewan people", Driol concluded.

For more information contact Chris Driol at 955-3399