



ONTARIO COUNCIL OF HOSPITAL UNIONS

**For release: 6:00 a.m. May 5, 2010**

**Staff at Peterborough Regional Health Centre plan a major campaign to protect services from Liberal budget cuts**

Peterborough Ontario...Union members attended an emergency meeting last night to discuss how to respond to the Peer Review which has called for 71 bed cuts, 151 full-time equivalent staff cuts and the closure of many clinics and other services at Peterborough Regional Health Centre.

CUPE Local 1943 President Karen Ward commented after the meeting “ staff at the hospital are very upset that vital services could be lost and they committed to fight these cuts. We adopted an action plan: door to door literature drops, a lawn sign campaign, a picket of Liberal MPP Jeff Leal’s office on May 11, a rally at the hospital, a public meeting and a major demonstration. We will be working with the Peterborough Health Coalition, community and seniors’ organizations and other unions. “

Karen Ward also commented “ the lawn signs will say ‘**Jeff Leal: Defend Peterborough Regional Health Centre**’. In other communities, Liberal MPP’s defended their hospitals and brought back an extra \$80,000,000 to cover deficits. Far from getting help to cover our hospital’s deficit, Mr. Leal suggested the Peer Review, which recommended our hospital lose 1/6 of its beds and many of its clinics and staff. He has done Peterborough an enormous injury.”

Michael Hurley, president of OCHU commented “the provincial government receives a 6% increase in healthcare funding from the federal government in 2010. But they are passing on just 1.5% to Peterborough Regional Hospital. Hence the need for budget cutting masquerading as a scientific study. We are asking the Peer Review to release details of the 21 hospitals it compared PRH against to reach its conclusions. This information is not included in the report. The Harris government’s Hospital Restructuring Commission disclosed much more information to the public when they recommended the merger of St. Joseph’s Hospital and Peterborough Civic. ”

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