

# Advocate

Official news magazine of the BC Federation of Retired Union Members (BC FORUM)

Vol. 28 No. 3., Fall 2025

## Flight attendants win their fight to get paid



## SENIORS ADVOCATE'S REPORT

## Truth and Reconciliation: Will Canada ever be ready?

## LABOUR DAY HIGHLIGHTS

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## Advocate

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## THE ADVOCATE

# In this edition

Summer is over, and we are heading back to school, work, and our regular activities. It is a time to celebrate labour, support children and parents to thrive, and fight for a fair wage. But, this is also a time to reflect on Truth and Reconciliation, and whether we still have work to do before we can truly engage in the necessary process of repair. As always, we hope this edition of the Advocate highlights the moments to be proud of, but also offers food for thought, as we strive for better, and to do better.

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We respectfully acknowledge that the BC FORUM office is located on unceded lands of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), səliłwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Nations.

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# Wanted: A fair wage for workers

By Sam Wiese, BC FORUM President

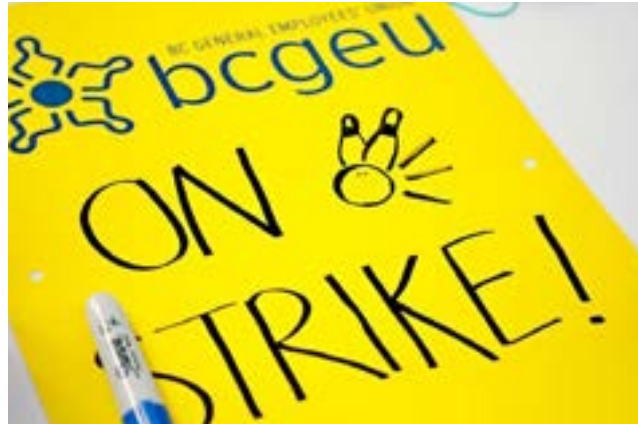
**Y**es, I am still here. While I indicated that I would not be offering for another term as the BC FORUM president, we're still within this term. And... after much review, I have determined that I will stand for a third term. Should it be the will of the Executive Board, you're stuck with me for a bit longer.

Labour Day. What a fantastic day it was to celebrate all that organized labour has provided. We may not have photos from every region of the province to present in this edition, but rest assured, your BC FORUM directors and regional representatives were out making every celebration one of solidarity, community effort and good old fashioned fun. Thank you to everyone who celebrated the gains we have made through collective purpose and action.

In respect to collective purpose, we fought long and hard for national pharmacare to become a reality in Canada, and not even a year in we are seeing a stall in its implementation. David Legree, in a September 2nd article in the online news journal iPolitics, provided the following pieces of information ([www.ipolitics.ca/2025/09/02/feds-open-to-new-pharmacare-deals-depending-on-success-of-current-agreements-health-minister/](http://www.ipolitics.ca/2025/09/02/feds-open-to-new-pharmacare-deals-depending-on-success-of-current-agreements-health-minister/)):

'Since pharmacare legislation was passed last year, as part of Justin Trudeau's supply-and-confidence agreement with the NDP, funding deals have been negotiated with P.E.I., B.C., Manitoba and Yukon — but Carney has so far been non-committal about expanding the program to other jurisdictions( ... ).

'Health Minister Marjorie Michel said Ottawa is not currently engaging in discussions with other provinces, but that the government is broadly



Courtesy of the BCGEU.

supportive of expanding pharmacare coverage.

"Nobody can be against pharmacare, but... we are in a very special context right now," said Michel, referencing the economic uncertainty brought on by U.S. President Donald Trump's trade war against Canada. "Everything is still on the table, and we are tracking those [agreements] that have already been done to see how it works.

"Then, we'll see for the rest."

What clearer evidence is there that it is essential we remain vigilant in our fight to ensure a truly national pharmacare system comes to fruition?

Action is exactly what public sector members of the BCGEU and the PEA have taken to bring working conditions and their bargaining demands to the attention of the public, to get the employer back to the table to have a genuine discussion about needs.

Like most of you I voted for David Eby because I believed he understood the struggles of working people and would stand up for us as a labour-friendly premier. That's why it's frustrating to see thousands of workers walking picket lines just to secure a fair wage that keeps up with the rising cost of living. They're not asking for anything extravagant — just the respect of a contract that recognizes the essen-

tial work they do every day and the costs they incur to live and raise their families.

Instead, we're being told the government can't afford to do better, even while other provinces are offering more to their public servants. I expected better from this government, one that built its reputation on supporting workers. If Premier Eby truly values the people who keep this province running, he needs to get back to the bargaining table with a serious offer that shows he hasn't forgotten the purported values that got him in office.

Now that I've segued into the political sphere, you know I must comment on the state of the "tariff war" with our southern neighbour.

At the onset Trump's flagrant—and recently determined unconstitutional—use of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) to impose tariffs managed to open our eyes to the somewhat nonsensical interprovincial trade barriers in place here in Canada. How can we be taken seriously on the world goods and services trading platform when we restrict the trade of goods and services within our own borders?

Thankfully, positive steps are taking place. Just a few weeks ago B.C. Premier David Eby and Manitoba Premier Wab Kinew forged a series of interprovincial trade agreements to boost economic collaboration and reducing barriers between our provinces. And maybe Carney's bid to rollback the counter tariffs we imposed will help further discussions.

As always, I hope you find this edition of The Advocate informative, interesting and thought provoking. If you have anything to share for upcoming editions email us: [bcforum@bcfed.ca](mailto:bcforum@bcfed.ca).



# Reclaiming our time: How 10,000+ flight attendants exposed our industry's unpaid secret

By Henly Larden, VP, CUPE 4094

Last month, 10,000+ Air Canada flight attendants made history. As interim president of Vancouver-based CUPE Local 4094, I watched a predominantly female workforce do what nobody thought we had the audacity to do. For three days, we withdrew our labour completely, grounding a national airline. We stood up to a powerful corporation, and when the federal government unjustly interceded, we defied a back-to-work order and stayed on the picket lines, fortified by the support of our Component, national union and the roaring solidarity of the entire labour movement.

Our core issue was the industry's unknown reality: the systemic expectation of unpaid labour. The time spent in pre-flight briefings, on critical safety checks, during boarding, through lengthy delays and in emergencies—all done off the clock and unpaid. This unpaid and amassed time quietly subsidizing the airline's profits, which had reached \$2.2 billion in the last years alone, with \$1.5 billion in stock buybacks and the executive salaries in the tens of millions.

Flight attendants from all backgrounds and every region of the country were united under this banner. We were emerging from a historical ten-year contract that had eroded our wages to a fraction of their former purchasing power. With 58% of members with less than ten years of seniority—many earning a shocking \$1,952 a month—we knew something had to change.

These junior colleagues, even with Air Canada's proposed 8% wage increase, would still earn less than the federal minimum wage and far below what is needed to live in Canada's



Top: Henly Larden. Bottom: striking members of CUPE 4094 at YVR. All photos copyright and use by kind permission of Henly Larden and CUPE Local 4094.



major cities. Many of us work full-time and still qualify for income support, a damning indictment of the poverty wages we've been expected to accept.

Our slogan, #UnpaidWorkWontFly, cut to the heart of this injustice. And the overwhelming response—88% of Canadians supporting our fight—told

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us we had tapped into a national truth. By giving a name to the quiet exploitation happening in our industry, people saw their own struggle reflected in ours. Flight attendants became the mirror held up to the quiet, unpaid overtime of the salaried employee, the extra care provided by medical professionals off the clock, the unpaid administrative labour that holds so many sectors together, amongst so many others doing as much and more. I believe most Canadians supported our fight because we gave voice to a silent subsidy fueling corporate profits across our economy and throughout the country.

Encapsulated as a historical moment in time, we held an extraordinary amount of collective power. Our stand demonstrated a simple but transformative idea: when workers join ranks in solidarity and refuse to give their time for free, they reclaim their power.

I truly believe that the concept of unpaid work exposes a pressure point available to almost every worker. The widespread potential of a tactic like “work-to-rule”—where workers collectively and precisely do only what they are paid for, and nothing more—is a formidable, and legal, leverage point that we can, and collectively should, use as necessary.

Our fight, the plight of unpaid work, is far from over. While a tentative agreement is currently on the table at the time of writing, the fundamental issue of unpaid work persists. But for three days in August, we, a group of trained safety professionals, came together and showed what is possible and the strength of collective solidarity, which can ground a giant. While we look back in reflection, we remain with the resolve that this hope, the spark we ignited spreads across the labour movement, empowering every worker to ask themselves this: when does it become time to acknowledge that living to work is no more, that we, labour, must harness our collective strength and return to working to live and that our time must be paid.

# A new chapter for the Health Sciences Association of BC

By Alec Regino, Communications Officer, HSA

Last April, Health Sciences Association of BC (HSA) members made history by electing Sarah Kooner as the union’s new president following its first-ever one-person, one-vote election.

Kooner is the first South Asian woman to lead the HSA. An infant and child development consultant at the Fraser Valley Child Development Centre in Abbotsford, Sarah has been a part of the union since 2018.

“It’s an incredible honour to serve the over 23,000 members in our union who care so deeply about the work that they do and the people that they serve,” she says.

Sarah began her career supporting children and families in Abbotsford, delivering vital early intervention services that help kids grow up happy and healthy. Growing up in a region with a significant South Asian population, she’s especially attuned to the barriers families face when services don’t reflect their language or culture and has always worked to help bridge that gap.

Her journey into the labour movement began in 2018, when she attended an orientation with the lead steward at her worksite. She recognized early on how advocating for better workplace conditions allowed health care professionals such as herself to provide the health care British Columbians need, when they need it.

“When you improve working conditions, prevent burnout, and compensate people adequately, you improve patient care. It’s as simple as that,” Sarah says. “There is a powerful connection between our rights as workers and the care our communities receive.”



Sarah Kooner, photo by kind permission of HSA

From there, she quickly got deeply involved in HSA, having served as a steward, lead steward, then regional director of Fraser Valley and Surrey. Her approach throughout has been defined by listening first, acting collaboratively, and building stronger, two-way relationships between members and their union.

Sarah has also been drawn to advocacy outside of the workplace. She ran as the BC NDP candidate for Abbotsford South in the 2024 provincial election, earning a strong share of the vote in a traditionally conservative riding.

Now, as HSA president, she’s focused on expanding how members connect with HSA. “It’s clear to me that there’s so much energy and engagement in the union right now,” she says. “These last few years have opened up a lot of eyes to the challenges health care workers face and we need to respond by making our members voices heard.”

Outside of work, Sarah plays volleyball, races cars, and spends time with her corgi, Holly.



## Reconciliation may have been too ambitious a goal

By Eden Fineday, Author and Publisher, IndigiNews

In 2008, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission launched, traveling across the country collecting stories from survivors of Canada's residential school system. Its findings were published in a multi volume Final Report in 2015. The stories were shocking and devastating. Around this time, a sea change began in Canadian culture—non-Indigenous citizens were learning about the horrors of the residential school system for the first time.

Suddenly, the word “reconciliation” was on everyone's tongue, and Indigenous Peoples felt, for the first time ever, a glimmer of hope, a faint expectation of possible change in the country. CBC stopped using the word, “Aboriginal” and started using the term “Indigenous.”

We rode that wave of hope for 10 years, but in the end, it did not carry us very far. Looking back, we have to come to the painful but not surprising conclusion the country was not ready for reconciliation. Did the Calls To Action get implemented? Of the 94 calls to action, only 11 have been completed. What about the everyday lives of Indigenous peoples? Are the rates homelessness any better for the Peoples of this land? No. Do all reserves have access to clean drinking water? No. Is the incarceration rate for Indigenous Peoples any lower? No.

Turns out, that in those 10 years, nothing really substantial changed. Gerald Stanley got away with shooting a young Indigenous man in the head, from behind, because property is more valuable than the life of an Indian.



Joyce Echaquan died while nurses laughed and called her racial slurs. The feel good “vibes” of Justin Trudeau have given way to Carney's “quickly tear out everything we possibly can from the land” ethos. Indigenous Peoples? We seem to have been an afterthought in his plan to open up Canada for business.

We've all learned a lot in those 10 years, but the biggest lesson is this: Power does not cede itself. Men don't want to give up power to women. Governments don't want to share power with the Indigenous Peoples whose land they govern. Violence against women, especially Indigenous women, continues.

So what can we do?

I personally have given up on reconciliation. I think it was a lofty idea, but one that, in the end, has proven impossible to implement. Canada cannot be changed from the top down. Imposed cultural change, it turns out, is difficult to weave into the fabric of a society, especially one that was founded on the subjugation of Indigenous Peoples and the Earth.

I think it's time to admit we failed, and let that noble idea go.

Instead, let's focus on waking up. Let's take a good look at ourselves and remember that there can be no reconciliation without truth. Right now, Canadians are still denying the truth of First Nations people. We live in separate parts of town, governed by an apartheid system called the Indian Act. Our grandmothers and grandfathers were forced into barbaric institutions as children, where they were tortured and abused with a sadism that is difficult to fathom today.

Let us change ourselves, using truth. Let us reflect on their own position in Canadian society and examine our privileges. Let us prioritize self-awareness over fear, and over the instinct to hoard wealth.

Instead, I invite you to live like we once did. Notice the life all around you – the beautiful tree nearby, how the wind on the back of the neck is like a blessing, like love. Reflect on how lucky you are for the small hand in yours. Be grateful for every step you take on the Earth.

This is how we will awaken – by allowing softness into our lives. In this way we will grow and become better

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## TRUTH & RECONCILIATION

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humans. We will learn how to mature emotionally and in turn will become better leaders for our communities, better neighbours. Perhaps we will even see each other—really see each other—for the first time.

We cannot force feed “reconciliation” to Canada. We tried that, and it all came back up. In fact, it came back up so violently that it created a backlash. There’s even an organisation now dedicated to denying the realities of residential schools. The rhetoric is cloaked—much like those who deny the horrors of the holocaust—in the verbiage of ‘research.’

Notice that, too.

In hindsight, reconciliation might have been too ambitious for Canada. We weren’t ready for it. And without awareness, this country may never be.

Let’s wake up together.

*Eden Fineday is a Cree woman from Sweetgrass First Nation in Treaty 6 territory, the publisher of IndigiNews and a co-founder of the Indigenous Media Association of Canada. Through her writings and music, Eden openly shares insight and perspective on human and Indigenous*

*issues. With National Truth & Reconciliation Day coming up we wanted to share her thoughts on reconciliation to reinforce September 30th is not a holiday, but the gift of time for reflection. Thanks to Eden, The Advocate is privileged to be able to feature the work of Eden and IndigiNews.*



News from a decolonized lens

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## LABOUR DAY

# Highlights from Labour Day

Friends, and current, and future BC FORUM members, stop by the BC FORUM table at the Vancouver District Labour and New West District Labour Council event in Burnaby to say hello and get updated on campaigns we're working on.

Below: BC FORUM members Wayne and Brenda.

Right: Jenny Kwan-MP Vancouver East and Sam enjoying a friendly chat.

Top far right: Nina from HEU and Neil from BC Insulators Union.

Middle far right: Jennifer, PSAC BC Regional Council

Bottom far right: Jamey Mills from PSAC and Peter Julian help Sam display a benefit of becoming a BC FORUM member

Bottom left: Peter Julian, former MP for Bby-New West-Mallaird-ville and his steadfast assistant Doris Mah promote the summer edition of The Advocate.



Labour Day events around the province are not just for organized labour. Labour Day celebrates everybody, with a focus on family participation, as can be seen by the activities.

Top right: Serena joins with [mrspicasso.ca](http://mrspicasso.ca) to transform little faces into magical beings.

Middle right: Stephen, Erin and Coraline enjoy another fantastic Labour Day picnic compliments of the NWDLC AND VDLC.

Below: right: Mr.Bubbles makes balloon figures.



Above: Chris Johns staffs the BC FORUM tent at the East Kootenay District Labour Council's Labour Day event in Cranbrook.

Events outside the Lower Mainland were also proudly attended by BC FORUM regional representatives and members. The East Kootenay District Labour Council's event in Cranbrook made it into the paper, and features the BC FORUM's own Chris Johns! You can find it online at [www.cranbrooktownsman.com/e-editions](http://www.cranbrooktownsman.com/e-editions) - look for September 04, 2025, Kootenay News.





## CUPW negotiations: Hard to predict, lots at stake.

Marion Pollack, BC FORUM Director, CUPW

**A**s a retired postal worker and former Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) activist, I am regularly asked what is going on with the union's efforts to gain new collective agreements for its Urban Operations and Rural and Suburban Mail Carriers bargaining units. The answer is ever changing. What is occurring today may dramatically change the next day.

However, even though it is difficult to predict or outline what is occurring in bargaining the reality is that so much is at stake—not only for postal workers, but also for both active and retired trade unionists.

### Free collective bargaining is at stake

CUPW members have been ordered back to work on numerous occasions over the past decades. This not only undermines free collective bargaining; if the employer knows that the government will step in to end strikes then they don't have to bargain in good faith.

For retirees this means a possible erosion of the gains we worked our entire lives for.

More recently, rather than relying on legislation, the federal government has resorted to using provisions of the Canada Labour Code to end strikes.

The Federal Minister of Jobs ordered a vote on Canada Post's final offer. This action ignored basic principles of fairness and justice, and CUPW members knew this. They turned down this so-called final offer by more than 70%.

### It's about decent jobs

CUPW is bargaining for decent jobs that provide guaranteed hours and access to benefits and pensions. This



is important for a strong economy and to prevent the gigification of our workforce.

### It's about the future of our postal service

CUPW wants improved and expanded postal services. The Union wants to maintain door to door delivery for those people who currently have it.

### Postal service is in danger

Several months ago the federal government announced a regular mandate review into the future of postal services. This has the potential of:

- resulting in the privatization of our public postal services
- reducing or stopping door to door delivery
- closing post offices in rural areas
- and much more

In the coming months, CUPW will be asking both BC FORUM and BC FORUM members to help keep Canada Post strong and public.

# Congress of Union Retirees of Canada are moving forward

By Michael MacIsaac, CURC President



Charlie Angus with members at CURC's 15th Convention; photo by kind permission of Arnie De Vaan

**T**he Congress of Union Retirees of Canada (CURC) held a well-attended convention in June. The 15th CURC Constitutional Convention brought together leaders and affiliates from across the country to discuss how to make life better for union retirees and seniors.

The main theme was “Union Retirees Moving Forward,” focusing on growing the retiree movement and improving how the organization supports retired workers and their families. The delegates talked about new ways to strengthen their voice and ensure that the concerns of seniors are heard at all levels of government.

A significant part of the convention was making changes to the organization's constitution. These changes will give more power to affiliate groups and retiree organizations, so they can have a bigger say in CURC's decisions. They also added a new position for a representative of Indigenous Peoples, making the organization more diverse and inclusive. These updates will help

ensure everyone's voice is heard and that the organization better reflects the diversity of its members.

Throughout the convention, many excellent speakers shared their ideas and expertise. Charlie Angus captivated the audience with his “Elbows Up – Resistance Tour” message. Others included Bea Bruske, President of the Canadian Labour Congress, who discussed the challenges faced by the labour movement. Healthcare experts and advocates on the economy and seniors' rights also shared valuable insights. Their presentations inspired delegates and provided helpful information on issues like healthcare, pensions, affordability, and social justice.

The delegates discussed many important issues. They want to protect Canada's sovereignty, safeguard retirement incomes, improve healthcare, and ensure seniors can enjoy a good quality of life. They are committed to working hard to increase Old Age Security benefits and protect pension plans from being cut.

The convention also emphasized the importance of strong, public healthcare. They want healthcare services to stay accessible and publicly funded for everyone. They support programs that give seniors access to medicines, mental health services, and long-term care. They are calling on the government to prevent privatization and for-profit companies from taking over healthcare, so that quality care remains available to all seniors.

Many seniors face rising rent and housing costs. The delegates are dedicated to fighting homelessness and helping seniors find safe, affordable homes. They want the government to invest more money in housing programs and support services so that everyone can live with dignity and security.

The convention also supported international efforts to protect the rights of older persons. They back the idea of creating a UN Convention that will set standards for respecting and treating seniors fairly, worldwide. They want Canada to lead by example in protecting seniors' rights both at home and across the globe.

Looking ahead, CURC plans to work more closely with unions and retiree groups so everyone's voice can be heard. They also aim to promote educational programs, like pre-retirement courses, to help future retirees prepare for a happy, secure life after work.

The 15th CURC Convention proved that union retirees are determined to move forward with hope and strength. They are working hard to protect their rights, improve healthcare, and promote fairness for all seniors. With these plans, CURC is committed to making Canada a better place for union retirees and seniors now and in the future.



# Report by the Seniors Advocate of BC

By Sam Wiese, President, BC FORUM

**B**C FORUM is grateful for all the work the Office of the Seniors Advocate has put into the July 29, 2025 report *From Shortfall to Crisis: Growing Demand for Long-Term Care Beds in B.C.* This is a synopsis of salient points in the report, which also provides feedback from caregivers and delves into the issues and impact on the health care system, caregivers, seniors requiring care, their families and communities. Well worth the read, the full report is available on the Seniors Advocate website: [www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca/osa-reports/from-shortfall-to-crisis-growing-demand-for-long-term-care-beds-in-b-c/](http://www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca/osa-reports/from-shortfall-to-crisis-growing-demand-for-long-term-care-beds-in-b-c/).

## Waitlists

Over the past ten years, the waitlist for long-term care in B.C. has ballooned. Between 2016 and 2025, the number of people waiting to be admitted to long-term care rose from 2,381 to 7,212, an increase of 200%. The provincial average wait time has grown by 98% over the past eight years, from 146 days in 2018, the first year data was collected, to 290 days in 2025.

There is no current benchmark for how long a person requiring long-term care should reasonably be expected to wait for placement. Other health services, like surgeries, have stated benchmarks, but so far, no jurisdiction in Canada has set one for long-term care.

## Numbers waiting

The number of people on the waitlist has grown significantly over the past ten years. Between 2016 and 2025, the number of people waiting to be admitted to long-term care rose from 2,381 to 7,212, an increase of 200%.

## Why increased wait times?

The population aged 65 to 74 in 2025 has grown 38% since 2015, while the population 75+ has grown 50%.

Since 2016, the number of publicly-subsidized long-term care homes primarily for seniors has increased by six facilities from 295 care homes to 301 in 2025, while the number of publicly-subsidized beds increased 8%, from 26,744 to 28,840 beds.

## Long-Term care alternatives

The provincial home support program provides assistance to seniors with activities of daily living.... Data indicate that approximately half of home support clients have functional and cognitive needs comparable to people living in long-term care. This suggests adequate, available and affordable home support services may serve as an effective alternative or delay the needs for long-term care placement and is a more efficient use of public funds.

The cost barriers of home support for low to moderate income seniors has been subject of reports and recommendations to government from the OSA over the past several years. No action has been taken by government.

## Six recommendations

1. Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the Ministry of Infrastructure, extend and update the Long-Term Care Bed Expansion Plan to increase the supply of new long-term care beds with funding commitments beyond 2030/31 to increase capacity, meet growing demand and reduce wait times.
2. The Ministry of Health improve access to community-based supports to help seniors remain at home longer and reduce the demand for long-term care by eliminating the financial barrier to accessing the provincial home support program; increasing the availability of adult day programs; and increasing the availability of respite care.



Dan Levitt, BC Seniors Advocate. Courtesy of the Office of the Seniors Advocate

3. The Ministry of Health strengthen the navigation of the long-term care system by establishing a consistent and transparent process, and expand access to essential supports for seniors and families waiting for publicly-subsidized long-term care. Improving supports for seniors and their families should include eliminating the home support assessed client contribution cost for people waiting for long-term care.
4. The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the ministries of Housing and Infrastructure, develop a comprehensive plan to expand access to a broader range of publicly-subsidized seniors' housing options.
5. The Ministry of Health must act with urgency to conduct a comprehensive review of health authority waitlist management practices and develop wait time targets.
6. The Ministry of Health develop a detailed action plan outlining how it will address the findings and recommendations of this report, including clear timelines and deliverables with annual updates. This plan must be submitted to the BC Seniors Advocate by October 1, 2025, the International Day of Older Persons.

# From the Office of the Seniors Advocate

*The following are a few highlights from the recent newsletters. For full details search Seniors' Advocate – Government of British Columbia – newsletters. Included are provincial government news releases of interest to seniors. For complete media release content go to [news.gov.bc.ca/releases](https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases).*

## Tsunami preparedness

As we were reminded last month, B.C. is a seismically active province and many coastal communities can be at risk of tsunamis. Tsunamis are most often caused by huge undersea earthquakes that cause large waves. Read the Earthquake and Tsunami Preparedness Guide to learn what to do during and after a major earthquake and tsunami. For more information go to : Prepared BC: Earthquake and Tsunami Preparedness Guide.

## Emergency planning

The Province is funding local community projects throughout B.C. to improve planning for evacuation routes and public notifications to keep people safe and informed when emergencies occur.

## Protecting critical drugs

The Province has moved to protect supply of two more diabetes drugs. The Province is limiting sales of the drugs tirzepatide and dulaglutide to preserve the supply for people with diabetes who really need it.

## Transit improvements

People using handyDART services in Fort St. John will see improved and expanded travel options.

## Kamloops BC Cancer Centre

Construction has begun on a new BC Cancer centre in Kamloops that will provide people in the Thompson-Cariboo-Shuswap region with better access to cancer care closer to home.

## Protections for renters

More people will be able to stay in an affordable home as the Province ties the annual allowable rent increase to inflation at 2.3% in 2026, down from 3% in 2025.

## New housing targets

New housing targets of 38,930 homes, spread over several communities, housing supply is set to increase

(cont. on next page)



# Strong. Proud. United.

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HEU is the union of choice for B.C. health care workers.





(cont. from previous page)

over the next five years. More than 14,000 of these homes are below-market rentals.

## New long-term care home

Construction is underway on St. Vincent's Heather, a new long-term care home that will increase access to care for seniors in the Lower Mainland.

## Recent research

### Adapting after Alzheimer's disease diagnosis

Receiving a diagnosis of a major neurocognitive disorder due to Alzheimer's disease (AD) brings with it the need to adjust to a new life situation. People with AD seek to maintain emotionally positive goals in their current lives and use positive



experiences from the past to create continuity in their lives, with the aim of maintaining their quality of life

and gaining a sense of hope. For more information go to:

*The need to adapt after Alzheimer's disease diagnosis: Coping strategies used to maintain identity and quality of life - Simone Gamm, Deborah Ummel, Nancy Vasil, Sébastien Grenier, 2025 (Journal of Alzheimer's Disease)*

## Move more, age well

People who survive to age 65 years are expected to live another 20 years on average; however, life expectancy gains have not corresponded with "compression of morbidity," whereby extra years are largely lived in good health. Physical activity is a modifiable risk factor for more than 30 chronic conditions relevant to the older adult. Learn more at:

*Move more, age well: prescribing physical activity for older adults (Canadian Medical Association Journal)*



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## We need Pharmacare now

With the passing of Bill C-24 the Pharmacare Act, we thought our battle was won. No such luck, as Prime Minister Carney seems to have forgotten his promise to protect pharmacare and expand it to cover everyone in Canada. Funding for diabetes medication and contraceptives coverage may be one of the first casualties of Carney's proposed \$25 billion cutbacks to pay for a growing defence budget. BC FORUM is amongst several groups taking direct action to ensure universal pharmacare remains forefront on the Carney Liberal agenda. While we continue to lobby for a full national pharmacare program please take a few minutes to check out what's going on and support the actions of affiliates such as:

Pharmacare now – The Council of Canadians: [canadians.org/pharmacare-now/#action](https://canadians.org/pharmacare-now/#action).

Friends of Medicare: [friendsofmedicare.org/](https://friendsofmedicare.org/).

Canadian Health Coalition PharmacareAction: [bchealthcoalition.ca/canadian\\_health\\_coalition\\_pharmacareaction](https://bchealthcoalition.ca/canadian_health_coalition_pharmacareaction).

## Federal Minister for Seniors

Stephanie McLean, Secretary of State for Seniors, is maintaining use of Facebook as the means for relaying information. The page "Seniors in Canada" is hosted by Service Canada, not to be confused with the page "Seniors in Canada" (Community Group).

### Ways to save money on food

- Plan meals around sales.
- Cook in batches and freeze extras.
- Choose canned or frozen veggies.
- Shop at discount stores.

Find more helpful tips to eat healthy meals on a budget: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/.../healthy-eating-budget>.

### Saving for a child's education

RESPs are special savings accounts to help save for a child's education after high school, including trade schools, CEGEPs, colleges, universities, and apprenticeship programs.

Learn more at: [www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/education/education-savings.html](https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/education/education-savings.html).

### Help put a stop to fraud?

Red Flags to watch for:

- 1-Urgent or threatening language
- 2-Requests for sensitive language
- 3-Anything too good to be true
- 4-Unexpected e-mails
- 5-Information mismatches

The best way to fight fraud is to report any suspicious activity to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre (CAFC) as well as your local police.

Find more: visit CAFC at [antifraud-centre.ca/index-eng.htm](https://antifraud-centre.ca/index-eng.htm).

Common scams: check out [competition-bureau.canada.ca/en/fraud-and-scams](https://competition-bureau.canada.ca/en/fraud-and-scams).

## It's time to get serious about public service.

This is reprinted from the BCGEU's Fund the Frontlines campaign website at [publicworkers.bcgeu.ca](https://publicworkers.bcgeu.ca).

British Columbia is facing overlapping emergencies: housing, affordability, wildfires, mental health, and more. Meeting them requires a strong public service with the right balance of frontline staff and management.

Frontline workers are the backbone of public services. They fight fires, staff emergency lines, and care for our most vulnerable. But too many are struggling to stay in the jobs our communities depend on:

- 70% spend more than 30% of their income on housing
- 1 in 2 live paycheck to paycheck
- 1 in 5 work a second job to get by.
- Over 50% have considered leaving public service in the past 3 years.

Management plays an important role in supporting frontline workers. But since 2010, management positions have grown nearly twice as fast as frontline roles. That imbalance leaves communities waiting for services.

At the same time, government continues to spend millions on costly private contracts, even though public service workers can deliver services more efficiently and at a lower cost.

There is room to invest in public services and the people who provide them.

A fair deal for frontline workers is how we strengthen public services — and a flood of messages from B.C. voters can help make it happen.

**Will you send a message to your MLA today?**

Visit [publicworkers.bcgeu.ca](https://publicworkers.bcgeu.ca) to find out more.



## Renew your membership

## Encourage your friends to join!

## Many unions cover first year dues

A graphic with the words "GREAT" in white on a red background and "DEAL!" in white on a black background, both in a bold, sans-serif font. The text is arranged in a speech bubble-like shape pointing towards the bottom right.

## Extend the benefits of membership to your spouse

We are proud to extend this coverage to members' spouses at the low cost of \$5 per year. All you have to do is check the appropriate box when you apply or renew your membership. BC FORUM's AD&D coverage is valid until you reach age 86, the maximum age we were able to negotiate.



BC  
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**Membership:** ☐ Application ☐ Renewal ☐ New address

Single membership: ☐ \$20 - 1 year ☐ \$49 - 3 years  
With AD&D for spouse: ☐ \$25 - 1 year ☐ \$64 - 3 years  
☐ Cheque ☐ Visa ☐ MC Expiry  /  CVV\*   
Card number:

**Date of application:**           /        /               
    DAY                      MONTH                      YEAR

# A win for grandparents, families, and workers: CUPE BC's Seamless Childcare campaign

Karen Ranalletta, President, CUPE BC

For many retired union members, grandparenthood brings immense joy—and often, a return to childcare duties. When parents can't find affordable, reliable care, grandparents step up. We see you, we thank you, and we're fighting for a solution that supports your families and your values.

CUPE BC is leading the campaign for Seamless Childcare—a practical, transformative model to provide before- and after-school care within our public schools, delivered by qualified Education Assistants and Early Childhood Educators. This model is already a reality; successful pilot programs in districts like Chilliwack and Nanaimo-Ladysmith are already proving it works.

For grandparents, this means less pressure to fill the gaps. It means kids are cared for in a safe, familiar school environment by trusted staff they already know, with fewer stressful transitions throughout their day.

For our union values, it's a perfect fit. This model creates good, unionized jobs with benefits and pensions by providing more stable, full-time hours for the dedicated support staff who are the heart of our schools. It strengthens public education and rejects the patchwork of underfunded, private options.

Our vision is to expand this across B.C. We're calling on the provincial government to:

- Fund start-up costs for every school district.
- Make school-based childcare a core part of our public education system.



## seamless CHILDCARE NOW

[seamlesschildcarenow.ca](https://seamlesschildcarenow.ca)

This is about solidarity across generations. It's about ensuring today's working parents—your children—have

the support they need, and that your grandkids get the best possible start. It's about building a stronger, more affordable future for everyone, delivered by the public sector.

Join us in calling for a seamless system. Learn more and support this campaign at [seamlesschildcarenow.ca](https://seamlesschildcarenow.ca).

### New address? New e-mail address?

Please send your new address and e-mail address to BC FORUM. You can mail in the form on page 15, or you can reach us by telephone at 1.800.896.5678 (toll free) or 604.688.4565; or by email at [bcforum@bcfed.ca](mailto:bcforum@bcfed.ca).



Please check the expiry date on your label. Is your membership due for renewal?