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PRIVATISATION: THREATENING PAY EQUITY

If the provincial government wants to save money by privatizing health care services, it should not be at the expense of people holding traditionally female jobs, warns the NB Coalition for Pay Equity.

"The Graham government has promised pay equity legislation in the public sector", said Anne-Marie Gammon, Chair of the Coalition for Pay Equity. "How will it ensure pay equity while subcontracting health care services?"

A study showed that the privatization of health care support services in British Columbia immediately and completely eliminated previous pay equity gains (Griffin Cohen & Cohen, *A Return to Wage Discrimination*, 2004).

The Coalition stressed the high number of predominantly female jobs in the health care sector. When there is privatization and private businesses reduce wages in order to make profits, the people holding these jobs experience more pay discrimination rather than pay equity.

"Pay equity will have only been a short-lived illusion for the women and men holding predominantly female jobs" said Anne-Marie Gammon. "Yet, reducing wages in order to increase private profits does not translate into savings for taxpayers."

The Coalition urges the government to focus instead on eliminating discrimination by adopting pay equity legislation covering both the public and private sectors as soon as possible.

Pay equity is equal pay for work of equal value. It is about paying jobs traditionally or predominantly held by women at the same level as jobs that are traditionally or predominantly held by men and have the same value.

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