

# news

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BC HEALTH COALITION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Conversation on Health: British Columbians want better public health care, while the government plans more for-profit, private schemes**

As the provincial government prepares for the final sessions of its "Conversation on Health" this weekend in Vancouver, participants from 14 of the public forums held across the province during the past six months joined with the BC Health Coalition to deliver a clear message today.

They say that British Columbians attending the Conversation on Health overwhelmingly want better public health care and support proven innovations and solutions within public health care facilities.

"We're concerned that the provincial government is on the road to increasing for-profit, private health care, no matter what people have been saying through government's own consultation process," says BCHC co-chair Joyce Jones.

"We're concerned that-the Conversation may have been an elaborate \$10 million production in smoke and mirrors, designed to create the impression that the government is consulting British Columbians on the changes we want to the health care system. In fact, the government has already determined the future of health care in B.C."

At a news conference this morning, Conversation on Health participants from across the province spoke about their experiences in the process, including their perceptions and the observations shared about health care challenges in their own communities.

Jean Leahy with Save Our Northern Seniors said, "We are very concerned that no recommendations from the Conversation process will be taken to the government, and that our input around issues related to home support and long-term care beds for seniors in Fort St. John and area will be ignored."

Leahy will join other Conversation on Health participants at a rally for public health care tomorrow at 12:00 noon in Portal Park, on the northeastern corner of Thurlow and West Hastings in Vancouver.

The BC Health Coalition has been actively engaging individuals and organizations across the province in discussions about proven public innovations and solutions since the Conversation began in January.

“With the Conversation coming to an end, we have grave concerns that the focus of the government has not been to find ways to deliver better public health care, but instead to find ways to justify user fees and more for-profit health care delivery,” says Jones.

The BC Health Coalition is a broad-based network of organizations and individuals who support public health care.

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