

Bungled transition of staff

The staff changes the hospital said were needed to implement rethermalized food service has been a bungled process. More voluntary exits were issued than necessary, requiring the hospital to ask some workers to give back their exit agreements. The hospital is also recruiting new staff while providing financial incentives for others to leave. While the hospital claimed “retherm” food would require fewer staff and save money, it is looking less likely as the plan comes closer to implementation.

For the eleven staff that still have incentive packages to leave the hospital, they are not being given end dates for their employment, making it impossible for these workers to move on with their lives or to seek new employment.

OPSEU says its local leadership has been targeted for discipline by the hospital, that the employer has interfered with the service employees’ elected bargaining team, that the hospital has not worked with the union to establish policies around workplace violence and bullying despite a requirement to do so under Bill 168, and that it has repeatedly disrespected the elected leadership of employees at the hospital.

Remarkably, the hospital has simply chosen to deny that any of these problems exist.

Who is on the SBGHC Board?

Paul Davies (President & CEO): pdavies@sbghc.on.ca

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You can do something

Let’s take back our hospitals.

Tell the hospital that patients recover better with fresh local food, not reheated processed meals that have been trucked in from outside the community.

Ask your municipality to use their representatives on the board to start asking questions, including how poor staff morale is impacting the quality of services delivered by the hospital.

Demand that the community get back its voting rights to determine who should sit on the SBGHC board, not leave it up to a closed circle to reappoint their own friends and colleagues.

Demand that health records remain safely in the hospital.

Demand greater transparency from the hospital, including more open board meetings.

Demand that the health needs of the community come first.

This leaflet is produced and distributed by

Ontario Health Coalition

Friends of the Kincardine Hospital



*Grey Bruce
Labour Council*



OPSEU Ontario Public Service
Employees Union
SEFPO Syndicat des employés de la
fonction publique de l'Ontario

Do **you** know what’s really going on at our **local hospital?**



Secretive, top-heavy, top-down and unresponsive to the needs of the communities it serves, **South Bruce Grey Health Centre (SBGHC)** is in need of a wake up call now.

In a recent survey less than 10 per cent of Kincardine residents said they were satisfied with services at their local hospital.

When Friends of the Kincardine Hospital hired an experienced consultant to review and make recommendations around how the four-site facility was governed, the hospital board showed little interest and refused to hold a follow-up meeting. Staff members were discouraged by senior management from participating in the study. When a doctor had encouraged others to give input into the study, she was disciplined by the hospital.

Board sessions behind closed doors

The SBGHC has a board whose sessions are frequently held behind closed doors — the consultant's report says there is a lack of transparency about board discussions and decision-making.

Its CEO and President serves as a voting member of that board despite a conflict of interest. The board is supposed to provide oversight to the CEO, including making decisions regarding his salary, bonus and benefits.

The commissioned report confirms the hospital relies heavily on secrecy, while management operates in an authoritative top-down culture.

It claims that it is balancing its budget, yet the Local Health Integration Network shows the hospital to be running a deficit.

Located in Ontario's agricultural heartland, the hospital now plans to replace fresh food service with "retherm" frozen meals trucked in from a great distance and reheated on-site.

Recently SBGHC has

- Closed all outpatient physiotherapy.
- Announced it is ending fresh food service and is seeking a contract to truck in frozen processed meals to be reheated on site.
- Is considering leasing out space used by health records, sending employees home to work on sensitive personal health information.
- Taken away the right of community members to vote on board appointments.
- Disciplined a doctor for encouraging other staff to participate in a community commissioned study.
- Closed obstetrics at Kincardine where there is a young and growing population.
- Closed the day hospital in Walkerton.
- Damaged staff morale with what some staff consider to be bullying behavior, including telling a long-time staff member that she had to return to work within 10 days of her surgery despite her doctor's recommendation to stay out for 30 days.

Microwaved food at Chesley

Instead of joining a growing movement to put fresh, local and sustainable foods in our hospitals, SBGHC is going to rely on processed and reheated food stripped of many of its healthy nutrients.

When a cook recently quit at Walkerton, the only cook at Chesley was brought in to replace her. Without a cook, patients at Chesley are left

with microwaved foods. Is this anyway to promote good health and a speedy recovery?

Other hospitals have found that "retherm" food often leads to high levels of waste.

Tension at SBBHC affecting staff morale

Some staff say the tension at the hospital has gotten so bad their co-workers often exhibit extreme symptoms of stress sickness, including spontaneous crying at work. While SBGHC experienced few grievances in the past, there have been 45 new grievances in the last two years. That figure could rise dramatically this year.

When the Ontario Public Service Employees Union President wrote May 3rd to the CEO and Board Chair asking for a meeting to improve labour relations, the union was ignored. Instead CEO Paul Davies told the media he was unaware of problems with labour relations.

Management has tried to silence its critics in every way it can.

It maintains rules not allowing employees to talk about the hospital in public, cutting off those on the front-lines from telling the public what's really happening at SBGHC.

Conflict with doctors over sick time

OPSEU calls SGBHC one of the worst health care employers in the province. The Vice-President of Labour Relations has placed herself in conflict with local physicians in deciding the appropriate return dates for sick and injured employees. One long-service employee was told by her doctor not to return to work for 30 days following surgery. The hospital insisted she return to work in 10 days or be subjected to discipline.