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## Joint funding to make KGH safer

KELOWNA – The BC Nurses' Union (BCNU) and representatives from Interior Health (IH) are pleased to announce funding to pilot new security measures at Kelowna General Hospital (KGH) to enhance safety for patients, nurses, and health professionals.

On February 21, 2018, provincial leadership from BCNU and IH met to discuss safety concerns brought forward by the nursing staff of the KGH Emergency Department (ED) related to violence. Since that meeting, we are moving forward with a partnership that is focused on developing a culture of safety and violence prevention at KGH.

“This initiative is driven by our nurses and other health-care workers who have reported feeling unsafe,” said Christine Sorensen, Acting President, BCNU. “This is a great example of BCNU and IH collaborating on ways to reduce the prevalence of violent incidences against staff in the ED.”

The partnership includes funding from both BCNU and IH to pilot new security measures that will help keep nurses, physicians, and other health-care workers safer at work.

In addition to the security presence that is already in place at KGH, two full-time security officers have been assigned exclusively to the ED on a trial basis – one for the evening shift (6 p.m. to midnight) and another for the night shift (midnight to 6 a.m.). The additional security officers began covering the new shifts on March 11.

IH is also currently surveying KGH ED staff to assess the degree to which they feel safe at work. Regular meetings will take place between staff and managers to ensure that ideas from those most affected are brought to the forefront – ideas that will further grow the culture of safety within the department.

“BCNU and IH are committed to a safer workplace,” said Mal Griffin, Interior Health’s Vice President of Human Resources. “We are optimistic that this collaborative, solutions-based approach to the reality of violence in the workplace will protect all health-care workers in their ability to provide safe patient care.”

Last year, BNCU launched a campaign – “Violence. Not part of the job” – which continues to be top of mind with its membership. Learn more about the campaign at: <https://www.bcnu.org/news-and-events/campaigns-and-initiatives/current-campaigns/violence>.