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PRESS RELEASE

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NSGEU Opposes Forced Vacation Closure at IWK

Halifax – The Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union (NSGEU) is strongly opposed to the forced closure of the Adolescent Treatment Centre (ATC) run by the IWK for two weeks in August. The Union is responding to growing concerns being expressed about the impacts of this closure.

According to NSGEU President Joan Jessome, “We want to make it clear that our members who are front-line workers in the Centre did not support this closure. They are well aware of its potential adverse impacts on their youth clients (ages 12 to 19) and their families. Our members wanted to see the Program remain open and vacations to be scheduled as they always have been.”

“Ms. Jessome said that both members and the Union have opposed the idea of this closure from when the Employer first brought forward this idea. “It was clear to us from the beginning that this move was all about saving money and had nothing to do with maintaining or improving vital services.”

“It also certainly does nothing about allowing staff to take vacation time. Our members are now being forced to take vacation time when they would not necessarily want to do so. And for some people, it also means going without pay.”

“Unfortunately,” Ms. Jessome explained, “This is not the only program closure being forced by the IWK. The Compass Program for younger youth (6-12 years old) also has to close for two weeks in August and the CHOICES Adolescent Treatment Program had to close for two weeks earlier. We opposed those closures as well.”

Jessome concluded: “The forced closure of the Adolescent Treatment Centre in August has very little to do with allowing staff to take vacations. It is primarily an ill-conceived cost-saving tool by the IWK. This is definitely a step backwards as far as our members are concerned.”

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The Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union represents over 28,000 women and men who provide quality public services Nova Scotians count on every day.

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