

**For Immediate Release**  
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**ROYAL COLUMBIAN DOCTOR WARNS OF HALLWAY MEDICINE, CARE 'CRISIS'**

VICTORIA — NDP Health Critic Adrian Dix and New Westminster MLA Chuck Puchmayr took the Campbell government to task today in question period over the latest complaint from a physician at Royal Columbian Hospital in New Westminster regarding cancelled surgeries and hallway medicine.

"We have been warning the Campbell government for years about the deteriorating situation at Royal Columbian Hospital and the consequences of closing St. Mary's Hospital in 2004," said Dix, the MLA for Vancouver-Kingsway. "Health Minister George Abbott and his colleagues have ignored our warnings, and now Royal Columbian's health care crisis is deepening."

The two MLAs brought up a letter written last month by Dr. Rob Granger, a surgeon at RCH who warned that the hospital is "truly in a crisis" due to cancelled surgeries, patients being left in hallways due to "years of financial neglect."

"Dr. Granger's letter follows the fire marshal being called in to Royal Columbian in February to deal with overcrowding. This government has been ignoring doctors at Royal Columbian since 2003," Puchmayr said. "For five long years, doctors have been sounding the alarm. When is the Minister of Health going to take their concerns seriously?"

"This hospital has suffered from years of financial neglect with no significant input into infrastructure," Dr. Granger's letter said. "Operating slates are cancelled on a daily basis, operating rooms are closed, and patients are sitting in hallways for nursing care."

"When the government closed St. Mary's Hospital at the cost of 71 beds, doctors warned them repeatedly that this was wrong. The Campbell Liberals ignored the doctors then, and they have ignored them ever since," Puchmayr said.

"How many doctors' warnings are needed and how many patients have to be put in danger before the Campbell government does something to deal with the ongoing crisis at Royal Columbian Hospital," Dix asked.