

**For Immediate Release**  
**June 18, 2008**

**VERNON HOSPITAL SETS RECORD FOR MOST 'CODE PURPLES'**

**KELOWNA** – While the Campbell government played spectator to the crisis at Vernon Jubilee Hospital, the number of 'code purples' soared to new record heights, New Democrat leader Carole James said today.

"Because of the Campbell government, Vernon Jubilee has set a new record – the most code purples ever recorded at a B.C. hospital in a year. And we are only half-way through the year," said James.

James noted that since Jan. 1, there have been over 50 code purples called at the hospital. A code purple is called when the hospital is too full and reaching a dangerous level of congestion. It is a signal for doctors and nurses to discharge patients to make room for those who need to be admitted.

"The emergency room at Vernon Jubilee Hospital is operating in almost constant chaos," said James. "The number of code purples is unacceptable – we cannot expect our health care professional to work under these pressures all the time."

Health critic Adrian Dix agreed. "The call for rapid discharge of patients should only be used in the rarest of circumstances. Unfortunately, the Campbell government has seen to it that code purples are a common occurrence at Vernon Jubilee Hospital."

"The Campbell government is well aware of the problem. Last February local doctors warned the government that more acute care beds were desperately needed to ease overcrowding of the ER. That warning was flatly rejected by the local MLA, by the health minister and by the Premier," said Dix.

"But what is clear is that the doctors were right all along, and the Campbell government was wrong," said Dix. "And now patients and residents are paying the price for the government's arrogance."

**-30-**

Media contact: Neera Ritcey 604-317-4450