

VIHA reneged on Saltspring hospital

By Barbara Giuliani, Times Colonist June 10, 2010

The reason there are few surgeries at Lady Minto Hospital on Saltspring Island is because the Vancouver Island Health Authority has refused to staff the operating room since its multimillion-dollar upgrade in 2005.

Either there was a need for this OR then or that upgrade reflected huge mismanagement. Will VIHA return the \$800,000 in community donations collected to support the operating room that never opened?

In 2006, VIHA still intended to keep and support this OR. If the OR was necessary then, how is it not necessary now?

The demographics in the area could not have changed dramatically in four years. Something is very wrong in VIHA management.

Finding qualified physicians would not be difficult if VIHA lived up to promises. My parents' former family physician moved to Saltspring because he was promised the anesthesiologist position in the new OR.

After several years of practising family medicine waiting for the promised position, he was told the OR would not be staffed.

He left because VIHA did not live up to promises made, not because it's inherently hard to get staff to come there.

Of course they don't have a surgeon if VIHA doesn't hire one.

VIHA is recommending the dismantling of a facility that underwent more than \$3 million in upgrades just five years ago, and is underused because they have refused to staff it.

Before this horrible waste is perpetrated, it's time for a qualified review of the decision-making at VIHA.

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