

Letter - Let's get health care back on track

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In light of recent events in New Zealand and Japan, I question the wisdom of the Vancouver Island Health Authority and several of our doctors who insist that we can live safely here with a hospital that has had its operating room services cut to the quick.

When the "big one" hits our island — and it will — how can these folks possibly imagine that the hospitals in Saanich, Victoria and Duncan will have OR and emergency room space available for our injured? Their already-stressed hospital capacities will be overwhelmed. Air ambulance services will be stretched thin as they attempt to deal with the needs of the larger and possibly harder-hit communities on Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland. Damage to transportation infrastructure is likely to be severe. Undoubtedly, we will be cut off and left to treat our own ill and injured. Without a working surgery, we will be operating under field hospital conditions.

In a misplaced effort to save a ridiculously small amount of money, VIHA is placing our families and loved ones at great risk. Its business model addresses the bottom line, with little or no attention paid to the health care needs of Salt Spring and the other Gulf Islands.

Our hospital — that's OUR hospital — has, until the last two and a half years, served us well, with its operating room being used to continue a surgical service that has been available on Salt Spring for decades. It now appears in need of some health care of its own. Let's get it back on track before we're in the midst of a huge mess.

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