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## **Paramedics keep their T-shirts on**

VANCOUVER—Striking ambulance paramedics will be donning T-shirts to remind the government that they are still on strike.

“The government has got to stop ignoring this critical situation,” says CUPE 873 president John Strohmaier. “Members are getting increasingly frustrated by the government’s unwillingness to take action to fix our broken ambulance system.”

Because the T-shirts are not official ambulance garb, CUPE 873 members hope that they will help draw attention to the strike that is now over 100 days long.

Over the weekend, Sue Conroy, chief operating officer of the BC Ambulance Service, sent a memo to all staff threatening discipline, up to and including suspension, for any ambulance paramedic wearing the T-shirt on the job.

Despite this threat, paramedics are still wearing the T-shirts.

“It’s really pathetic that, during a staffing crisis, the employer would consider sending someone home just for wearing a T-shirt,” says B.J. Chute, director of Public Education for CUPE 873.

Ambulance paramedics have been on strike since April 1. They want the government to negotiate so that improvements can be made to how services are delivered. Chronic understaffing and long response times continue to be the biggest issues paramedics want the government to address.

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