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ANOTHER LETTER TO CLRCS LEADERSHIP

CLRCS/OPSEU 472

I've come across yet another letter directed towards management of *Community Living Renfrew County South*.

The letter, this time from Renfrew resident *Krystle Bennett*, is addressed to CLRCS Executive-Director *Jennifer Lavallee* and her Board of Directors and challenges all of them to take another, more meaningful approach to a work stoppage now closing in on its fifteenth week.

Bennett indicates that she's had concerns regarding CLRCS in the past, including concerns dating back well before any strike action took place. She appears to take issue with some governance matters and the way the organization is, and according to her, has been run.

The letter chastises management for a strike strategy that she feels has only prolonged the conflict needlessly, and strongly encourages that same management and Board to come up with a different and more productive approach.

Because as she says, it's the clients and their families, caught in the middle of this conflict, who are the ones really doing the majority of the hurting.

When your regular workers are suddenly gone, it's tough for a client to make sense of all of it. In fact, in many of their minds, they start to actively blame themselves and begin wondering what they did to bring all this on. In vulnerable minds such as these, self-gaslighting emerges as a significant problem, one that may take a significant amount of time to repair once this is all over, if it can be repaired at all.



Bennett's letter puts the responsibility for this on management and management's style, a style she claims is hurting the clients enormously and cumulatively as time moves along. The regressions witnessed by families are heartbreaking, and again, represent damage that's going to be difficult to repair.

Serving as an indictment of sorts, the letter exhorts the Executive-Director to come up with a better, more reasonable plan rather than contributing to a stubborn standoff that actively hurts the clients and their families.

Krystle Bennett's letter is just the latest to join the increasing call for management to start talking to the union without the chicanery of procedural disagreements holding everything up.

These are people's lives we're talking about here, not some commodity. And they happen to be a very vulnerable population, one that's reliant on the care of others entrusted to provide

the necessary support. And yet, apparently, when the chips are down, management seems content to allow this travesty to continue, thereby appearing to be more than content with the damage their tactics are causing to the very people they pledge to protect.

So that we're clear, there's a reason management doesn't want to go anywhere near arbitration. Because if they did, all the books would be opened for study, any number of questions would be raised, and, at the end of the process, CLRCS would lose their case.

And that would surely be followed by internal recriminations directed towards those calling the shots, the ones who are "in charge."

I feel she'd want to avoid that at all costs.