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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
2009OTP0036-000228  
Feb. 24, 2009

Office of the Premier  
Ministry of Health Services  
Vancouver Island Health Authority

### **NEW DEVELOPMENT INCREASES CARE FOR VICTORIA SENIORS**

VICTORIA – Premier Gordon Campbell was joined by Health Services Minister George Abbott, Vancouver Island Health Authority representatives and community partners today to open Selkirk Place, a new 258-unit, \$40-million campus of care that will provide seniors with greater access to more housing and care options.

“Selkirk Place opens new doors for Victoria seniors, doors to better health care, doors to enhanced independence, doors to improved quality of life,” said Premier Campbell. “Through cutting-edge facilities like Selkirk, we can provide the services that seniors need to be comfortable, to be independent, and to receive the quality care they deserve.”

Selkirk Place offers 217 residential care beds and 41 assisted living units for independent living all on the same site. It is located within a mixed commercial and residential development adjacent to Victoria’s Selkirk waterway.

“Our government is committed to providing a range of housing options to accommodate all the levels of care seniors require,” said Abbott. “Selkirk Place offers a campus of care that allows seniors to remain in their homes and community as their care needs change.”

“Almost one-fifth of our provincial population is now over 65 years old and the number of seniors is doubling, along with demands for better care options,” said Ida Chong, MLA for Oak Bay-Gordon Head. “Selkirk Place demonstrates our commitment to ensuring seniors can age in a place they call home.”

The number of seniors in British Columbia is expected to double from 637,000 to 1,275,000 over the next 20 years. In southern Vancouver Island, currently there are 64,000 seniors, representing 17 per cent of the population, and the population is projected to increase to more than 119,000 over the next 20 years, which will represent 27 per cent of the population.

“The development of affordable housing is essential for the well-being of people and communities,” said Victoria Mayor Dean Fortin. “Selkirk Place embodies this by providing varying levels of care under one roof, allowing residents to remain in their community as they age.”

The Province through Vancouver Island Health Authority is providing annual funding for 185 residential care beds at a cost of \$9 million and providing \$300,000 annually for rent and hospitality services in 25 assisted living units.

“Enhancing access to seniors care is a top priority for VIHA, particularly in Victoria where we have a large seniors’ population,” said Jac Kreut, VIHA board chair. “By working in partnership with the community and the Province, we have significantly increased our community care capacity, which is helping to reduce pressure on our hospitals, and the emergency departments in the South Island.”

Jointly developed and operated by the Ahmon Group and the Lark Group, the residential care component of the new facility will offer private and semi-private rooms and provide 24/7 services for individuals with complex care needs. The assisted living units are self-contained studio apartments where residents receive meals, housekeeping and laundry services, a 24-hour response system, and care services provided through Home and Community Care.

“Selkirk Place is providing high quality long-term care to Victoria seniors while still ensuring all of the comforts of home,” said Michael Ahmon, CEO of the Ahmon Group. “Our residents are enjoying good nutrition, health care, exercise and entertainment activities, as well as the opportunity to access the many other amenities located nearby.”

The new publicly-funded units at Selkirk Place support the Province’s commitment to provide 5,000 net-new beds and units across British Columbia. The Province has opened 5,896 additional new beds and units across B.C. since 2001. In total, 12,435 new and replacement beds and units have been opened, replacing those that were old and unsuitable. In Southern Vancouver Island, there have been 642 net-new beds and units built since 2001, for a total of 3,686 beds and units.

1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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## BACKGROUND

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### **SELKIRK PLACE**

Selkirk Place, located at 385 Waterfront Crescent in Victoria, combines 217 residential care beds and 41 assisted living apartments in the same development for a total of 258 new units.

The seven-storey building offers dining rooms, meeting and family rooms, courtyards, and a hair salon. Three levels of care will be offered on-site, including independent, assisted and complex.

#### **Residential Care:**

All 217 residential care units are constructed to meet provincial standards of care. 185 are completely funded by the Vancouver Island Health Authority and 32 are private pay units.

#### **Assisted Living:**

41 units: 33 studio and eight one-bedroom assisted living units. 25 of the units are publicly subsidized; Residents pay 70 per cent of their after-tax income which includes their rent, two meals per day, and services, including 24-hour response, personal care, weekly housekeeping and linen services, and social and recreational opportunities.

#### **Partners and Funding:**

Total capital cost of this project is more than \$40 million.

- Vancouver Island Health Authority is providing annual funding of \$9 million for 185 residential care beds as well as providing \$300,000 annually for rent and hospitality services in 25 of the residential care units.
- The Ahmon Group and Lark Group jointly developed and own the facility, and the Ahmon Group operates the facility.
- Operational services are being provided through Beacon Community Services for the Assisted Living units.

#### **Ahmon Group**

The Ahmon Group has owned and operated long-term care facilities in the Lower Mainland for over 30 years, including several facilities under contract with the Fraser Health Authority. As a service provider they are committed to providing quality individualized care and support for adults with complex health needs within a residential setting.

#### **Lark Group**

The Lark Group has been a developer, facility manager and builder in B.C. since 1972. The Lark Group has focused on institutional development for the last ten years and has completed or has under construction 2,400 beds of various levels of care. Lark is proud to be involved with such a first class care and assisted living facility.

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