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For Immediate Release

NEW RESIDENTIAL CARE BEDS COMING TO NANAIMO

NANAIMO – Seniors on Central Vancouver Island will have improved access to local support services when a new facility with 110 residential care beds and 40 assisted living units opens in 2008.

Good Samaritan Canada, a voluntary, not-for-profit care provider, has been awarded a contract to build and operate the new facility, which will provide the 110 publicly funded residential care beds and 40 assisted living units. These units will be funded by BC Housing through the Independent Living BC program (ILBC). The facility will be located at 80-90 10th Street, which is currently vacant land, in south Nanaimo. The Good Samaritan Society operates numerous facilities in Alberta and British Columbia and has a 55-year history of creating specially designed and caring environments for the elderly or disabled. The new facility is slated to open June 30, 2008.

"This new facility is part of the government's commitment to create 5,000 new residential care and assisted living beds in British Columbia," said Health Minister George Abbott. "Across the province we are investing in beds, facilities, and health care professionals and following through on the Government's commitment to improve health care across British Columbia."

"This is good news for residents of the greater Nanaimo area," said Nanaimo-Parksville MLA Ron Cantelon. "This facility will support and encourage independence while also providing more intensive care as peoples' health care needs change."

The Good Samaritan project is the third successful bid to be announced as part of a Request For Proposal (RFP) issued by the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) on January 31. New Horizons in Campbell River and Jones Development in Duncan will build and operate new facilities in those communities. The VIHA RFP sought proposals from not-for-profit and private operators to build and operate 1,230 residential care beds and assisted living spaces throughout the health authority. This included approximately 930 additional net new beds and spaces by 2010 (727 of those to be completed by December 2008) as well as flexibility for approximately 300 replacement beds in the future.

"VIHA is committed to developing and enhancing services that support our growing and aging population," said Mike Conroy, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Vancouver Island Health Authority. "This contract award is part of a series of projects that will significantly increase our residential care and assisted living capacity, improve access to services for seniors and help reduce pressures on our emergency departments."

(more)

VIHA received approximately 50 submissions to the RFP. The health authority continues to evaluate proposals and conduct discussions with potential developers in Greater Victoria, Sooke, Parksville/Qualicum, Port Alberni and Comox/Courtenay.

Announcements regarding future developments and successful bidders in these communities will be made as contracts are finalized and signed.

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