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For Immediate Release

NEW RESIDENTIAL CARE BEDS COMING TO DUNCAN

DUNCAN – Seniors on Central Vancouver Island will have improved access to local support services when a new facility with 160 residential care beds and 50 assisted living units opens in March 2008.

Jones Development Corporation, a private operator, has been awarded a contract to build and operate the new facility, which will provide the 160 publicly funded residential care beds and 50 publicly funded assisted living units. The facility will be located at Bundock Street and Trunk Road in Duncan. Jones Development has designed and built many housing projects and currently provides over 800 units of senior's housing in BC.

"This is great news for residents of Duncan and the Central Island," said Health Minister George Abbott. "These new beds will go towards fulfilling our province's commitment to develop 5,000 beds and units for seniors by 2008 – services that will support and encourage independence while also providing more intensive care as peoples' health care needs change."

The Jones project is the second successful bid to be announced as part of a Request For Proposal (RFP) issued by the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) January 31. New Horizons in Campbell River will build and operate a new residential care facility in that community. 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, which will improve access to services for seniors and help reduce pressures on our emergency departments."

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, Nanaimo, 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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