



NEWS RELEASE

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GROUNDBREAKING FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITY IN NANAIMO

NANAIMO – The construction of a new \$30.5 million facility with 110 residential care beds and 40 assisted living units is one step closer to becoming a reality with the official groundbreaking ceremony for the project being held on the building site of the future Good Samaritan Canada Wexford Creek Campus of Care.

Representatives from the Ministry of Health, the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA), BC Housing, and Good Samaritan Canada were on hand to participate in the ceremony.

“Nanaimo residents will soon have more options when planning for their long term care needs,” said Nanaimo-Parksville MLA Ron Cantelon, who spoke on behalf of Health Minister George Abbott. “The construction of 150 beds at Wexford Creek Campus of Care is part of our commitment to build 5,000 new residential care beds and assisted living units for seniors in the province by 2008.”

All 110 residential care beds will be publicly funded by the Vancouver Island Health Authority providing approximately \$6.4 million in annual funding for the residential care beds. The residential care component of the new facility will offer private rooms and provide 24/7 health care services for individuals with complex care needs.

“This facility, as well as others under development as a result of a number of agreements reached on Vancouver Island over the past year, is intended to give seniors more choices and opportunities to retain their independence,” said VIHA Board Chair Jac Kreut. “Projects like this one will significantly increase our residential care and assisted living capacity improve access to services for seniors and help reduce pressures on emergency departments and busy hospitals such as the Nanaimo Regional General Hospital.”

The Province will provide an annual housing and hospitality subsidy for the 40 assisted living units, under the Independent Living BC (ILBC) program. ILBC is an

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innovative housing-for-health program that meets the needs of lower-income seniors and people with disabilities by providing a middle option between home support and residential care. Assisted living units are self-contained apartments where residents receive meals, housekeeping and laundry services, a 24-hour response system, and assistance with medications.

“We’re so pleased to be able to offer another option that will allow seniors in Nanaimo to continue living in their community with dignity while also having access to high quality healthcare,” said Barbara Korabek, Executive Director for Continuing Health Services for the Vancouver Island Health Authority. “VIHA’s commitment to supporting seniors and developing innovative care options allows people to move through various levels within the same community of care, thereby ensuring a continuum of housing and care needs for Vancouver Island seniors.”

The contract to build and operate the facility, located at 80-90 10th in Nanaimo, was awarded in July 2006 to Good Samaritan Canada, a voluntary, not-for profit care provider that has designed and built a number of housing projects across Canada.

"This is a great partnership designed to benefit seniors living in the Nanaimo area," said Phil Gaudet, President and CEO of Good Samaritan Canada. "These 40 affordable assisted living units and 110 complex care units will be a campus of care that will allow seniors to stay in their own community and age in place, which defines quality of life for many of them."

These new units are part of the British Columbia Government’s commitment to provide 5,000 net-new residential care beds, assisted living units, and supportive housing with home support units by the end of 2008. To date, 8,102 new and replacement beds and units have been built, including 2,984 net-new.

The Province of British Columbia is committed to providing more than 4,000 affordable assisted living apartments for B.C. seniors and persons with disabilities. To date, more than 3,900 have been allocated in communities across the province. The Province’s budget for shelters and affordable housing is \$328 million – nearly triple what it was in 2001.

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