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For Immediate Release

NEW RESIDENTIAL CARE BEDS COMING TO VICTORIA

VICTORIA – Seniors on Southern Vancouver Island will have improved access to local support services when a new facility with 185 residential care beds and 25 assisted living units opens in 2008.

Ahmon Group, a private seniors' care provider has been awarded a contract to build and operate the new facility, which will provide the 185 publicly funded residential care beds and 25 publicly funded assisted living units. The facility will be located at 385 Waterfront Crescent adjacent to the Selkirk Waterway in Victoria. The land, which is owned by the Vancouver Island Health Authority, is currently a parking lot. The land was purchased in 2001 with health care related construction in mind. A new provider to Vancouver Island, the Ahmon Group has operated seniors' care facilities in the Lower Mainland for over 30 years, including several facilities under contract with the Fraser Health Authority. The facility will open June 30, 2008.

"This is great news for Greater Victoria residents. This new facility will give seniors more choices and more opportunities to retain their independence," said Health Minister George Abbott. "This facility furthers our government's progress towards creating 5,000 new residential care beds and assisted living units in British Columbia. We are building for the current and future needs of our growing population and moving forward on the government's commitment to strengthen health care in British Columbia."

The Ahmon project is the latest successful bid to be announced as part of a Request For Proposal (RFP) issued by the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) January 31. Developments have previously been announced for Campbell River, Nanaimo and Duncan. VIHA continues to negotiate with proponents in Courtenay/Comox, Parksville, Sooke and Port Alberni and will make announcements about projects in these communities when agreements are reached.

"VIHA is committed to developing and enhancing services that support our growing and aging population," said Jac Kreut, Board Chair, Vancouver Island Health Authority. "This contract award – and all the other agreements we have reached on Vancouver Island over the past few weeks – 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."

(more)

VIHA's 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 received approximately 50 submissions to the RFP.

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