



PRESS RELEASE



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564 New Assisted Living Units Allocated for Seniors

VANCOUVER, British Columbia, December 16, 2003 — Seniors will benefit from 564 new non-profit and private assisted living units in the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island allocated under the Independent Living BC (ILBC) program. Today's announcement, combined with the 649 units already awarded, brings the total allocation to more than 1,200 units across the province — about one-third of the 3,500 ILBC units to be developed by 2006.

This announcement is made possible through new partnerships forged by BC Housing along with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), three regional health authorities, and the non-profit and private sectors. It includes the first 531 non-profit assisted living units allocated under the ILBC program, and 33 private sector ILBC rent supplement units.

Various housing societies submitted proposals to provide assisted living through ILBC, in response to calls for expressions of interest issued by BC Housing and regional health authorities. Today's announcement involves unit allocations to 10 successful non-profit proponents and two private assisted living operators.

"The Government of Canada continues to work with the provincial government and other groups to bring quality affordable housing to the people of British Columbia", said the Honourable David Anderson, Minister of the Environment and Minister responsible for British Columbia. "The affordable housing program shows that commonly held goals of helping those most vulnerable in our society are achievable through strong partnerships and a resolve to meet those goals. I am truly happy to see this program and these projects are moving forward for the ultimate benefit of all the people of this province."

"Seniors want to maintain their independence, choice and quality of life," said Katherine Whittred, Minister of State for Intermediate, Long Term and Home Care. "Independent Living BC offers an affordable solution for people with lower incomes who need some help with daily activities, but want the independence of living in their own apartments. It expands the range of care options and helps us meet the needs of our growing seniors' population."

"Independent Living BC is a great example of partnerships in action – government working together with the non-profit and private sectors to meet the housing and health needs of the most vulnerable in our society," said George Abbott, Minister of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services. "The program offers British Columbians more choices for secure, affordable and quality housing with some support, in the communities where they live."

"Supporting the creation of new independent living units for seniors is directly in line with Vancouver Coastal Health's vision for a Community Care Network," emphasized Ellen Pেকেles, chief operating officer, North Shore/Coast Garibaldi and executive sponsor of VCH's Community Care Network. "Our goal is to work with our partners to provide a range of options for seniors, from independent living through supportive housing to assisted living and complex care, thereby ensuring that seniors have access to the care and service they need, while fulfilling their desire to live as independently as possible for as long as possible."

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"We know that people are less likely to become depressed, hospitalized or institutionalized if they have safe housing and appropriate support services," said Marilyn Rook, executive vice-president of the Vancouver Island Health Authority. "This supportive living program aims to meet the diverse needs of vulnerable people in our communities."

"Growing our supply of assisted living services across Fraser Health is necessary to address the health care needs of our growing communities," said Bob Smith, president and CEO of Fraser Health, the province's largest and fastest-growing health authority. "Assisted living is a very valuable addition to our menu of services for seniors and others with disabilities. Our newly-opened assisted living projects are proving extremely successful with clients telling us that assisted living means better health, satisfaction and quality of life."

ILBC encompasses two types of housing: independent housing with some support and assisted living for those who require a greater level of care. Typically, these units are self-contained apartments in developments where tenants receive hospitality and personal care services, such as some meals, housekeeping and laundry services, recreational opportunities and 24-hour response system.

The program will create a total of 3,500 independent living units with support services across the province as part of the provincial government's New Era commitment to provide 5,000 new intermediate and long-term care spaces by 2006.

ILBC is funded in part by the Canada-British Columbia Affordable Housing Program Agreement. The Government of Canada, through CMHC, will contribute \$88.7 million over the next five years towards affordable housing in this province. The provincial government, through BC Housing, will provide \$29.7 million annually to subsidize the costs of units built under this agreement, as part of a larger strategy to provide a range of housing options for vulnerable British Columbians.

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Backgrounder

A total of 564 Independent Living BC units were announced today in twelve developments in the Vancouver Coastal, Vancouver Island and Fraser Health authorities. Ten of these developments will be newly built or converted non-profit facilities, selected through calls for expressions of interest issued by BC Housing and regional health authorities earlier this year. The remaining are rent supplement units awards in two private assisted living residences.

The Independent Living BC program will create a total of 3,500 independent housing units with support services and assisted living units across the province. Of these, 2,500 units will be developed by non-profit societies and 1,000 units will be provided through rent supplements in private assisted living developments.

Non-Profit Developments — New Builds and Conversions

Vancouver Coastal Health

Gibsons — The Good Samaritan Society — 60 units (New Build)

This society will develop a campus of care on Shaw Road that includes 60 assisted living units (ILBC), 50 complex care beds and 30 dementia cottages. The Good Samaritan Society is a non-profit organization with a 50-year history of providing continuing care, assisted living and other specialized health-care services and facilities.

Vancouver — The Baptist Housing Society of BC — 59 units (New Build)

The Baptist Housing Society of BC will develop a 59-unit assisted living development at 6400 Clarendon Street in South Vancouver. The development will be located adjacent to Shannon Oaks, a congregate seniors living community also operated by the housing society. Founded in 1967, the Baptist Housing Society of BC houses more than 1,600 men, women and children in residences throughout the province.

Vancouver — Beulah Gardens Homes Society — 89 units (New Build)

The second phase of a larger redevelopment plan, Beulah Gardens Homes Society will develop 89 units of assisted living for seniors at 2001 Cassiar Street and partner with Diversicare for care services. The society has been providing non-profit housing since the late 1940s.

Richmond — BC Housing — 40 units (Conversion)

Forty apartments at Rosewood Towers at 6200 Blundell in Richmond will be converted to ILBC over the next few years, as apartments become vacant. This seniors' development receives support services provided by the Richmond Immediate Care Society. The renovations will allow people to live in self-contained, private apartments – maintaining their independence in a supportive environment.

Vancouver Island Health

Nanaimo — Nanaimo District Seniors Citizens' Housing Development Society — 45 units (Conversion)

Located in a new campus of care, 45 units will be converted from 75 units of an outdated multi-level care building. The Nanaimo District Senior Citizens' Housing Development Society has provided seniors' housing to the community since 1955.

Langford — M'akola Leasehold Housing Society — 60 units (New Build)

A rapidly developing satellite community to Victoria, Langford's 60 new assisted living units are located in the community core with amenities and medical services close by. These new builds are also part of a larger seniors' project that will produce an addition 140 market units. M'akola Leasehold

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Society is First Nations based and have been providing a range of social services to the community since 1984.

Fraser Health

White Rock — Evergreen Baptist Home — 40 units (New Build)

Evergreen Baptist Home will develop a new assisted living development with 40 units as part of an existing campus of care that includes 157 complex care spaces and 110 independent seniors' housing units. The development is located at 1501 Everall Street in White Rock.

Burnaby — Action Line Housing Society — 28 units (Conversion)

Action Line Housing Society will convert Seton Villa, an ageing building at 3755 McGill, to 28 units of assisted living. A long-standing partner in the community since 1974, Action Line Housing Society aims to provide seniors with affordable housing with hospitality and support services.

Port Coquitlam — Port Coquitlam Senior Citizen's Housing Society — 70 units (Conversion)

Port Coquitlam Senior Citizens Housing Society will complete a phased redevelopment of Hawthorne Seniors' Care Community that will result in 70 new assisted living (ILBC) units, 56 new dementia cottage spaces and 75 existing complex care spaces.

Mission — Mission Association for Seniors' Housing — 40 units (New Build)

A new assisted living development with 40 units will be built at 7366 Hurd Street in Mission. The development will be operated by the Mission Association for Seniors Housing. This development is located close to a hospital, physician offices, a pharmacy, and the Pleasant View Care Home.

Rent Supplements in Private Assisted Living Developments

Vancouver Coastal Health

Vancouver — Louis Brier Home and Hospital — 15 units

Rent supplements were awarded for 15 units at Harry and Jeanette Weinberg (of Baltimore) Residence, 5650 Osler Street. The development is operated by Louis Brier Home and Hospital (Jewish Home for the Aged of British Columbia), the only ethnic Jewish care facility in British Columbia and is located close to the Jewish Community Centre and Oakridge Mall.

Vancouver — Retirement Life Concepts — 18 units

The Terraces on 7th Avenue, located at 1570 West 7th received rent supplements for 18 assisted living units. Operated by Retirement Life Communities (Vancouver) Inc., the development is adjacent to the Seymour Medical Centre in an established Vancouver neighbourhood.