



PRESS RELEASE



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First Supportive Seniors Housing Opens in Lillooet

LILLOOET, British Columbia, March 29, 2004 — Lillooet seniors now have the opportunity to live independently and receive the support they need, thanks to the first supportive living development in Lillooet. Sumac Suites, at 951 Murray Street officially opened today and will provide six units of subsidized supportive seniors housing to singles or couples. Residents will have their own suites, receive an evening meal, weekly housekeeping and linen service.

"This project is a fine example of governments working together to provide affordable housing and support services for seniors who want to live independently but require some assistance," said the Honourable David Anderson, Minister of the Environment on behalf of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). "Successes like Sumac Suites in Lillooet are key to developing strong communities in B.C. and throughout Canada."

"The provincial government is committed to increasing health care and housing options for seniors," said Murray Coell, Minister of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services. "This development allows seniors to age in their own community and the end result of programs like this is better health and a better quality of life for our seniors."

"Seniors have told us they want to live in an environment that balances their desire for independence and privacy with ready access to support and personal care services," said Yale-Lillooet MLA Dave Chutter. "Sumac Suites provides quality, affordable housing and personal care to help seniors maintain their independence as they age."

Sumac Suites is managed by the Lillooet Housing Society, a group of local people who identified a need for a housing development that allows seniors to age in place. Sumac Suites is part of a larger campus of care. It is connected to Lillooet & District General Hospital and Health Centre, which includes 22 complex care beds, along with rehabilitation, acute care, laboratory, medical imaging and emergency services. A public health office is also conveniently located on the lower level of the development.

"Sumac Suites offers our seniors an affordable option in Lillooet between home care and residential care," said Claire Ann Brodie, director of home and community care for Interior Health's Thompson Cariboo Shuswap Health Service Area. "The concept of aging in place minimizes the transition for our seniors when their care needs change and also helps couples and friends to remain nearby even when a new level of care may be required."

Under the Canada-British Columbia Affordable Housing 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.

This news release is available online at www.bchousing.org

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Visit the province's Web site at www.gov.bc.ca for online information and services.

Backgrounder

Lillooet Housing Society

Lillooet Housing Society, a group of local people in Lillooet who identified a need for a housing development that allows seniors to age in place, was the catalyst for the development of Sumac Suites.

Housing Development Facts

Sumac Suites
951 Murray Street, Lillooet

Number of Units: 6 one-bedroom units

Sumac Suites benefits seniors who are able to live independently but who require some assistance. Tenants pay 30% of their income for their housing and an additional \$293 per month for a support package that includes an evening meal, weekly housekeeping and linen service. Lunch or breakfast can be purchased for an additional monthly cost.

The development is part of a larger campus of care. It is connected to Lillooet & District General Hospital and Health Centre, which includes 22 complex care beds, along with residential, acute care, laboratory, medical imaging and emergency services. Sumac Suites contracts its food, laundry and housekeeping services from the hospital. A public health office is conveniently located on the lower level of the Health Centre. The suites accommodate couples as well as singles. Tenants are allowed to bring one pet.

Partnership Contributions

- The Canada-British Columbia Affordable Housing Program and the Provincial Housing Program were the funding programs for this development.
- The capital cost for Sumac Suites was \$893,000.
- The federal government, through Canada Mortgage and Housing and the Canada-BC Affordable Housing Program, provided \$180,000 to the development.
- The provincial government, through BC Housing, is providing up to \$495,000 in operating subsidies over 35 years.
- Interior Health provided the land, valued at \$292,000, and provides operational support.