



## PRESS RELEASE



*Canadian Mortgage News - National Archive 2004*

### **Construction Begins on New Women's Shelter**

**LONDON, Ontario, May 7, 2004** — Women's Community House held a groundbreaking ceremony in London today to mark the construction of a women's shelter for victims of family violence. The project was made possible thanks to joint funding from the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario.

"The construction of this shelter demonstrates the Government of Canada's commitment to address housing for at-risk groups," said Pat O'Brien, Member of Parliament for London-Fanshawe. "Federal strategies dealing with family violence and homelessness are helping those most in need at the community level, and this project is a prime example."

"Domestic violence has no place in our communities and in our homes," said Sandra Pupatello, Ontario's Minister of Community and Social Services and Minister Responsible for Women's Issues. "Giving women a safe place to go is the first step in helping them build a better future for themselves and their children. This investment is real action and real positive change for women fleeing abuse."

"Women's Community House is excited to be breaking new ground for the construction of our new shelter at 450 Clarke Road," says Kate Wiggins, Executive Director of Women's Community House. "At our current shelter at 101 Wellington Road we are running at full capacity most days, having to turn away hundreds of abused women and their children each year. Our new shelter will provide 50 per cent more beds and safety to abused women and their children in the London area."

The Government of Canada is contributing \$225,000 towards the project through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC) Shelter Enhancement Program. The Ministry of Community and Social Services is contributing \$2 million in capital funding towards the construction of the new shelter.

Women's Community House operates as a non-profit organization. It is devoted to providing shelter and crisis services for physically, financially, emotionally and sexually abused women and their children. The construction of Women's Community House will provide a 25 bed residential facility for abused women and their children. The project will provide counselling in job placements, housing, education and childcare.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's Shelter Enhancement Program offers financial assistance for the repair, rehabilitation and improvement of existing shelters for women and their children, youth and men who are victims of family violence as well as the acquisition or construction of new shelters and second stage housing where needed.

#### **For further information:**

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Pat O'Brien, Member of Parliament for London-Fanshawe



Groundbreaking - left to right: Kate Wiggins, Executive Director; Anne Baxter, President, Board of Directors; Pat O'Brien, Member of Parliament for London-Fanshawe; MPP Deb Matthews; Anne Marie DeCicco, Mayor of London.



Sod-turning - left to right: Kate Wiggins, Executive Director; Anne Baxter, President, Board of Directors; Pat O'Brien, Member of Parliament for London-Fanshawe; MPP Deb Matthews; Anne Marie DeCicco, Mayor of London.