



PRESS RELEASE



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New Assisted Living for Nakusp Seniors

NAKUSP, British Columbia, May 14, 2004 — Arrow and Slocan Lakes Community Services (ASLCS) is one step closer to achieving its goal of developing eight new assisted living units for seniors in Nakusp and the surrounding area. The group responded to a call for expressions of interest issued under the Independent Living BC (ILBC) program by BC Housing and Interior Health, and has now been formally invited to further develop its proposal.

ASLCS plans to convert Halcyon Community Home into the community's first publicly funded assisted living residence. It will be subsidized through ILBC, a housing-for-health partnership that involves the provincial and federal governments, regional health authorities and the private and non-profit sectors. The conversion will involve the renovation of 16 of the 26 rooms into assisted living apartments. In addition, the fire and life-safety systems will be upgraded for the entire building including installation of sprinklers throughout and the upgrade of the fire alarm system.

Halcyon Community Home was originally built to care for residents with intermediate-care needs. However, the 23-year-old facility is outdated and no longer meets the complex needs of today's care clients. It is being converted to assisted living to offer more choices for seniors with health needs in the community.

If the project is successful through the next stage of the proposal process, ASLCS will receive funding for the conversion through the Canada-British Columbia Affordable Housing Agreement. Under the Agreement, Government of Canada, through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), will provide a \$200,000 grant and the Province of British Columbia, through BC Housing, will provide a grant worth \$696,641. These grants will be used to offset project costs of the conversion and eliminate the need for mortgage financing.

"This project is a good example of how government partnerships can provide senior citizens assistance and support, allowing them to continue to live independently," said the Honourable David Anderson, Minister of the Environment. "New assisted housing units not only meet the needs of our seniors, but they are helping build strong communities throughout the province and across Canada."

"This is excellent news for Nakusp and I am delighted to see this project move forward to the next stage," said Blair Suffredine, MLA for Nelson-Creston. "This assisted living development would give seniors in this community more choices for affordable housing and personal care services, which is one of the top priorities for our government."

Alan Dolman, Interior Health board chair, has seen first-hand the benefits of assisted living across the Interior. "Giving seniors a new option between care in the home and institutional residential care is a very positive step," said Dolman. "There are lots of seniors who need a little help with the activities of daily living, but don't need round-the-clock nursing care as provided in a residential facility. Assisted living is a level of service that is needed for our ageing population, and I'm proud that Interior Health and BC Housing have been able to announce so many of these projects across the region."

In preparation for the conversion of Halcyon Home to assisted living, ASLCS will now develop its detailed service

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delivery plan, refine the design and scope of work, and confirm its budgets.

The group looks forward to moving ahead with the project. "Assisted living is greatly needed by many seniors in Nakusp and outlying areas, and we are very proud to be a part of this exciting project that will breathe new life into Halcyon Home," said Ulli Mueller, ASLCS president.

Typically, ILBC 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.

ILBC will create a total of 3,500 independent living units with support services across the province by 2006. To date, over 1,900 ILBC units have been allocated — about 55 per cent of the target.

ILBC is funded in part through the Canada-British Columbia Affordable Housing Program Agreement. The government of Canada, through CMHC, will contribute \$88.7 million over 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.

For more information about ILBC, visit www.bchousing.org.

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