



PRESS RELEASE



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New Assisted Living Units for the North

KITIMAT, British Columbia, November 19, 2004 — Moderate-income seniors are one step closer to additional affordable housing and care services with today's announcement of 15 new Independent Living BC (ILBC) units being developed in Kitimat and 22 units that will be converted for assisted living in Pouce Coup.

These assisted living units will provide affordable apartments, hospitality services and personal care for low-income seniors and people with disabilities and are part of 59 ILBC units announced today in four northern communities.

The Honourable Joe Fontana, Minister of Labour and Housing said, "Seniors in Kitimat and Pouce Coupe will be able to live in a quality environment once these projects are completed. The partnership between the various levels of government, as well as our local partners, ensures that our seniors will be able to contribute meaningfully to their communities in which they have lived and will continue to live."

The province, through BC Housing, is facilitating the ILBC program in partnership with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), Northern Health, and the private and non-profit sectors. Various housing operators submitted proposals to provide assisted living through ILBC, in response to calls for proposals issued by BC Housing and Northern Health. This announcement involves ILBC unit allocations to non-profit societies within the Northern region.

"Today's announcement is excellent news for our seniors and our communities," said the Honourable Roger Harris, MLA for Skeena. "Assisted living is a great option for seniors who require some help to continue to live independently and we are working hard to make assisted living more accessible and affordable throughout the province."

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 personal care and hospitality services, such as meals, housekeeping, laundry services, recreational opportunities and a 24-hour response system.

As a middle option between home care and residential care, assisted living offers a more tailored approach in addressing individuals' housing and personal care needs.

"These assisted living units will provide seniors with more options that promote choice and independence," said Harry Gairns, Northern Health Board Chair. "Up until now, seniors requiring assistance had few options - care at home or living in a facility. Northern Health is committed to providing housing and care to seniors in their own communities."

This announcement brings the total number of ILBC units allocated in the Northern Health to 65, with developments in Quesnel, Houston, Burns Lake, Kitimat and Pouce Coupe.

ILBC will create a total of 3,500 independent apartments with support services across the province by 2006. The ILBC units announced today will bring the total allocation to over 2,430 assisted living units across the province - almost 70

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per cent of the target. The remainder, are expected to be allocated over the coming months.

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 those in greatest need.

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

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Backgrounder

A total of 59 assisted living units were announced today in four developments throughout BC's Northern Region. All of these assisted living units will be managed by non-profit societies.

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Houston

Houston Lions Senior Citizens Home Society 5 units New Build

As the result of a competitive Expression of Interest process, Houston Lions Senior Citizens Home Society has been invited to submit a detailed proposal to build 5 new assisted living units as an addition to their existing 16 units of seniors housing at 2261 Copeland Avenue.

Burns Lake

Lakes District Senior Citizen Housing Society 17 units New Build

As the result of a competitive Expression of Interest process, Lakes District Senior Citizen Housing Society has been invited to develop a detailed proposal to build 17 assisted living units. The site location, already leased to the Society is between Babine Lake Road and the existing Heritage Manor, with access off 9th Avenue.

Kitimat

Kitimat Kiwanis Senior Citizens Housing Society 15 units New Build

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As the result of a competitive Expression of Interest process, Kitimat Kiwanis Senior Citizens Housing Society has been invited to submit a detailed proposal to build 15 subsidized assisted living units at 701 Mountainview Square. The land is municipally owned and is expected to be donated to the Society.

Pouce Coupe

Dawson Creek Society for Community Living

22 units Conversion

As the result of a competitive Expression of Interest process, Dawson Creek Society for Community Living has been invited to submit a detailed proposal to convert the Peace River Haven, a residential care facility, into 22 units of assisted living.