



PRESS RELEASE



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Assisted Living Provides More Options for Salmon Arm Seniors

SALMON ARM, British Columbia, November 25, 2005 — Seniors in Salmon Arm are one step closer to having more affordable housing options as construction begins on thirty new subsidized assisted living units at the Pioneer Lodge.

The assisted living units self-contained apartments where seniors can lock their doors and cook their own meals, will also include housekeeping and laundry, recreational opportunities, assistance with medications and a 24-hour response system. These new units will replace 70 residential care beds at the Pioneer Lodge, which were designed for seniors with much higher care needs.

Salmon Arm is already home to two residential care facilities, the 101-bed Bastion Place and a new 75-bed facility, Hillside, where the majority of the residents from Pioneer Lodge have already been moved. Twenty temporary assisted living apartments will remain open during the conversion of Pioneer Lodge to allow seniors access while construction is underway.

The \$5.3 million development, operated by Good Samaritan Canada, is funded in part under the Canada–British Columbia Affordable Housing Agreement, through Independent Living BC.

"Affordable, quality housing for the people in need in this province is what the partnership between the Governments of Canada and British Columbia aims to produce," said Senator Jack Austin, on behalf of the Honourable Joe Fontana, Minister of Labour and Housing. "Assisted living projects such as this one in Salmon Arm will help us to ensure that our seniors continue to lead active and independent lives."

George Abbott, B.C.'s Health Minister and MLA for Shuswap, said that the Province is working hard to provide a range of care options for B.C.'s aging population. "With new residential care beds and a new assisted living development under construction, seniors in Salmon Arm will have more options to suit their care needs," said Abbott. "With the range of options that will soon be available, Salmon Arm will have what we call a campus of care, where seniors will get the care and attention that their individual circumstances require."

The federal government, through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), provides funding to cover capital costs, and the Province provides funding to make sure the housing remains affordable to tenants. Interior Health will provide ongoing funding for personal care services and a portion of the hospitality services to ensure tenants have access to the healthcare support they need to remain independent.

"At Interior Health, we have witnessed the benefits of assisted living," said Susan Rolph, Assisted Living Manager for the Thompson Cariboo Shuswap health service area. "Interior Health is committed to bringing choice to seniors where they live and this new home will allow seniors the opportunity to remain as independent as possible while ensuring all their healthcare needs are met."

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"These 30 affordable assisted living units will promote choice and independence for Salmon Arm's seniors," said Phil Gaudet, president and CEO, the Good Samaritan Society. "With the construction of new residential care in Salmon Arm, assisted living was the missing element in providing a continuum of care with options."

The Province of British Columbia, through the Independent Living BC program, is committed to providing 3,500 affordable assisted living apartments across British Columbia. To date, more than 3,300 Independent Living BC units, or 94 per cent, have been allocated in communities across the province.

The Government of Canada, through CMHC, will contribute \$130 million towards affordable housing in B.C. by 2008. The provincial government will provide a minimum of \$34 million annually to subsidize the cost of units built under the Canada-British Columbia Affordable Housing Agreement, as part of a larger strategy to provide a range of housing options for British Columbians in greatest need. The federal assistance is part of the \$1 billion announcement under a 2001 federal-provincial framework, and the 2003 Federal Budget, to create affordable housing.

Today's announcement reflects the B.C. government's goal of providing the best system of support in Canada for seniors. The Province's September Budget Update provided an additional \$242 million over three years to improve the lives of seniors, including: renewing the Seniors' Supplement, to provide a monthly benefit for approximately 40,000 low income seniors; doubling annual funding for the Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) program; and updating existing seniors' health facilities and strengthening and modernizing the full range of services for seniors, to help them live as independently as possible.

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Backgrounder

Conversion Of Pioneer Lodge

Good Samaritan Canada

Good Samaritan Canada, a Lutheran Social Service Organization, has over 55 years experience in providing continuing care, assisted living and other specialized health care services and facilities in an innovative and caring environment. It is one of the largest voluntary health care providers in Canada.

The society was created in 1949 and built its first facility, a long-term care hospital, in 1955. Subsequent expansion within Alberta and British Columbia included continuing care, assisted living and supportive housing facilities for seniors, as well as purpose-built homes for persons with development disabilities

The society has played a key role in the development of new and innovative programs - ones that are becoming industry standards across Canada

Assisted Living Details

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The aging 75-bed residential care facility, known as Pioneer Lodge will be converted to 30 one-bedroom assisted living units for seniors.

Capital cost of this project is approximately \$5.3 million.

- The federal government, through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, is providing a \$750,000 capital grant.
- The Province will provide housing subsidies of \$3.8 million over 25 years.
- Interior Health is providing the land, valued at \$325,000, and will provide funding for personal care and part of the hospitality services to tenants.

Residential Care

Before starting the conversion of Pioneer Lodge from residential care to assisted living, a replacement 75-bed residential care facility, Hillside, was built. It is also being operated by Good Samaritan Canada. In addition, located adjacent to the new assisted living development is Bastion Place, a 101 residential care facility subsidized through Interior Health. The addition of assisted living to Salmon Arm builds on existing services for seniors and fills a need for a middle option between residential care and living alone with home support.