



PRESS RELEASE



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First Assisted Living Units in Burns Lake Open

BURNS LAKE, British Columbia, September 28, 2006 — Federal, provincial and community funding partners gathered today to celebrate the opening of the Lakes District Senior Citizens Housing Association's Tweedsmuir House, a \$4 million assisted living development that will provide 17 new homes for Burns Lake seniors. These are the first assisted living apartments for seniors in Burns Lake.

"Canada's new Government is very proud to support this project, the first of its kind in Burns Lake," said the Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister of Agriculture and Minister Responsible for British Columbia, on behalf of the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development. "This project will enable seniors to continue to live in their community, near their family and friends, and ensures that they enjoy the high quality of life that they deserve."

Tweedsmuir House was developed under Independent Living BC, an innovative housing-for-health program that provides seniors with assisted living, a middle option between home support and residential care.

"Seniors should have the opportunity to access affordable housing in their own communities," said Dennis MacKay, MLA for Bulkley Valley – Stikine. "The Province, in partnership with the Government of Canada, Northern Health, and the Lakes District Senior Citizens Housing Association, is working to ensure this."

Assisted living units are self-contained apartments where tenants receive personal care and hospitality services, such as meals, housekeeping and laundry services, recreational opportunities, assistance with medications, mobility and other care needs, as well as a 24-hour response system.

"As seniors age, they find it much more difficult to maintain their independence and still access quality care. Assisted living is a great middle option," said Northern Health Board chair Jeff Burghardt.

Added Burns Lake Mayor Bernice Magee, "Tweedsmuir House will have a positive impact on the Burns Lake community by offering seniors the opportunity to age in the neighbourhood they call home, close to family and friends."

"Tweedsmuir House will ensure that our residents have the health care and support services they require, regardless of their income level," said Karen Dueck, president of the Lakes District Senior Citizens Housing Association.

The Government of Canada, through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, will contribute more than \$130 million by 2010 towards affordable housing in this province. The provincial government, through BC Housing, will provide a minimum of \$34 million annually to subsidize the cost of units built under the Canada – BC Affordable Housing Agreement, as part of a larger strategy to provide a range of housing options for British Columbians in greatest need.

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Backgrounder

Tweedsmuir House

Tweedsmuir House, located at 53-9th Avenue in Burns Lake, houses 16 one-bedroom and one two-bedroom subsidized assisted living suites. The assisted living development is situated adjacent to the existing 25-unit seniors building operated by Lakes District Senior Citizens Housing Association. Tweedsmuir House, the first assisted living facility in Burns Lake, opened to residents in July 2006.

Tenants receive two meals a day, weekly housekeeping and linen services, 24-hour emergency response, personal care services and social and recreational opportunities.

The Lakes District Senior Citizens Housing Association was formed in 1962 to provide affordable housing for low-to moderate-income seniors. The non-profit society currently manages two seniors' homes, 14-unit Carroll Cottage and 25-unit Heritage Manor. The 39 units have a 100 per cent occupancy rate.

The capital cost of this project is \$4 million, with funding provided through:

- An \$850,000 capital grant provided by the Federal Government, through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation;
- \$2.4 million over 35 years in housing subsidies from the Province, through BC Housing;
- \$169,000 annually from Northern Health for personal care services and to subsidize hospitality services to tenants;
- \$20,000 in work and material or waived fees from the municipality of Burns Lake; and
- \$126,000 in land and \$322,000 in sponsorship contributions from The Lakes District Senior Citizens Housing Association.