



PRESS RELEASE



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New Affordable Housing Project Approved for Summerside

SUMMERSIDE, PEI, September 29, 2006 — A sod turning ceremony was held today to celebrate the approval of seven new units of affordable housing for individuals with mental illness in Summerside.

The Honourable Peter MacKay, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, on behalf of the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development; the Honourable Chester Gillan, Prince Edward Island Minister of Social Services and Seniors; MLA Helen MacDonald, St. Eleanors – Summerside; and Gordon Matheson, President of the Canadian Mental Health Association – PEI Division made the announcement.

The housing project, located on Duke Street in Summerside, will provide seven one-bedroom apartment units for rent at affordable levels for a minimum period of 10 years.

“Canada’s New Government is committed to building thriving communities that include affordable housing projects like the one we’re announcing today,” said Minister MacKay. “This project will not only provide quality, affordable housing for seven residents of Summerside facing mental illness, but it will also allow them to access the services they need to continue to make a positive difference in the community.”

“Today we are focusing on the strengths of the individual rather than the illness,” said Minister Gillan. “Because of this project, seven individuals will have safe, affordable housing in their own community. I commend the board, staff and volunteers of the CMHA – PEI Division for their meaningful work in helping people with mental illness open doors to mental wellness.”

The CMHA – PEI Division, the group responsible for this new development, will receive \$175,000 under the Canada – P.E.I. Affordable Housing Agreement. The Government of Canada will provide an additional \$175,000 through the Supporting Community Partnerships Initiative under the National Homelessness Initiative. Service Canada will provide \$114,766 through the Canada – PEI Labour Market Development Agreement, co-managed with the Provincial Department of Development and Technology. The Canadian Mental Health Association will provide an additional \$95,000 with the balance of funding provided by a mortgage loan.

“The development of this project is a result of a strong commitment by CMHA Board of Directors, regional volunteers, staff and community partners to ensure appropriate and affordable housing is available for individuals who experience mental illness. This is an integral part of the Canadian Mental Health Association’s mandate,” said Gordon Matheson, President of the Canadian Mental Health Association – PEI Division.

The Canada – Prince Edward Island Affordable Housing Agreement involves an investment of \$8.32 million in the creation of affordable housing units in Prince Edward Island. To date, 101 units have been supported by the Canada – PEI Affordable Housing Agreement in rural and urban communities across PEI.

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The Department of Social Services and Seniors delivers services that touch the lives of nearly every Islander. Staff works with other levels of government and community-based organizations to assist children, youth and families, seniors, persons with disabilities, and those in need of employment supports, financial assistance and affordable housing.

The PEI Division of the Canadian Mental Health Association – PEI is part of a nation-wide, charitable organization that promotes the mental health of all and supports the resilience and recovery of those experiencing mental illness.

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Backgrounder

Canada – P.E.I. Affordable Housing Program Agreement Summary

Objectives

To increase and sustain the supply of new affordable housing in Prince Edward Island. Housing supported by the Canada – P.E.I. Affordable Housing Agreement must be affordable for 10 years.

Program

Funding under this agreement will be used to create new, additional, affordable housing units for low to moderate income Islanders through rental, conversion and home ownership initiatives.

Administration

The program is administered by the Prince Edward Island Department of Social Services and Seniors. P.E.I. is responsible for the selection of affordable housing projects. Provincial priorities are housing for families, persons with disabilities and persons with special needs. The P.E.I. Government has partnered with Habitat for Humanity to deliver the home ownership component.

Financial Provisions

Maximum CMHC funding under the agreement is \$4.16 million to be matched by the Province of Prince Edward Island, municipalities and others partners.

Accountability

P.E.I. will provide annual audit and performance reports on the use of CMHC funding. CMHC will lead a national evaluation of the program in 2006 and the province will be invited to participate.