



PRESS RELEASE



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Building for Independence Opens to Provide Supportive Housing to People with Mental Health Disabilities

DARTHMOUTH, Nova Scotia, September 27, 2007 — Building for Independence, a supportive housing facility for people with mental health disabilities, opened its doors today. Mr. Gerald Keddy, Member of Parliament for South Shore – St. Margaret’s, on behalf of the Honourable Monte Solberg, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, participated with other dignitaries in a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the official opening.

“Canada's New Government is delivering on its commitment to help individuals who are homeless and at risk of becoming homeless, including the many Canadians on our streets who have mental illness and mental health disorders,” said Mr. Keddy.

“Building for Independence will help Nova Scotians with mental health disabilities improve their quality of life and fully participate in society.”

Canada’s New Government has made mental health issues a national priority. Last month, it created the Mental Health Commission as the cornerstone of the Government’s strategy to address mental health issues in Canada. The Commission will lead a national campaign to erase the stigma attached to mental health illness and ensure that Canadians in every part of the country have access to the best possible prevention, diagnosis and treatment practices.

The federal government provided funding of over \$1.05 million through homelessness funding, and in partnership with the Government of Nova Scotia through the Canada – Nova Scotia Affordable Housing Program.

“We are very proud to work with our housing partners to make Building for Independence a reality,” said Minister of Community Services Judy Streach. “This is a project that empowers people who are too often defined by what they can’t do. Thanks to this unique approach to affordable housing, people with mental health disabilities are able to access affordable homes and receive the supports they need to live on their own.”

“The Building for Independence project is proof that with a clear aim, committed community volunteers, and support from all levels of government and the private sector, great things can be achieved,” said Mr. Ken Greer, Chair of Affirmative Industries’ board of directors.

Affirmative Industries is a non-profit society that helps persons with disabilities achieve economic independence. It gives them employment and skills development through its community-based businesses. Affirmative Industries’ volunteer board represents organizations in law, industry, banking, communications and health care.

Canada’s New Government, through its Homelessness Partnering Strategy, is providing \$269.6 million over two years to help communities across Canada combat homelessness more effectively. The Strategy puts in place structures and supports that help people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless achieve self-sufficiency and full participation in society.

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