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Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation  
Ministry of Forests and Range and Minister Responsible for  
Housing  
Vancouver Coastal Health

## **SENIORS AND YOUNG ADULTS BENEFIT FROM ASSISTED LIVING**

VANCOUVER – A new \$20-million assisted living development for Vancouver seniors and young adults with disabilities was celebrated today with a groundbreaking attended by federal, provincial and municipal government representatives.

The new assisted living development, previously St. Vincent’s Hospital, is located at 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Heather Street. The development, operated by Providence Health Care, will provide affordable housing and care for seniors and young adults who require some support services but wish to maintain their independence. The units are funded under Independent Living BC (ILBC), a partnership between the federal and provincial governments, local health authorities, non-profit groups and the private sector.

“Canada’s New Government is working closely with our partners to support the Vancouver area and its many community projects,” said the Honourable David Emerson, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics, on behalf of the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development. “This development will enable seniors and young adults with disabilities to continue to live close to their family and friends and enjoy a high quality of life.”

Lorne Mayencourt, MLA for Vancouver-Burrard, said these units are part of the provincial government’s commitment to provide 5,000 residential care beds, assisted living units and supportive housing units with home support by the end of 2008.

“This assisted living development is unique in that it will house both seniors and young adults with disabilities together,” said Mayencourt. “The Province is committed to finding innovative ways to provide housing and care options to our most vulnerable citizens and this is a way for us to do just that, while in addition enabling multiple generations to live together on one site. I think a lot of good can come from that.”

The assisted living units will be self-contained apartments with a 24-hour response system. Residents will receive personal care services, such as recreational opportunities and assistance with medications, housekeeping, meals, and laundry services.

Vancouver Coastal Health will be subsidizing the residents’ personal care and hospitality services. The units for people with physical disabilities, while co-located at the site will operate as a separate housing option.

“There was significant input from the disabled community to ensure the units will be fully accessible to meet residents’ needs,” said Linda Thomas, director of housing for Vancouver Coastal Health. “We are excited to be a part of this development, as it supports our vision of creating a full range of options for seniors, and offers young people with disabilities housing that allows them to maintain a high level of independence.”

Vancouver Mayor Sam Sullivan added that the development of the assisted living building, which included the demolition of St. Vincent's Hospital, was done with an eye towards sustainability.

"I would like to congratulate Providence for being so creative in their approach to the development of this first phase of housing on the old hospital site," said Sullivan. "In addition to providing much-needed housing for seniors and youth with disabilities, this project is a model of sustainability due to the fact that many of the previous structures were recycled into the new development."

"To help meet the Ministry of Health's and VCH's goals, Providence's long-term vision for this site is to develop a campus of care – facilities that provide a broad range of elder-care services, enabling seniors to age in place rather than have to move as their care needs increase," said Dianne Doyle, president and CEO of Providence Health Care. "Providence voluntarily closed St. Vincent's Hospital so we could innovatively redevelop the site and renew the mission of the Sisters of Charity who founded the hospital."

The Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia, through the ILBC program, are committed to providing 4,000 affordable assisted living apartments across the province. To date, more than 3,500 ILBC units have been allocated in communities across B.C.

Today's announcement reflects the B.C. government's goal of providing the best system of support in Canada for seniors.

1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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