



**Independent  
Living BC**

## Information for Seniors

There are currently over 550,000 seniors over the age of 65 living in B.C.; by the year 2031 that number will increase to 1.4 million.

Today's seniors are living longer, healthier lives. While some need ongoing professional nursing care, the vast majority do not want or need 24-hour care in an institutional setting. Many want their independence and to maintain a better quality of life. They want to continue to live in the communities they call home.

Independent Living BC (ILBC) is an innovative housing-for-health program designed for seniors and people with disabilities who require some assistance to remain independent but don't want or need 24-hour care.

Assisted living homes are self-contained, wheelchair accessible apartments where residents receive hospitality and personal care services such as meals, housekeeping, laundry, recreational opportunities, assistance with medications, and a 24-hour response system. Residents can interact with one another; they can also have time alone, as well as private time with their friends and family.

ILBC residents pay 70 per cent of their after-tax income for rent and services. Through the program, assisted living homes are made more affordable for those seniors with low to moderate incomes.

Assisted living developments are sometimes built as part of a "campus of care", which allows seniors to age in place. Within the same site, residents may move from independent seniors' housing to assisted living, and on to residential care as their care levels change. This allows couples and friends whose care levels are different to stay in the same community and visit each other regularly.

ILBC is facilitated by the Province, through BC Housing, in partnership with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, regional health authorities, and the private and non-profit housing sectors. The program will create 3,500 homes with support services across the province.

BC Housing is the provincial crown agency that develops, manages and administers a wide range of subsidized housing options for those most in need. The Province of British Columbia has increased funding for housing programs to nearly \$172 million for the 2005/2006 fiscal year; the largest annual level ever in B.C.

## ELIGIBILITY FOR ASSISTED LIVING

Assisted living is intended primarily for individuals who are no longer able to stay in their own home with supports, but who do not require 24-hour professional nursing care and supervision.

Tenants of assisted living are relatively healthy and independent, but benefit from the additional supports and services available in the building. These include such things as daily meals, regular housekeeping and social activities, personal care and the security of knowing there is emergency support available.

To be eligible for subsidized assisted living, individuals need to:

- Require both personal care (e.g. assistance with meals, mobility, medications management, dressing, bathing) and hospitality services (e.g. laundry and housekeeping);
- Be able to participate in decisions about their activities and needs and be able to communicate these to others;
- Be capable of taking direction in an emergency and be able to use an emergency response system; and,
- Not exhibit behaviours that put the safety or well-being of others at risk.

## HOW TO APPLY

For information on how to apply to live in an ILBC apartment, contact a case manager with your local health authority. The case manager will work with you to determine whether assisted living is the best option to meet your needs. Health authorities are responsible for ILBC resident selection and therefore individuals are not able to apply directly to a housing development.

### Vancouver Island Health Authority:

General inquiries 250-388-2273

### Vancouver Coastal Health:

[www.vch.ca/assisted](http://www.vch.ca/assisted)

### Fraser Health:

General inquiries 604-519-8546

### Interior Health:

Central Okanagan Health Service Area 250-868-7707

East Kootenay Health Service Area 1-888-426-7566

Kootenay Boundary Health Service Area 1-888-221-3388

North Okanagan Health Service Area 250-545-9288

South Okanagan Health Service Area 250-770-3477

Thompson Cariboo Shuswap Health Service Area 250-851-7936

### Northern Health:

Dawson Creek Health Service Area 250-719-6500

Fort St. John Health Service Area 250-263-6000

Lakes District Health Service Area 250-692-2467

Omineca Health Service Area 250-567-2211  
(local 22)

Prince George Health Service Area 250-565-7317

Prince Rupert Health Service Area 250-624-7413

Quesnel Health Service Area 250-983-6850

Smithers Health Service Area 250-847-4471

Terrace Health Service Area 250-638-2234