



# Independently Healthy

A special publication on B.C. seniors' changing housing and care needs



## Seniors living longer, healthier lives

The seniors' population in British Columbia is growing at a record pace – almost twice the rate of the general population over the last 10 years. Right now there are more than half-a-million people over the age of 65, but that will increase to nearly 1.4 million people, almost one-quarter of the population, in the next 25 years.

Not only is the seniors' population growing quickly, but seniors today are more healthy and active than ever before – and they want to remain independent for as long as possible. That means past expectations of housing and care needs are also changing. This seniors' population isn't destined for traditional nursing homes – the vast majority does not want or need round-the-clock care, as most report

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**Inside:** Check out our *Seniors Resource to Living Independently Healthy*

## Independently Healthy

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### More Rent Assistance for BC Seniors

Are you 60 years or older and paying rent? You may now be eligible for the expanded Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) program, which provides rental assistance for low-income seniors across the province.

Recently, the Government of British Columbia doubled the SAFER budget by increasing the level of rental assistance for seniors and by expanding the program to those who pay pad rental fees for their manufactured home. These changes will extend SAFER benefits to an additional 7,200 seniors. Most of the 12,000 seniors currently receiving SAFER will get more money. Those who didn't qualify previously may now be eligible.

Find out today if you qualify for the SAFER program. Contact BC Housing at 604-433-2218 in the Lower Mainland, 1-800-257-7756 in BC or visit the BC Housing website.

[www.bchousing.org](http://www.bchousing.org)



### Seniors living longer, healthier lives

continued from front cover

their health as good to excellent, with one-third of people over age 65 participating in daily physical activity.

What happens when keeping up your own home becomes too difficult or home care just can't meet your needs anymore? But at the same time, independence remains possible without all of the provisions of residential care? Clearly, seniors need a wider range of housing options to match their needs. Today, assisted living, a middle option between home care and residential care, is increasingly popular.

Assisted living homes are private apartments within a development that offers support services such as meals, housekeeping, a 24-hour response system, personal care, assistance with medications and social and recreational programs.

"Assisted living allows seniors to live more independently and provides another option that wasn't available until recently," says Val MacDonald, Executive Director of the Seniors Housing Information Program (SHIP), a non-profit organization that provides housing information about the Lower Mainland for seniors. She urges seniors to learn about all their housing options. "The emphasis with assisted living is on independence rather than the traditional nursing home model that residential care provides," she notes.

Private sector operators have traditionally developed assisted living homes for seniors who can afford to pay market rates. Now, the province, in partnership with the federal government, the regional health authorities, and private and non-profit housing providers, has created the *Independent Living BC* (ILBC) program to provide subsidized assisted living options. The program does not replace residential care; instead, it's a middle option for seniors who need some assistance with daily activities, but who do not need 24-hour care.

"The *Independent Living BC* program makes assisted living affordable and provides the necessary supports for seniors to remain independent in a social and supportive atmosphere," says Margaret Coates, Executive Director at the 411 Seniors Centre Society in Vancouver.

**To find out if you are eligible for assisted living and the *Independent Living BC* (ILBC) program, see "Am I eligible for subsidized assisted living?" on page 5.**

**To find out contact information for the Seniors Housing Information Program (SHIP) and/or the 411 Seniors Centre Society, see Resource Contacts on page 6.**

## A special publication on B.C. seniors' housing and care needs

### Appreciating the benefits of assisted living

For 84-year-old Pat Booth, Surrey has been home for the past 25 years. So it was an easy move for her just down the street to The Gateway, an assisted living development that opened earlier this year.

"I'd been receiving home care twice a week before moving here," explained Pat. "But it wasn't enough. I'd just had hip replacement surgery and my daughter who lives in Richmond was having to help out a lot with shopping, banking and laundry. And frozen meals were getting to be very boring!"

Pat's new home is just one of the many housing developments helping to meet Fraser Health's target of creating more than 1,100 assisted living units. The 60 apartments at The Gateway receive rent supplements under the province's *Independent Living BC* program, which makes assisted living an affordable option for B.C. seniors.

Pat was assessed by a case worker from Fraser Health and six weeks later she moved into her new home. "It's wonderful to be in the same neighbourhood," she said. "People can come and visit me easily and it's within driving distance for everyone. I have my own place, so I can put my feet up and watch TV, read a book or do some knitting. It's up to me if I want to invite a friend over or take part in the social activities."

A former nurse at the BC Cancer Agency, Pat's caring nature is still apparent. "I like to help out," she said. "If I see someone having difficulty walking, I'll help them get their lunch. Every little bit helps."

With her positive attitude, Pat has made many new friends. "There's a camaraderie amongst us," she added. "We're all here for health reasons and it somehow helps us understand each other. When I had my own place, I could talk to friends over the phone, but it makes a big difference to talk face to face."

Pat participates in many social activities at the development, including a daily exercise program and special events such as bingo, flower arranging, movies, and mix and mingles. "I like to get in on everything that

goes," said Pat, "it's a great way to meet all sorts of people."

Pat's three children know that their mother is well looked after in assisted living. "They know that there's no need to worry," she emphasized, "as help is available immediately should anything happen. That's a big relief to them."

With the rent for the apartments subsidized under the *Independent Living BC* program, residents pay 70 per cent of their after-tax income for the rent and a wide range of hospitality and care services, including meals, laundry and housekeeping, social and recreational activities, help with medications and mobility and a 24-hour response system. Through the program, assisted living homes are made more affordable for those seniors



Pat Booth and her friend Denis Lee browse for some reading material in the new library of their assisted living housing development in Surrey.

with low to moderate incomes who can no longer live completely on their own but who do not want or need 24-hour residential care.

**For more information on subsidized assisted living, please see page 5.**



Since our inception in British Columbia 118 years ago, The Salvation Army has been committed to providing independent and assisted housing facilities for seniors across the province.

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# Seniors Resource to Living Independently Healthy

## Housing and care options

### At a glance

INDEPENDENT LIVING			FACILITY LIVING
<b>At Home</b> <b>1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home support</li> <li>• Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) – rent assistance for those over 60 years of age</li> </ul>	<b>Independent Housing with Support</b> <b>2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent housing</li> <li>• Some combination of the following:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meals</li> <li>• Housekeeping</li> <li>• 24-hour response</li> <li>• Social activities</li> <li>• Home support</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>Assisted Living</b> <b>3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent housing</li> <li>• Meals</li> <li>• Housekeeping</li> <li>• 24-hour response</li> <li>• Social activities</li> <li>• Personal care services</li> <li>• Registered</li> </ul>	<b>Residential Care</b> <b>4</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full-time professional care</li> <li>• Licensed</li> </ul>

#### 1 At Home Care

##### Home support

Home support services help seniors remain in their own homes. Home support workers provide personal assistance with daily activities such as bathing, dressing, grooming and light household tasks that help maintain a safe and supportive home. Contact your local health authority (see Resource Contacts on page 6) to find out more about home support.

##### Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) program

The SAFER program provides direct cash assistance to eligible B.C. residents who are age 60 or over and who pay rent for their homes. The Government of British Columbia recently doubled the budget for the SAFER program, increasing rent ceilings used to calculate the monthly rent subsidies. SAFER has also been expanded to include seniors

who pay pad rental fees for owner occupied manufactured homes. To find out more about SAFER, contact BC Housing (see Resource Contacts on page 6).

#### 2 Independent Housing with Support

This is housing where seniors live in communal settings (typically apartment units) and receive home support services. This would include some combination of meals, housekeeping, social activities, and a 24-hour response.

#### 3 Assisted Living

Assisted living residences provide housing, hospitality and personalized assistance services for adults who can live independently but require regular assistance with daily

activities. Each unit is a self-contained, wheelchair-accessible apartment where residents receive hospitality and personal care services, such as meals, housekeeping and laundry, social and recreational opportunities, assistance with medications, mobility and other care needs, as well as a 24-hour response system. The level of personal care services provided is usually higher than Independent Housing with Support. Applicants for publicly funded assisted living units must be at significant risk in their current environment.

#### 4 Residential Care

Residential Care provides services for adults who can no longer live safely or independently at home because of their more advanced health care needs.

## Answers to common questions

### Am I eligible for subsidized assisted living?

Publicly funded 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 service 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 24-hour response available.

To be eligible for subsidized assisted living (the *Independent Living BC* program), you need to:

- Require both personal care (e.g. assistance with meals, mobility, medication management, dressing, bathing) and hospitality services (e.g. laundry and housekeeping);
- Be able to participate in decisions about your 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 do I apply for subsidized assisted living?

Health authorities throughout the province are responsible for *Independent Living BC* resident selection and they assess applicants to determine if assisted living is their best option. Contact your nearest health authority (see Resource Contacts on page 6) and explain that you are interested in assisted living and ask to speak with a case manager.

A case manager will come to your home or interview you in a clinic setting. They will talk with you about your care needs and provide information about the services that are available.

If assisted living is considered an appropriate option for you, the case manager will forward your completed paperwork to a priority access team which will review your application and let your case manager know if you are eligible for an assisted living apartment. If eligible, you will be contacted when a suite becomes available.

You would pay about 70 per cent of your after-tax income for a suite, including all the services (meals, housekeeping etc.). For example, if your after-tax income is \$12,240 a year, or \$1,020 per month, the monthly payment would be about \$714.

### Q. Where do I begin to find out about housing options for seniors?

A. The provincial government has a toll-free Information for Seniors line: 1-800-465-4911. Staff are available Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to answer your questions about seniors' programs and services, including housing options. You can also access information on-line at [www.gov.bc.ca/seniors](http://www.gov.bc.ca/seniors) or [www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/hcc](http://www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/hcc).

Your nearest Community Health Centre can provide you with information about housing options, starting with home care and up to residential care. To find out the centre nearest

you, contact your local health authority (phone numbers of health authorities and other housing sources are listed in Resource Contacts on page 6).

There are seniors' resource centres located throughout the province. Look under your Senior Citizens' Services and Centres in your local Yellow Pages.

### Q. Where are the government-subsidized *Independent Living BC* assisted living developments located?

A. *Independent Living BC* apartments are offered in both for-profit and non-profit

assisted living developments throughout the province. For a complete list of subsidized assisted living developments in B.C., visit [www.bchousing.org/programs/independent/List](http://www.bchousing.org/programs/independent/List)

### Q. Who is likely to need the type of housing and care in the assisted living category?

A. Typically, people over 75 years of age who are living alone or isolated, and need help with personal care through frequent visits. They may be eating poorly and are worried about their safety and security, and can no longer stay in their own home with home support services.

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## Seniors Resource to Living Independently Healthy

### Who to contact

#### Provincial Government

##### BC Housing

Information on housing programs in B.C. including seniors' housing and the Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) program  
[www.bchousing.org](http://www.bchousing.org)  
 604-433-2218  
 Toll free: 1-800-257-7756

##### Choosing a Care Facility or Home

An online guide to choosing a licensed residential care facility or residential care home.  
[www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/ccf/adult/com031.pdf](http://www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/ccf/adult/com031.pdf)

##### Information for Seniors

Answers to questions about seniors' services, including housing options.  
[www.gov.bc.ca/seniors](http://www.gov.bc.ca/seniors)  
 1-800-465-4911

##### Enquiry BC

604-660-2421  
 Enquiry BC can assist you in contacting the provincial program, service or person that you need to speak to, Monday to Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

##### Home Owner Grants for Seniors

Information about grants that reduce the amount of property tax that homeowners pay.  
[www.rev.gov.bc.ca/rpt/home\\_owner\\_grants.htm](http://www.rev.gov.bc.ca/rpt/home_owner_grants.htm)  
 250-356-8904

##### Residential Tenancy Office

Information for landlords and tenants about their rights and responsibilities.  
[www.rto.gov.bc.ca](http://www.rto.gov.bc.ca)  
 Lower Mainland: 604-660-3456  
 Outside Lower Mainland: 1-800-665-8779

##### Regional Health Authorities

Health authorities, designated by five geographic regions, provide a full range of health care services ranging from hospital treatment to community-based residential, home health, mental health and public health services. Health authorities can also provide information on housing and care options, ranging from home care to residential care. They are also

responsible for selecting tenants for the *Independent Living BC* assisted living program.

##### Vancouver Coastal Health

[www.vch.ca](http://www.vch.ca)  
 Vancouver: 604-736-2033  
 North Shore: 604-983-6700  
 Richmond: 604-278-3361  
 Sea to Sky (Squamish): 604-892-2293 or 1-877-892-2231  
 Sunshine Coast: 604-741-0726  
 Powell River: 604-485-3310

##### Fraser Health

[www.fraserhealth.ca](http://www.fraserhealth.ca)  
 General information on assisted living: 604-519-8546

##### Vancouver Island Health Authority

[www.viha.ca](http://www.viha.ca)  
 South Island: 250-370-5699  
 Central Island: 250-740-6971  
 North Island: 250-740-6971

##### Interior Health

[www.interiorhealth.ca](http://www.interiorhealth.ca)  
 South Okanagan: 250-770-3477  
 Central Okanagan: 250-868-7707  
 North Okanagan: 250-545-9288

Thompson Cariboo Shuswap: 1-877-668-3388  
 East Kootenay: 1-888-426-7566  
 Kootenay Boundary: 1-877-221-3388

##### Northern Health

[www.northernhealth.ca](http://www.northernhealth.ca)  
 General Information: 250-612-4501

#### Federal Government

##### Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Information on seniors' housing and other housing programs in Canada.  
[www.cmhc.ca](http://www.cmhc.ca)  
 604-731-5733  
 Toll free: 1-800-639-3938

##### Seniors Canada Online

Information for seniors, caregivers, families and service providers.  
[www.seniors.gc.ca](http://www.seniors.gc.ca)

#### Other

##### Seniors Housing Information Program (SHIP)

Information on seniors' housing and services in the Lower Mainland.  
[www.seniorshousing.bc.ca](http://www.seniorshousing.bc.ca)  
 604-520-6621

##### 411 Seniors Centre Society

Volunteer counsellors can assist seniors with finding appropriate housing or refer them to other housing resources.  
[www.411seniors.bc.ca](http://www.411seniors.bc.ca)  
 604-684-8171

##### The Care Guide

A comprehensive guide to seniors' housing and care services including retirement homes, nursing homes, home health care, adult lifestyle retirement communities, supportive housing and palliative hospice care.  
[www.thecareguide.com](http://www.thecareguide.com)  
 1-800-311-2273



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For more information on programs and services for seniors (such as residential care, assisted living and home care services), please call:

Vancouver ..... 604-736-2033  
 North Shore ..... 604-983-6700  
 Richmond ..... 604-278-3361  
 Sea to Sky (Squamish).... 604-892-2293  
                                          toll free 1-877-892-2231  
 Sunshine Coast ..... 604-741-0726  
 Powell River ..... 604-485-3310

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## Protecting residents' health and safety

**S**usan Adams is B.C.'s Assisted Living Registrar, appointed by the Minister of Health in March, 2004 to protect residents' health and safety. The Registrar registers assisted living residences (over 90 to date) and sets and responds to concerns about health and safety standards. She works with care providers to ensure residents receive high quality care. British Columbia is the first province to regulate this form of assisted living. She answers some common questions about assisted living and her work.

### *What is the philosophy of assisted living?*

British Columbia is encouraging seniors and people with disabilities to live more independently, in the community, through assisted living. As a housing and care option, assisted living maximizes independence, while promoting choice, self-direction and dignity. This philosophy enables seniors and people with disabilities to remain active, contributing members of their communities for as long as possible.

### *What does assisted living involve?*

Assisted living residences offer housing, hospitality services and personal assistance to adults who can direct their own care, but require regular help with daily activities.

Meals, housekeeping, laundry, social and recreational opportunities and a 24-hour emergency response system are also provided. Health authorities accept applications to live in publicly-funded residences.

### *Why is registration important?*

Until now, assisted living residences have been unregulated. With registration, seniors and people with disabilities who make these residences their home have an independent, third party who is mandated to investigate health and safety concerns.

### *What powers does the Assisted Living Registrar have?*

The Assisted Living Registrar develops health and safety standards and investigates complaints. The Registrar can suspend or cancel a registration and impose fines on unregistered residences.

### *Do all assisted living residences have to comply?*

By law, all assisted living residences must meet provincial health and safety standards and be registered. This legislation applies whether the residence is publicly or privately owned and operated.

### *What should you do if you have a health or safety concern?*

Assisted living providers are expected to inform residents

about how to resolve complaints and to try to resolve concerns promptly. If the resident has ongoing concerns, the Assisted Living Registrar can be contacted, toll-free at 1-866-714-3378, to provide assistance.

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## Independently Healthy



**Independent  
Living BC**

**A Housing for Health  
Partnership**

## Affordable housing options being created for seniors across B.C.

The province's construction industry is one of the strongest contributors to our robust economic growth, but it's not all focused on building condominiums for young urban dwellers.



Seniors are asking for affordable housing that gives them greater independence, choice and quality of life, while addressing their increasing care needs. As a result of the *Independent Living BC* program, thousands of new apartments for low-income seniors are being built, new developments that will offer tenants an atmosphere that fosters community and friendships.

Created in 2002, *Independent Living BC* is a partnership between the province, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, regional health authorities, and the non-profit and private sectors. Close to 1,000 new *Independent Living BC* units have now been built as part of the recent construction boom, with 2,400 currently under construction or in development, with more to come.

*Independent Living BC* plans to create at least 3,500 units.

"We're making significant progress toward our goal, and making sure that seniors in B.C. have the

best system of support in Canada," said Rich Coleman, Minister of Forests and Range and Minister Responsible for Housing. "Providing low-income seniors with affordable assisted living apartments helps to expand the range of housing options, and provides an opportunity for them to remain close to family and friends in the communities they helped to build."

*Independent Living BC* is a housing-for-health program—an affordable middle option between home support and residential care for seniors and people with disabilities. Up until recently, assisted living was out of reach financially for many lower-income seniors and their families. The province subsidizes rents through the program so lower-income seniors have access to the benefits of assisted living, and the regional health authorities fund a range of support and personal care services.

### Designed for affordability and independence

These new developments are more home-like, offering residents an affordable, independent lifestyle complete with private apartments, nutritious meals in a common dining room, laundry and housekeeping, and a choice of social and recreational opportunities with families and friends. Residents also have access to personal care services such as help with medications and mobility, as well as a 24-hour response system.



## A special publication on B.C. seniors' housing and care needs

**Assisted living offers seniors 'the best of both worlds'**

Fran Kary has nothing but praise for her home at Joseph Creek Village, a private assisted living residence in Cranbrook.

In order to be with her frail husband, Fran lived in a residential care facility for 10 years. Now a widow, the 84-year-old had the opportunity to move into an assisted living apartment a year and a half ago.

"I actually needed more independence," said Fran, "and I wanted a place of my own. Now, I can come into my own apartment, make myself a pot of tea, but I can join other seniors in the dining room for meals. I don't feel like anyone's telling me what to do. But if I can't manage, I just push the emergency button and help is there. It's the best of both worlds."

Fran says that she feels like a real person again now that she has her own place and can look after herself more. The

Cranbrook native has enjoyed buying furniture for her home and welcoming old friends for visits. Her children know that she is well looked after.

An avid reader, Fran enjoys using the library at Joseph Creek Village and also participates in the other activities offered at the development. She plays bocce, bowls, and goes on shopping trips and outings to a nearby casino. "We also do mental aerobics, play Jeopardy and Wheel of Fortune," added Fran. "There is lots of different entertainment and I try to go to just about everything."

Joseph Creek Village, with 25 rent supplement apartments under the *Independent Living BC* program, is owned and operated by Golden Life

Management, which also has assisted living homes in Castlegar, Trail, Fernie, Invermere and Creston. Rent supplements are available to qualified seniors through the *Independent Living BC* program.

**To find out if you are eligible for the ILBC program, see page 5.**



The majority of the 3,500 *Independent Living BC* units are being developed with non-profit societies through the construction of new developments or the conversion of existing facilities. Canada's housing agency, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), on behalf of the Government of Canada, is helping to administer the new capital costs of developing the non-profit units under the Canada-British Columbia Affordable Housing Program Agreement.

"CMHC, on behalf of the Federal Government, is committed to working with the Province as well as other levels of government and community organizations to provide an integrated approach to care for the vulnerable members of our society," said Nelson Merizzi, General Manager, BC Region, CMHC.

"In addition to the \$230 million provided annually through existing housing programs

that benefit some 74,000 lower-income households in BC, we are pleased to be working with our multiple government and community partners administering the Federal Government's additional \$130 million contribution towards new affordable housing in this province by 2008."

This includes funds that will be directed towards the *Independent Living BC* program, the Provincial Homelessness Initiative, and towards the Provincial Housing Program which also benefits low-income seniors and others living independently in the community.

Other *Independent Living BC* homes will be provided through rent supplements by the provincial government to people living in for profit assisted living developments. Residents rent these apartments and receive appropriate support services for 70 per cent of their after-tax income.

In 2005, openings and groundbreakings have been held in communities across the province including Vancouver, North Vancouver, Surrey, Delta, Mission, Abbotsford, Chilliwack, Victoria, Saanich, Sidney, Salt Spring Island, Ucluelet, Gibsons, Powell River, Kelowna, Vernon, Westbank, Lake Country, Penticton, Keremeos, Kimberley, Creston, Burns Lake, Hazelton, and Fort St. James. These are in addition to developments already open in other cities and towns across B.C.

**To find out if you are eligible for a subsidized assisted living apartment, see page 5.**

**For a complete list of subsidized assisted living developments in B.C., visit [www.bchousing.org/programs/independent/List](http://www.bchousing.org/programs/independent/List)**

## Independently Healthy

# Campuses of care: the wave of the future

Housing providers are creating communities where residents can move from one care option to the next as their health needs change.

Independent housing. Assisted living. Residential care. As we age and our care needs change, some of us may need all three of these housing options. And moving to a new home in a new community can be stressful. Now, housing providers are starting to create "campuses of care": sites that offer different care options so seniors can move from one part of the development to another as their health needs change.

Vancouver's first campus of care is Haro Park in the West End. Up until a year ago, the 25-year-old organization was home to 68 seniors living independently, as well as 154 others who required residential care. Thirty-six independent housing apartments were recently converted to a middle option—assisted living—making Haro Park a full campus.

Karen Baillie is Haro Park's acting executive director. "A campus of care supports the

concept of aging in place," she said. "We have about four couples whose care needs are different, but they are able to live on the same site. It means the world to them to still be able to visit one another and have meals together. It keeps them going."

Retirement Concepts, a private developer, has built several campuses of care throughout the province. Nanaimo Seniors Village and The Waverly in Chilliwack are among them. Both offer independent housing, assisted living and residential care on one site. "Campuses seem to really help augment the health of a person in residential care when their spouse is living close by and is a vital part of their well-being," said Mary McDougall, Retirement Concept's chief operating officer. "We had seen a detrimental effect on the weaker partner when couples were separated. That was one of the reasons we wanted to create campuses."

Good Samaritan Canada, a Lutheran social service organization, has also been building campuses of care in British Columbia. Its Penticton site offers assisted living and residential care, including dementia care. Its Kelowna site has independent housing and assisted living and has plans to expand to include residential care. The society will open assisted living homes, residential care and dementia cottages at its Gibsons site early next year. And ground was broken earlier this fall for its Vernon campus, which will include all types of care.

"When building a campus of care, you're trying to build community," said Doug Stickney, Good Samaritan Canada's director of project development. "It should be representative of the needs of the community. Campuses give residents a better opportunity for integration and to share supports with one another."

continued on next page

## TWO DISTINGUISHED RETIREMENT RESIDENCES BY ONE INSPIRED COMPANY – ALL FOR YOU.

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## A special publication on B.C. seniors' housing and care needs

### Couple reunited at Haro Park

Frank and Kathleen Bradley lived together for more than 50 years. When Kathleen's health care needs changed and Frank wasn't able to meet those needs, he moved her to a residential care home while he stayed alone in their apartment.



Frank and Kathleen Bradley can now enjoy spending more time with each other.

When he found himself using Kathleen's walker for his own mobility issues, Frank's family knew that something needed to change.

Kathleen and Frank have been reunited at Haro Park, Vancouver's first campus of care. Frank lives in a newly renovated assisted living apartment, while Kathleen lives in an extended care room. When they want to spend time together, Frank helps Kathleen into her wheelchair and they go up to his apartment on the fifth floor.

This way, they can enjoy spending more time with each other. And they can eat meals together in the common dining room.

continued from previous page

Kevin Svoboda's company, Kaigo Retirement Communities, owns and operates Heritage Square, a campus of care in Vernon that offers assisted living and residential care. The company also owns and manages Pioneer Square, an assisted living home in Armstrong. "Offering more than one care option means a lot to seniors. Health authorities determine who has priority for subsidized assisted living homes and for residential care beds. In our case, it's worked out very positively for our residents to move from one type of care to the next. If a bed is not immediately available in our residential care, we look for an alternative care plan in assisted living until we can accommodate them. We try to make the transition as smooth as possible."

Eighty-eight-year-old William Haymond lives in assisted living at Heritage Square. His wife, Barbara, who passed away in September, lived downstairs in the site's residential care facility for over two years. "For us, this was the perfect answer," said Mr. Haymond. "Before moving here, I'd been living in a facility that changed from independent care to intensive care and I just couldn't take it. My needs were better suited to assisted living and having Barbara so close by was ideal."

## There's No Place Like Your Own Home!



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\* PLEASE NOTE: TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR HASI, YOU MUST BE OVER 65 YEARS OF AGE AND HAVE A LOW INCOME. LANDLORDS MAY ALSO APPLY.

## Independently Healthy

## The 'Sandwich Generation' – searching for solutions By Sam Zeitoun

B.C.'s seniors' population is expected to exceed the one-million mark in a decade.

The aging population presents a huge challenge for the "sandwich generation," children of elderly parents who need to maintain a balance in their own lives while dealing with the expectations of both their children and their aging parents.

These situations are often complex, making it difficult to know where to start. Many of us wait too long to broach the subject. We feel that our parents will be offended when the subject is raised, yet parents are often relieved to know that their children want to talk about planning.

Here are some questions you should ask:

- Do my parents live alone in a large house?
- Are there a lot of stairs?
- Are family members in the area?
- Do they need to have additional help during a health issue or after a hospital stay?

- Are they eating properly?
- Are they seeing other people?
- What do they do with their time during the day?
- What is the plan if one parent passes away?
- When is the best time to make a change in their living situation?
- Can they continue to live independently?
- What is their financial situation?

Perhaps assisted living would be a better option for your parents. Ask yourself:

- Do they need help with meal preparation, dressing, bathing, laundry, housekeeping, medication management?
- Are they able to participate in decisions about their activities and needs and are they able to communicate these needs?
- Are they capable of taking direction in an

emergency and able to use an emergency response system?

Learn about options that are available and be practical and clear about the environment that will suit your parents best. Research retirement communities and assisted living developments and visit them. Meet the management team and ask lots of questions. Speak with existing residents about their experiences.

Most of us know changes are necessary and we tend to procrastinate. It is important to have ongoing dialogue rather than pressure planning triggered by a life-changing event. In my experience, parents who are approached thoughtfully are often more open to suggestions and assistance than we give them credit for.

*Sam Zeitoun is the General Manager of The O'Keefe—a Leisure Care Retirement Community in Vancouver.*

## Seniors 2005 INDEPENDENTLY HEALTHY



The addition of 1,176 new Assisted Living units in communities across Fraser Health over the next year is the result of our commitment to innovation and partnerships with other community groups who share our goal of meeting the health and housing needs of seniors.

Assisted living is a new option to meet a range of care and housing needs for seniors and others with disabilities. It fits between home care and facility-based complex care. In Assisted Living, singles or couples enjoy a one-bedroom or bachelor suite and the single fee for rent and services includes the cost of 2 meals daily, 24-hour emergency response service, and an individually tailored care and service plan to meet the specific health and well-being concerns of each tenant. Individuals moving into Fraser Health Assisted Living units pay a single monthly rate set at 70% of after-tax income for rent and services.

Our newly-opened Assisted Living projects are proving extremely successful with clients telling us that this approach, which promotes personal decision-making, individuality, and choices, means better health, satisfaction and quality of life.

Admission to Assisted Living is coordinated through our local Home Health offices. To call your local office, check the Blue Pages in your phone directory under Fraser Health Authority.

**Community groups interested in holding a public information session about Assisted Living are invited to contact 604.519.8546.**

**Fraser Health is working to develop this service across the health authority, in co-operation with the Independent Living BC program, and our growing list of partners in the non-profit and private sectors. Together we are moving toward Better Health, Best in Health Care.**

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Better health.  
Best in health care.

A special publication on B.C. seniors' housing and care needs

## Federal funds help low-income seniors live independently

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) has funds to help low-income seniors improve the safety, comfort and accessibility of their homes.

CMHC, the federal government's housing agency, has a Home Adaptations for Seniors Independence (HASI) program which provides low-income seniors with financial assistance of up to \$3,500 to make minor home adaptations to improve a home's accessibility as well as security.

Some of the many adaptations that can be made to improve accessibility are: installing a ramp; lever handles on doors; grab bars; increasing lighting; and installing pull-out shelves in kitchen cupboards.

To improve home safety, seniors can add security film or bars on windows or reinforce doors and replace locks.

To qualify for assistance from the HASI Program, at least one member of the household must be 65 years or over and have difficulty with daily living activities or be concerned about their personal safety. As this program is for low-income seniors, applicants must provide proof of income to qualify.

Assistance is in the form of a forgivable loan of up to \$3,500. This loan does not have to be repaid provided that the occupant of the home agrees to live in the dwelling for the duration of the loan forgiveness period, which is six months.

Landlords can apply on behalf of their senior tenants, provided that they agree to not increase rents as a result of the adaptations.

To find out if you are eligible, please contact CMHC at (604) 731- 5733 or toll free at 1-800-639-3938. The application deadline for this year's funding is March 31, 2006.

## An Hour Ago She Heard About Our Free Move Offer.



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Independently Healthy

# Supporting seniors at home, in the community

British Columbia is transforming care services for seniors in this province.

For the past four years, government has been working in partnership with the non-profit and private sectors to support British Columbia seniors to live as independently as possible, for as long as possible.

Many of the changes are focused on keeping seniors well, active and contributing to their communities. With recent advances in medical technology and prescription drugs, it is hardly surprising that the vast majority of British Columbia

seniors live in the community. Many seniors are in very good health and are active, contributing members of their families and communities.

There will always be seniors who need a higher level of care. At this time, approximately six per cent of all British Columbia seniors live in publicly funded residential care facilities that provide 24/7 professional nursing assistance.

Government is responding to this trend by providing 5,000 new care beds and units for

seniors and people with disabilities by 2008 and by developing innovative community options, such as expanded adult day programs and after-hours response teams. The province has already developed or upgraded thousands of publicly funded residential care beds and assisted living and supportive housing units with home support. Annual spending for seniors' care has increased by about \$25 million since 2001 and will expand by another \$75 million by 2006.

Now that assisted living residences are operating in 33 communities throughout the province, today's seniors have more affordable, independent housing and care options. As an example, St. Francis by the Sea in Victoria is a welcoming home for seniors who can direct their own care, but need some assistance with personal care. Home support workers visit residents as needed, enabling them to live in the community they have chosen to call home.

For those who need 24/7 assistance, patient care has been improved through upgrades to aging residential care facilities and the creation of new beds where needed. End-of-life services are also part of planning for seniors' care. Since 2001, seniors nearing the end of their life have had enhanced coverage for at-home medications, medical supplies and equipment through the B.C. Palliative Care Benefits Program.

Programs like these are all part of the government-wide effort to ensure that B.C. seniors have the right care, in the right setting.

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## A special publication on B.C. seniors' housing and care needs

## Shine a light on someone who has made a difference

The 2nd Annual Lighthouse Awards Program honours seniors who make our communities better places to live.

The Leisure Care Lighthouse Awards Program was launched last year to honour older adults in the Lower Mainland who make a difference in our lives.

This awards program honoured seniors whose dedication and commitment have changed the lives of individuals, families, and entire communities. More than 140 nominations were received last year, with finalists and winners honoured at a special awards luncheon this past spring.

Now you have a chance to nominate someone for the 2006 Lighthouse Awards Program.

There are four categories to consider:

- **Shining Light Award:** For outstanding volunteer service to the community and/or advocacy on behalf of seniors.
- **Wisdom of Age Mentorship Award:** For demonstrating a commitment to make a difference in the lives of children.
- **Picture of Health Award:** For demonstrating an exemplary commitment to good health and fitness.
- **Philanthropy Award:** For demonstrating a concern for humanity by providing significant financial resources and personal time.

The nomination deadline is February 20, 2006, with the awards luncheon on April 21, 2006.

**Don't wait...** nominate someone today!

This year's sponsors include The O'Keefe, Concert Properties, Ministry of Health, Minister Responsible for Seniors' and Women's Services, BC Housing, Vancouver Coastal Health, Neptune Foods, Vancouver Sun and Global TV.

**For more information on the awards program or sponsorship opportunities, call (604) 736-1640.**

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