
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2006FOR0188-001507
Dec. 14, 2006

Ministry of Forests and Range and Minister Responsible for Housing
Ministry of Health
Fraser Health

MILESTONE REACHED IN 5,000-BED COMMITMENT FOR SENIORS

COQUITLAM – At the opening of 60 new assisted living units at the Belvedere in Coquitlam, Health Minister George Abbott announced the Province has surpassed 2,500 net-new residential care beds, assisted living units and supportive housing units as part of the government’s commitment for 5,000 new beds and units by the end of 2008.

“The government made a commitment to our province’s seniors and we are making great progress. We have reached the halfway point, with 2,521 beds and units completed,” said Abbott. “These 60 new assisted living units in Coquitlam are part of our commitment and will give residents the support and care they need to live independently and remain connected with their communities.”

The Residences at Belvedere is part of a campus of care, with 114 assisted living units and 61 residential care beds. A campus of care allows seniors to age in-place, remaining in the same facility as their care needs change.

Sixty of the 114 assisted living units will receive rent supplements from the Province under the Independent Living BC (ILBC) program. ILBC meets the needs of lower-income seniors and people with disabilities by providing a middle option between home support and residential care. The new units will provide residents with personal care, hot meals, housekeeping, laundry services, recreational opportunities and a 24-hour emergency response system. The Province is committed to providing more than 4,000 affordable assisted living apartments for B.C. seniors and persons with disabilities through the ILBC program.

“We’re proud of the progress we have made in building a strong inventory of assisted living units within Fraser Health in the last two years and partners like the Belvedere Seniors Living that have helped make it happen,” said Keith Anderson, interim CEO of Fraser Health. “Fraser Health will have the highest number of assisted living units in the province. We are working with the Province to ensure seniors throughout the region get the best possible care.”

“Belvedere Seniors Living is pleased to be a part of the government’s strategy to provide affordable accommodation with care and supports for seniors within the Fraser Health region,” said Bert Evertt, CEO of Belvedere Seniors Living. “Residences at Belvedere is an integral component of our campus of care here in Coquitlam.”

In 2001, the government initiated a redesign of seniors’ care in British Columbia. Provincewide consultations were held with seniors, advocacy groups and health professionals that resulted in a number of improvements that responded to the needs of today’s seniors. The 5,000-bed commitment is an important part of the continuum of care for B.C. seniors, with assisted living providing a bridge for seniors who are no longer able to remain at home, but are not yet ready to enter a residential care facility.

“We are improving seniors’ care in British Columbia,” added Abbott. “We have built 7,200 new and replacement beds and units, introduced assisted living across the province and reduced wait times to access residential care. We are investing in better quality care and ensuring that seniors receive the right care in the most appropriate setting.”

2 backgrounder(s) attached.

Media contact: Laura Kohli
Communications
BC Housing
604 439-8583
604 805-4960 (cell)

Marisa Adair
Communications Director
Ministry of Health
250 920-8500 (cell)
250 951-1887 (media line)

Michael Bernard
Media relations
Fraser Health
604 587-4611

Bert Evertt
Owner
Belvedere Seniors Living
604 939-5991

For more information on government services or to subscribe to the Province’s news feeds using RSS, visit the Province’s website at www.gov.bc.ca.