



## PRESS RELEASE



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### **Seniors Housing Development Opens in Vanderhoof**

**VANDERHOOF, British Columbia, May 21, 2008** — Seniors in Vanderhoof now have access to more affordable housing options with today's opening of Riverside Place, a \$4.1-million, 32-unit development offering assisted living apartments and the first Seniors' Supportive Housing program apartments to open in the North.

"The Government of Canada is committed to making affordable housing more available in British Columbia for those who need it most," said Dick Harris, MP for Cariboo – Prince George, on behalf of the Honourable Monte Solberg, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development. "Seniors in Vanderhoof will now have access to quality, affordable housing and the services that meet their specific needs, while remaining close to their families and friends in the community."

The development is a result of a partnership between the federal and provincial governments. The federal government, through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation provided funding through the Canada – BC Affordable Housing Program Agreement for the assisted living units. The Province provided a one-time grant for the Seniors' Supportive Housing units and will provide a housing subsidy for all of the units to ensure that the housing remains affordable. Northern Health will provide ongoing funding for personal care services and hospitality services to ensure tenants have access to the health-care support they need to remain independent.

"Riverside Place ensures Vanderhoof seniors will enjoy apartment style living in the community they are part of," said John Rustad, MLA Prince George-Omineca. "These assisted-living and Seniors' Supportive Housing units promote seniors' independence in safe and affordable homes."

Riverside Place provides 14 units of assisted living, 12 units of Seniors' Supportive Housing and six units of provincially subsidized housing that are not part of either housing program. The tenants of those six units receive rent subsidies based on their income.

"Northern Health's goal is to provide a range of services for seniors across the region. It is important that we provide the best possible support for our seniors' unique health needs. These new assisted living developments will help Vanderhoof seniors remain independent, while having their care needs met," said Michael McMillan, Northern Health's chief operating officer for the Northern Interior.

"We believe that our local seniors should have a place to live when their care needs change," said Brian Malchow, president of the Nechako Valley Community Services Society. "Riverside Place is achieving our goal of assisting our seniors in maintaining their independence and quality of life for as long as possible."

The assisted living units are part of the British Columbia government's commitment to provide 5,000 net-new residential care beds, assisted living units, and supportive housing with home support units by the end of 2008. As of December 2007, 9,599 new and replacement beds and units have been built, including 4,053 net-new beds/units. In addition, there are 2,401 beds/units under construction.

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The Province has exceeded its Budget 2007 Seniors' Supportive Housing program commitment to upgrade or convert **up to 750** subsidized housing units to supportive housing. The program combines accessible housing with a support services package that enables seniors and people with disabilities to maintain their independence and remain in their homes and communities longer. Budget 2008 increased the amount the Province invests in affordable housing and shelters to more than \$380 million a year, more than three times as much as in 2001.

The Government of Canada, through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, will contribute more than \$130 million by 2010 towards affordable housing in this province. The provincial government provides a minimum of \$34 million annually to subsidize the cost of units built under the Canada – BC Affordable Housing Agreement, as part of a larger strategy to provide a range of housing options for British Columbians in greatest need.

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