

Improved dementia care coming to Kitimat

News Release

Kitimat

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Residents and seniors in Kitimat and Kitimaat Village area will soon have access to high-quality dementia care at a new long-term care (LTC) home being developed at 100 Loganberry Ave.

“People want the best care for their loved ones in the community they live,” said Adrian Dix, Minister of Health. “This is especially true when it comes to stressful diagnoses, such as Alzheimer’s or another form of dementia. The long-term care home in Kitimat will offer the best quality of life for individuals living with dementia in a serene setting with dedicated staff.”

This project is jointly funded by the Province, through Northern Health, North West Regional Hospital District, Kitimat Valley Housing Society and Haisla Nation.

“Our government is committed to improving the quality of life for seniors in their home community, including in rural and remote areas,” said Harwinder Sandhu, Parliamentary Secretary for Seniors’ Services and Long-Term Care. “This long-term care home, which is focused on meeting

the needs of those living with dementia, will meet people where they are at so seniors can receive the care they need as they age, close to their loved ones and community.”

The project will provide 12 single-occupancy rooms for seniors living with dementia who require additional support and would benefit from long-term care services targeted to individuals with dementia.

“Having specialized and considerate care for people with dementia close to home is excellent news for families in Kitimat and the region,” said Jennifer Rice, Parliamentary Secretary for Rural Health. “Quality health care that meets the needs of people should be available regardless of where in the province someone lives. This is another example of our commitment to improving rural health care in B.C.”

People living in the LTC home will find a warm, inviting home-like environment that encourages seniors to engage in day-to-day activities, reflecting lifelong interests, such as meal preparation, gardening, music and crafts.

Development of the new LTC is based on what is known as a “quality of life” model. The goal is to support seniors living with dementia to enjoy the best quality of life despite the effects of dementia, through the combined efforts of staff, volunteers and family members who nurture a sense of purpose, belonging and companionship.

Civeo Corporation donated the land for the project through the auspices of the Kitimat Valley Housing Society. The society is spearheading a fundraising campaign to offset costs associated with bringing this LTC home to Kitimat.

Northern Health led the business planning for the project in partnership with the Kitimat Valley Housing Society, Haisla Nation and the District of Kitimat. The project business plan was approved on Aug. 10, 2023. Procurement is underway, which includes confirming the budget and schedule. Construction is anticipated to begin in fall 2024. The facility is expected to open in 2026.

To meet the increasing demand from British Columbia's growing seniors' population during the past five years, the government has invested approximately \$2 billion to expand and improve the quality of care for seniors. This funding covers improvements, such as primary care, home health, long-term care and assisted living.

In addition, government is investing more than \$2 billion in the redevelopment and replacement of long-term care facilities, such as projects in Vancouver, Colwood, Abbotsford, Richmond, Nanaimo, Delta, Campbell River and Cranbrook.

Quotes:

Colleen Nyce, board chair, Northern Health –

“I am extremely happy about the upcoming construction of the care home in Kitimat that supports people with dementia. This project is a true example of community partners working together with passion and determination to make life easier for this segment of our aging population.”

Barry Pages, chair, North West Regional Hospital District –

“This project is possible because of the collaboration of many partners. It's great to see so many organizations coming together to deliver this innovative project that will give people with dementia the opportunity to live fulfilling and independent lives. We hope this model of care can be applied to other facilities in other communities.”

Fernanda Fontes, president, Kitimat Valley Housing Society –

“We are very grateful for the strong and collaborative relationships that we have built with Northern Health, Haisla Nation, District of Kitimat and LNG Canada, which have supported us immensely throughout our journey. We are excited for the residents of Kitimat and Kitamaat Village who have been so very generous and have patiently waited for our project to come to fruition. We cannot wait to get the shovels in the ground and build our home.”

Phil Germuth, mayor, District of Kitimat –

“Projects such as these are incredibly important for ensuring seniors in our communities can stay closer to home in supportive settings. We are grateful for the efforts of the partnerships that have brought this project to this next step and look forward to the benefits it will bring residents in our community.”