
NEWS RELEASE

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Office of the Premier
Ministry of Health Services

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS ON NEW MENTAL HEALTH FACILITY

COQUITLAM – Premier Gordon Campbell and Health Services Minister George Abbott today launched construction at the future site of the new, \$9-million Cypress Lodge, a 20-bed mental health rehabilitation facility that will provide residents with individualized care in a supportive, community-like setting.

“Mental illness affects about one in five British Columbians from all walks of life. Providing the best possible support through facilities like Cypress Lodge ensures people who suffer from mental illness can live fuller, happier lives,” said Premier Campbell. “The ultimate goal of Cypress Lodge is to give residents the highest level of independence possible and develop life-skills for everyday living.”

Cypress Lodge is one component of the Riverview Redevelopment Project, which is part of government’s \$138-million capital commitment to build new mental health facilities across B.C. A total of 389 Riverview Hospital replacement beds have opened in communities across the province.

“Cypress Lodge is a world-class specialized mental health facility that will provide a supportive environment for people with challenges who need greater levels of supports than are provided in community-based facilities,” said Abbott. “We have committed to build facilities like this across the province, and Cypress Lodge is a great example of this commitment being fulfilled.”

Scheduled for completion in late 2009, Cypress Lodge will be located on the Riverview Hospital grounds and will house a mental health program for individuals requiring more intensive psychosocial rehabilitation than is available in existing community mental health residential rehabilitation services.

“Fraser Health is taking another significant step forward in providing enhanced care environments that best promote mental wellness and recovery for individuals living with mental illness,” said Gordon Barefoot, chair of Fraser Health’s board of directors. “I’m very proud to see Fraser Health focus on creating tertiary facilities where our mental health clients, while receiving the support they need, can be more in control of their lives and the illness affecting them.”

All Cypress Lodge residents will have private rooms and the new facility will support residents in learning or relearning basic living skills such as meal preparation, housekeeping, leisure planning, money management and vocational skills through supported education programs and job training initiatives. Residents will be encouraged to contribute to and utilize community services.

In addition to featuring a warm, home-like design for residents, Cypress Lodge will be built to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards to ensure the least impact on the surrounding environment. The building design for this facility will focus on minimizing energy use, reducing water use, improving indoor air quality and thermal comfort and incorporating resource-efficient materials.

Cypress Lodge will join Fraser Health's existing network of services on Riverview grounds, which include two specialized residential facilities: the 20-bed Connolly Lodge and the 24-bed Cottonwood Lodge. Fraser Health will operate the three lodges as a campus of care, which will include some shared clinical programming and services.

Investing in mental health and addictions is part of government's Pacific Leadership Agenda to improve the health of citizens and to renew the public health system. The Province spends more than \$1.1 billion per year to support mental health and addiction services in British Columbia, a more than 30 per cent increase over 2001 spending.

1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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