



# NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **SPECIALIZED DEMENTIA CARE FACILITY IMPROVES CARE FOR SENIORS WITH DEMENTIA**

VICTORIA – Provincial and community partners gathered in Brentwood Bay on southern Vancouver Island to celebrate Sluggett House, a new \$1.9 million specialized care facility that is improving the quality of life for seniors living with dementia.

“The provincial government is committed to providing care and support services that help seniors live longer in their communities,” said Murray Coell, MLA for Saanich North and the Gulf Islands. “Providing competent and compassionate dementia care services is an important component of the continuum of seniors’ care in British Columbia.”

Sluggett House is owned and operated by Beacon Community Services, a local non-profit agency with strong roots in the Saanich Peninsula community. The Vancouver Island Health Authority provides \$434,000 per annum for operating costs. The 16 residents who live in the facility do not have physical health complications but can no longer live safely in their own home. Specialized care professionals work on-site on a 24/7 basis, ensuring residents are safely cared for in a secure and supervised environment where staff are selected and trained to provide a compassionate approach to care.

Approximately 30% of all seniors waitlisted for residential care on southern Vancouver Island meet the care criteria for dementia care housing. Within the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA), seniors living with dementia are a growing population that are frequent visitors to our Emergency Departments and who often use other resources such as home support and complex care that could be better allocated.

“The residents living at Sluggett House require residential care services but are not able to live in an Assisted Living setting due to their level of dementia,” said Jac Kreut, Board Chair for VIHA. “This specialized level of housing not only enhances care services for this specific population, but also helps alleviate some of the pressures on our extremely busy Emergency Departments.”

Named after the Sluggett family, who donated the half-acre property at 1336 Marchant Road to BCS, Sluggett House boasts secure indoor and outdoor spaces to reduce the risk of elopement, and a décor and ambiance to reflect best practices in dementia care. The dementia care model allows residents to make choices about social interactions and activities that reinforce their sense of dignity and emphasize their abilities rather than their losses.

“This is the type of care I envisioned for seniors throughout my career as a nurse and manager in home care,” says Dawn Fyke, Chair of Beacon Community Services’ Board of Directors. “This

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model of dementia care improves the quality of life for residents because it respects them for who they are and who they have been in their life and encourages them to engage in activities that bring them joy,” says Fyke, adding that “It’s an extension of the services already provided at Brentwood House,” speaking of an existing facility located at 1167 Stelly’s Cross Road in Brentwood Bay, also operated by BCS.

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Contacts:

Shannon Marshall  
Vancouver Island Health Authority  
250-370-8270

Sandra Russell  
Beacon Community Services  
250-658-7213