

Residents at Shannon Oaks in Vancouver enjoy social activities like the Resident Golf Tournament.

Quality of Life

SENIORS FIND SUPPORT, RESOURCES AND INNOVATIVE RETIREMENT SOLUTIONS AT BAPTIST HOUSING

TODAY, B.C. IS HOME TO MORE THAN 700,000 SENIORS OVER THE AGE OF 65 – an age group that has nearly doubled over the last 25 years, and is expected to double again in another quarter century. To say that senior housing and care is a growth industry would be an understatement. But as the need for seniors resources in B.C. has grown, Baptist Housing, a non-profit organization founded in 1964 to serve that demographic, has grown with it.

Baptist Housing began with one facility in south Vancouver that housed 58 residents and catered to independent seniors with limited income. Today, the organization's 18 B.C. residences are home to 2,000 seniors and offer a mix of housing and care options, including affordable rental apartments, independent living with supportive services, assisted living and residential care. Several campuses are able to provide a complete continuum of these care services, allowing residents to "age in place" and receive greater support as their needs evolve. >





The Resident Exercise Class at Shannon Oaks in Oak Bay provides opportunities for seniors to stay active and live well.

Unlike most non-profits, Baptist Housing has experienced continued, steady growth over its 49-year history. President and CEO Howard Johnson credits Baptist Housing's success to its core principles. "We're a faith-based, non-profit organization," he explains. "Our values have distinguished us and make us unique in how we make decisions as team members and carry out our work every day."

Vice president and CFO Gordon Braun also emphasizes Baptist Housing's demonstrated commitment to the principles of social entrepreneurship. A clear mission to meet local needs for seniors housing makes growth and expansion the continual goal,

BAPTIST HOUSING FAST FACTS

Year started: 1964

Number of residences: 18

Services offered: Affordable and subsidized rental housing, independent living with support services, assisted living and residential care

Communities served: Victoria, Oak Bay, Saanich, Vancouver, Maple Ridge, Kelowna, Salmon Arm and Armstrong

Total Residents: 2,000

Total Team Members: 900

and the reinvestment of any accumulated resources into future projects (rather than shareholders' pockets) makes that expansion continually possible. "We've developed a very strong and capable management team over the years," says Braun. "We've progressively taken on bigger, more ambitious projects as a result. Our board has also embraced and encouraged growth, setting it as an agenda for Baptist Housing. When you have that combination, and then add the principles of social entrepreneurship – all those things come together to enable us to grow."

Another ingredient in Baptist Housing's success is its partnerships across the industry. "We recognize that we can't achieve everything on our own, but by being collaborative and building strong relationships with public and private partners, we're able to help bridge the gap between different agencies and government bodies," says Johnson. "In essence, we become a conduit, bringing everybody to the table to provide the housing and care that's needed."

Johnson points to Baptist Housing's newest residence as an example of how those partnerships work. Victoria's Carey Place is a 55-unit rental apartment building that opened in 2012. The one-bedroom suites are



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Baptist Housing's Sun Pointe Village in Kelowna offers independent living, assisted living and residential care so that seniors can age in place.

currently dedicated to independent living, but thoughtful details such as grab bars, extra-wide doorways and the basis for food service facilities will make it possible in the future for Carey Place to provide greater levels of care as residents age in place. The residence features a large lounge and full-service kitchen that encourage interaction and a sense of community amongst residents. "Two of the biggest issues seniors face are loneliness and boredom," says Dayle Krahn, VP of property maintenance and development. "We work really hard at designing buildings that will combat those issues."

Carey Place is the product of a four-way partnership: the federal government and BC Housing (on behalf of the provincial government) jointly provided the funding; the Capital Regional District owns the land and furnished a long-term lease; and Baptist Housing built and operates the residence. Thanks to a partnership between BC Housing and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) that benefits non-profits, the mortgage on Carey Place has been fully insured, with a low interest rate locked in for a 10-year term. "As a result of this partnership, we've been able to provide sustainable rents that are affordable, including some that are geared to be about 30 per cent of a senior's income," says Braun.

Adjacent to Carey Place is The Heights at Mt. View, a 260-bed state-of-the-art residential care community currently under construction. The Heights at Mt. View exemplifies Baptist Housing's unique



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Carey Place, Baptist Housing's newest residence, opened in June 2012 and features 55 one-bedroom suites.

approach to providing seniors with the latest innovations in care residence design. Each "house" of 20 suites has a kitchen, dining room, living room and den for residents to use, allowing them to maintain many of their own routines and as much independence as possible.

In addition to developing a sense of community within the residence, the design of The Heights at Mt. View aims to integrate the residence into the local neighbourhood. "We want to have the community involved, so we put a café on the main floor so that neighbours in the community feel welcome to come into the building," says Krahn.

One of the most innovative elements of The Heights at Mt. View is that two houses (40 suites) are specifically dedicated to seniors living with dementia. "In terms of the care continuum, licensed dementia housing offers less daily assistance than residential care but more supervision than assisted living," explains Johnson. "Residents retain their independence but are supervised 24/7." Licensed dementia

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Promotional Feature

housing is new to B.C., and a welcome alternative to forcing residents with dementia into a heavy-care environment. "It's very innovative. Studies are showing that residents with dementia are actually living longer."

It's this forward-thinking approach and dedication to innovation that has made Baptist Housing a leader in both the industry and the greater community. Baptist Housing is heavily engaged in several associations, including the B.C. Non-Profit Housing Association (representing all affordable housing in the province), the Denominational Health Association (comprising all faith-based health-care providers) and the Health Employers Association of B.C. (a resource for human resource-related issues in B.C. health care).

Baptist Housing is also a local source of knowledge and expertise. Johnson, on behalf of Baptist Housing, recently participated in the Mayor's Task Force



The Heights at Mt. View is a 260-bed state-of-the-art residential care community that will replace aging facilities and offer desperately needed residential care for seniors in Greater Victoria. The facility will open in 2014.

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Canada ICI Capital congratulates Baptist Housing on their innovative seniors' housing projects. We have had a long and mutually constructive business relationship with Baptist Housing, and wish them all the best in the future delivery of ground breaking housing to seniors in British Columbia.

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on Housing Affordability in Vancouver. The CMHC regularly invites international visitors to tour Baptist Housing's Shannon Oaks, showcasing the residence as an example of design excellence and innovative use of B.C. products. Shannon Oaks also receives frequent visits from graduate-level gerontology students through an educational partnership with SFU.

Baptist Housing is eagerly anticipating the completion of The Heights at Mt. View, the product of a partnership with Vancouver Island Health Authority and the Capital Regional Hospital District. The facility is expected to open in the fall of 2014. And beyond that? "We're seeking out opportunities throughout southern B.C.," says Krahn. "We're open to partnering with local governments, churches and others." Backed by nearly half a century of experience, tried and true partnerships, a proven track record of successful projects and its own financial resources to invest, Baptist Housing has a lot to offer. ■

This promotional feature was prepared for BCBusiness by the magazine's Special Advertising Features Dept. Writer: Tiffany Sloan. For more information contact VP of corporate features John Cochrane at 604-299-7311. Email: jcochrane@canadawide.com

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