

## Multi-million dollar care home facility proposed

A Calgary-based company wants to build a 56-bed personal care home in Swift Current.

At an estimated cost of \$4.4 million, the project would be unique in that it would provide care levels 1, 2, 3, and 4 in a single facility, which would be the first of its kind in the Southwest, say the project's proponents.

"Our uniqueness is the fact that we are going to accommodate people from assisted living right through to a high level care, so once they make a move into our home, they can stay there right through," said Summit Communities Inc. developer Randy Aspinall.

Summit has constructed personal care facilities in Estevan and Prince Albert. However, the Swift Current project would become the first it would both construct and operate, said Aspinall.

Planned to be located near the Chinook Golf course and Swift Current Creek, Aspinall said the facility would incorporate a concept called the "Eden Alternative", which was developed by an American doctor.

The philosophy centres on striving to recognize the spiritual, physical, intellectual and emotional needs of seniors.

"We're offering four levels of care within the same facility, each level being a community of its own, so people who are in assisted living associate with people of similar needs. If (needs) do increase, people would move throughout the building itself and still maintain that community of contacts and friends. We've very non-institutional. We're very residential. It's a home," said Aspinall.

Larger scale personal care homes of this type are necessary, he said, to help meet a demand smaller, home-based style operations can't fill on their own.

According to Summit's research, seniors are one of the fastest growing population group in Canada. In 1998, there were an estimated 3.7 million Canadians aged 65 and over, up almost 60 per cent from 2.4 million in 1981.

The rapid growth in the senior population will continue, particularly when people born during the baby boom years (1946-1965) begin turning 65.

Statistics Canada indicates that in 2021 there will be almost 7 million seniors who will represent 18 per cent of the country's total population. By 2041, this number is forecasted to reach 10 million.

Seniors account for a substantial share of the population in all provinces. However, Saskatchewan is the leader with almost 15 per cent of its population being over 65 years old, according to 1998 figures.

Summit plans to schedule meeting in the city to attract potential investors and clients.

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