

Bellwoods Centres for Community Living Inc.

News Release

Celebrating Community Connections

TORONTO, ON, **October 19, 2009** – Today Bellwoods Centres for Community Living Inc. celebrates enhanced connections with the community for services and housing to benefit adults with physical disabilities, representing the results of collaboration and partnerships among funders, providers and clients.

Bellwoods Centres introduced its new supportive housing project, Bellwoods Dundas, which achieved occupancy in 2008 and for which Bellwoods Centres is also providing services. This special project was made possible through the partnership of Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program, City of Toronto, First National Financial LP and Bellwoods Centres. Future partnerships are projected to take full advantage of on-site assets to offer relevant service and social opportunities for the community.

With the advent of Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs), Bellwoods Centres has enhanced its partnership development through initiation of Community Connect, a pilot transition supportive housing program targeted to assist the health system with discharge of Alternate Level of Care (ALC) patients from hospitals as well as residents from long term care homes who may be able to live independently in the community.

“I was impressed by the way in which Bellwoods, throughout its 50 years of serving adults with disabilities, has consistently evolved and renewed itself” said the Honourable David C. Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

"The new Bellwoods Dundas speaks volumes about the kind of innovative health care this community organization is dedicated to providing. Our government is proud to have played a role in bringing to life this long-awaited project," said George Smitherman, Deputy Premier and Minister of Energy and Infrastructure.

“Bellwoods Centres was started over 50 years ago during my political career with the support of the Ontario Provincial government,” said John Yaremko, former Minister of Social and Family Services and long time supporter of Bellwoods. “I am now very pleased to learn of the partnership between the private sector and all levels of government.”

“On behalf of Mayor David Miller and City Council, I’d like to congratulate Bellwoods Centres for its commitment to the creation of supportive housing,” said Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti, Chair, Affordable Housing Committee, City of Toronto. “This wonderful facility is a testament to what agencies and governments can accomplish when they work together as partners.”

“The Toronto Central LHIN looks forward to continuing to build its partnership with Bellwoods Dundas,” said Matthew Anderson, CEO, Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network “This new supportive housing service will give more people the option of living independently in a supportive environment geared to meet their needs.”

Bellwoods Dundas at a glance:

- 31 new accessible, affordable one-bedroom apartment units (rent-geared-to-income) owned and managed by Bellwoods Centres
- 24/7 access to personal support services
- Program support and opportunity for skill development
- Special features include
 - fire safety at the level of hospitals
 - integrated emergency call system (wireless and wired)
 - highest level of barrier-free accessibility
 - environmental control for comfort of vulnerable clients
 - energy saving appliances and lighting
- Located close to affordable shopping, banking, restaurants and Trinity Bellwoods Park

Community Connect at a glance:

- Community transition program for hospital patients needing 24/7 access to personal support services to facilitate successful transition from hospital or long term care home to community
- program focused on safety in everyday aspects of community living and involves skill development and program coordination
- Capitalizes on partnerships with hospitals and long term care homes as well as relevant community services
- located at Bellwoods Park House

Bellwoods Centres is one of the city’s largest providers of services, programs and housing for adults with physical disabilities including seniors, serving more than 230 individuals annually. Bellwoods has a vibrant 50+ year history of assisting individuals with a range of disabilities through provision of personal support services, program coordination and skill development as well as accessible affordable housing to enable them to live independently in the community.

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