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Capital Health and Touchmark open new Long-term Care Beds

Edmonton, Canada – Capital Health and Touchmark at Wedgewood today opened the first of 64 new long-term care beds, an important part of the region’s plan to increase capacity and ease pressures across the health system. The new beds are located at 18323 Lessard Road in the Health Services Neighbourhood of the Touchmark at Wedgewood retirement community in southwest Edmonton.

Thirty-two of the beds at Touchmark at Wedgewood are now open for admissions, and an additional 32 will be available later this month. The new building was funded through a Public-Private Partnership.

“These additional beds are crucial to Capital Health’s overall capacity and our plans to increase throughput all the way from the emergency departments through the hospitals and back to the community,” says Marguerite Rowe, vice president and chief operating officer for Community Care, Rehabilitation and Geriatrics. “Since 2003 we have added almost 1,000 community care beds to the system, including about 410 in the current fiscal year 2006-07. The Touchmark beds are a key part of our plans for this year.”

The new Touchmark centre features 50 private suites and seven semiprivate rooms. Each suite has an easily accessible shower and emergency call system. Design features include spacious hallways, large windows accessible for viewing by people in wheelchairs and four dining rooms, with the two main-floor dining rooms opening onto garden areas.

“We’ve implemented the best practices followed today in long-term care centres. We have the latest equipment, including the Safe Lift program and a system that cleans and sterilizes equipment, helping to reduce the risk of infections being spread,” says Marguerite Spilchen, director of care at Touchmark.

Up to 50 staff, including registered nurses, social workers and physical, occupational and recreation therapists, have been trained about Touchmark’s person-centered philosophy of care. “Touchmark respects each person’s life history and preferences, encourages an overall sense of well-being and provides a positive and unconditional regard for each individual,” says Touchmark Executive Director Leanne Gugenheimer.

Touchmark is a North American leader in planning, building and operating resort-style retirement communities for people age 55-plus. Situated in a picturesque ravine setting, Touchmark at Wedgewood offers a range of homes and lifestyle options, including 66 bungalows, 115 suites and independent and assisted living. Numerous amenities include a robust Life Enrichment/Wellness program, transportation and chef-prepared meals.

Admissions to the new Touchmark beds are being coordinated through Capital Health's Central Assessment & Placement Services (CAPS). For information on Community Care Access call 496-1300.

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