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NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health

Mission receives Age-friendly BC grant

MISSION – Mission seniors will benefit from a \$20,000 age-friendly grant to help create programs or tools that address the needs of the district's older residents. The District of Mission is one of 27 communities receiving grants for 2013.

“By creating age-friendly tools and supports, communities can help make life easier for seniors like me,” said Minister of State for Seniors Ralph Sultan. “I am pleased that communities like Mission are recognizing how important it is to ensure that programs and services meet the needs of its senior residents and their support networks. This is what seniors are asking for and this is what your community is committed to delivering.”

The District of Mission will work with the Mission Seniors Centre Association to expand and develop seniors' programming at the Mission Activity Centre. The funding will help support the creation of a program framework, which will include operating policies to help ensure the activity centre continues to provide programs that will enhance the lives of Mission seniors.

“Like many regions of the province, the population here in Mission is aging,” said Maple Ridge-Mission MLA Marc Dalton. “It's vitally important that we look for ways to support the health of seniors and ensure that our communities are age-friendly and accessible.”

The age-friendly planning and project grant program is a partnership between the government of B.C. and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM). Grants of up to \$20,000 are provided through UBCM to help establish, or continue, a variety of projects that support healthy, active seniors.

“Seniors in every region of B.C are benefiting from age-friendly grants this year and it is great news that Mission is working on the creation of new programs that will help make life easier for local seniors and their families,” said Abbotsford-Mission MLA Randy Hawes.

Applications for age-friendly planning and projects grants were reviewed by staff from UBCM and the Ministry of Health. They were scored on a variety of factors, including: goals, proposed activities, involvement of seniors and other key partners, budget, and innovation and sustainability.

“Age-friendly initiatives can have great benefits for seniors, and as a community we are committed to ensuring that we have a variety of programs and supports in place that help improve the health and well-being of the district’s senior residents,” said Mayor of the District of Mission Ted Adlem. “We are pleased that this funding will allow us to support seniors by expanding programming at the Mission Activity Centre.”

Since 2007, 117 B.C. communities have received funding to support age-friendly planning and projects. Examples include: age-friendly assessments, ensuring services are more accessible, supporting transportation and social connection to help prevent social isolation, and improving the community by increasing garden and green space.

In September 2012, government announced \$500,000 was available for the 2013 round of grants. Fourteen of the 27 successful applicants for 2013 have not received previous funding through the program.

The age-friendly grant program is just one aspect of Age-friendly BC, which focuses on providing communities with support, information and recognition to help meet the needs of an aging population. Local governments can achieve age-friendly recognition and officially become an Age-friendly BC community once they have completed four basic steps that focus on community engagement, commitment, assessment and action. To learn more about Age-friendly B.C. and the Age-friendly Planning and Project grant program, please visit: www.gov.bc.ca/agefriendly

The age-friendly grant program reflects the goals of B.C.’s Family Agenda, which supports seniors by encouraging healthy, active aging. To learn more, visit: www.familiesfirstbc.ca

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