



CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION

PROJECT PROFILE

Maple Ridge Apartments

Prince Albert, Saskatchewan



Eight residents of Prince Albert coping with mental illness now have affordable and secure housing, thanks to the development of a new apartment complex by the Prince Albert branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA P.A.). The rental building provides residents with furnished apartments, a landlord who understands their mental health issues, and a support worker to help them make the transition to independent living. The \$1.1-million project was made possible in part with

Highlights

A new eight-unit apartment complex in Prince Albert provides affordable and secure housing for adults with mental health and cognitive disabilities so they can live independently in the community, close to family, friends and support networks.

Client group: Adults coping with mental illness who are at risk of homelessness

Developer: Canadian Mental Health Association, Prince Albert branch

Number of units: 8

Tenure: Rental

Who was involved? Canadian Mental Health Association, Prince Albert branch; Government of Canada (CMHC and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada); Government of Saskatchewan (Saskatchewan Housing Corporation); City of Prince Albert

federal funding under Canada’s Economic Action Plan (CEAP) and the Homelessness Partnering Strategy.

The Affordable Housing Solution

The Maple Ridge Apartments are within walking distance of The Nest, a local CMHA drop-in centre that provides programming and supports, including independent living skills training,

employment initiatives and meals. A support worker checks in with residents once or twice a week to help with the practical aspects of daily living, such as grocery shopping, cooking and time management.

“There is a desperate need for attainable and affordable housing for all people,” said Doug Kinar, executive director of the CMHA P.A. “But people with mental

30-11-12



67735

illness have a particular barrier, because when the illness begins to manifest itself, they are more at risk of being evicted.”

The idea for Maple Ridge Apartments arose when CMHA P.A. began to explore how to develop rental housing that was geared specifically to the needs of people with mental illness. More than four years before breaking ground, the association conducted a feasibility study, interviewed clients and nurses, and sought partners and funding agencies. The result was an eight-unit building of one- and two-bedroom furnished apartments that are affordable and secure for the residents, with the CMHA P.A. as the landlord.

“The biggest risk most of our clients face is that when there’s an episode, they become isolated and things become worse,” explained Kinar. “The support worker works closely with the residents to make sure that doesn’t happen.”

For the housing project, the CMHA P.A. received almost \$680,000 in combined federal and provincial funding under the Housing for Persons with Disabilities component of Canada’s Economic Action Plan (CEAP). Among other housing investments, CEAP provided \$75 million in federal funding over two years to create new rental housing for people with disabilities. The federal funding was delivered through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), and was cost-matched by provincial and territorial governments.

CMHC Contact

Contact a representative of CMHC’s Affordable Housing Centre
www.cmhc.ca/contactahc

The Maple Ridge Apartments project received an additional \$400,000 in federal funding through Human Resources and Skills Development Canada’s Homelessness Partnering Strategy. The City of Prince Albert provided a grant of \$54,000 to help with the purchase of the building lot, made an exemption for parking requirements, and assisted with site servicing costs. The CMHA P.A. itself contributed approximately \$46,000 to the project.

Kinar considers the housing project a success. “It has added to the housing stock and is providing housing for our clients. It has also given some of the residents the first opportunity they have ever had to live on their own,” he said.