

**For Immediate Release**  
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**CLOSURES SHOW CAMPBELL GOVERNMENT IGNORING IHA BED SHORTAGE**

**VICTORIA**—The pending closure of a 50-bed residential care facility in the Interior Health region shows that Campbell government is ignoring the region's critical bed shortage, NDP Health Critic Adrian Dix said today.

"For more than 25 years, the Sagebrush Lodge has provided quality care for seniors," said Dix. "Instead of keeping it open to B.C. seniors and their families, the Ministry of Health is shutting Sagebrush down. It's a missed opportunity to build capacity in Interior Health and help fill the critical bed shortage the Campbell government has created."

Located in Osoyoos, the Sagebrush Residential Care Facility provides multilevel care for residents, including seniors with special needs such as dementia. In January of 2007, Interior Health announced that a new facility was being built to replace Sagebrush, which will close in June of 2008. It is suspected that the building will then be demolished to take advantage of the site's development potential.

The closure comes at a time when Interior Health has one of the lowest residential care rates in the province. According to the IHA Service Plan, there are only 88 residential care beds per 1,000 people over the age of 75.

"If the government continues to ignore the bed crunch facing Interior Health, we will see more Emergency Room backups, more Code Purples and more hallway medicine. The Ministry of Health should be taking this opportunity to build residential care capacity in Interior Health – not take it away," said Dix.

"It's shortsighted to close this facility in this way. And it shows the Campbell government's not paying attention to the crisis in seniors' care in the Interior."

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