



## BACKGROUND

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### Vision Overview of the Future St. Joseph's Seniors Community of Care

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#### Understanding the Changing Demographics in the Comox Valley

Comox Valley demographics for people 75 years of age and older will almost double in the next 20 years and by 2034 there will be over 6,000 more people in that population compared to today. Additionally, the prevalence of dementia is increasing in our society and community. These demographic shifts demonstrate a significant need to be proactive in developing senior and hospice care services and housing options.

The current Views residential care facility is aging and no longer complies with current standards and needs to be replaced. The demand for residential care is well above what can be currently supplied.

In continuing to provide outstanding care with compassion to its residents of The Views and Hospice at St. Joseph's, the vision is to develop a state-of-the-art facility to replace the current aging building. In keeping with St. Joseph's values, services will grow to include marginalized and special care populations such as dementia sufferers.

#### Eden Alternative

The future vision for St. Joseph's will follow the philosophies and traditions that are already part of St. Joseph's. In addition to this foundation, the philosophy of care will embrace the Eden Alternative, an approach to eldercare that is designed to fight the three plagues suffered by seniors in residential care - loneliness, helplessness and boredom.

The Eden Philosophy is focused on creating a human habitat that nourishes the spirit as well and the body and where life revolves around close and continuing contact with plants, animals and children.

Elements of the Eden philosophy include; loving companionship as the antidote to loneliness with easy access to human and animal companionship, having the opportunity to give as well as receive care as the antidote to helplessness, and understanding that the antidote to boredom is filling daily life with meaningful activities and having an environment filled with variety and spontaneity. In addition, medical treatments must act as the servant of genuine human caring and the maximum possible decision-making authority must be placed into the hands of the residents and their caring family members.

## Campus of Care

Under the Eden philosophy, St. Joseph's site will be anchored by an *aging-in-place* campus of care featuring various housing and care options for seniors. This would include fully independent living, assisted living, supportive housing, respite, residential care, and hospice services. There is particular interest in environments, design and services to support residents and their families who are living with dementia.

There is a desire to leverage the physical assets and expertise of the campus of care to develop such services as health and wellness resources for seniors and provide on-site primary and therapeutic care as well as social and community activities. This senior's health and wellness "hub" would also support seniors in the community by coordinating such services as home support activities, adult day programs and convalescent care with the goal to keep seniors independent and in their homes for as long as possible.

## Community Feedback

The St Joseph's Board of Directors created a Future Role Task Force to explore options on how to move the vision into tangible plans. Considerable work has been done to date including step one of a community engagement plan, step one of a site and building assessment plan, exploration and learning about the best innovative approaches in elder care, and exploring partnerships to better deliver on our goals.

Results of the Community Engagement has determined:

- strong support for St. Joseph's to continue to play a role in the provision of health and seniors care;
- overwhelming support for seniors' care, including residential, hospice and respite care;
- a desire for services that will prevent overcrowding and supports the new acute care hospitals;
- a desire to provide for the vulnerable populations such as dementia patients; and
- strong support for the use of innovation to provide care and keep seniors in their homes.

## Partnership Opportunities

The Views and Glacier View Lodge are independently run but have maintained reciprocal sharing of management, corporate, support services, for many years. The two Boards also work closely together. With shared values in regards to their approach for care for residents and their families, both are committed to continuing to provide services in a not-for-profit setting and maintaining this partnership.

Extending beyond this partnership and that which St. Joseph's has with the Comox Valley Hospice Society, St. Joseph's has been engaged in discussions with other partners regarding potential options for future residential care to better meet the needs of the Comox Valley.

## Phase One Redevelopment Plan

The development of the St. Joseph's aging in place campus of care would follow a phased approach (some phases may be concurrent) Phase One involves redevelopment to construct a new, purpose-built building for residential and hospice care. This new building will incorporate research-based innovative design and care approaches such as single rooms, secure outdoor access and special facilities that support residents with dementia.

A new Views residential care home and facilities to support the Comox Valley Hospice will be built on the St. Joseph's grounds – likely in either the Northwest or Northeast corners of the property as these are the only available spaces large enough to accommodate a construction site while residents continue to live at the current Views.

Prior to the completion of a new residential facility, St. Joseph's will make interim use of vacated acute care space because the main hospital infrastructure will still be required to supply The Views with utilities and food services. Demolition of the acute care can follow upon completion of a new residential care facility.

## Beyond A New Seniors' Residence

Phase Two involves longer term plans for an aging-in-place campus of care and seniors' hub that offers:

- a range of housing and care options for seniors where people can move from fully independent adult housing to supportive housing, assisted living, residential care and Hospice;
- a community able to support related retail and professional services such as physiotherapy;
- innovative outreach, primary care services and other services that takes advantage of the investments in facilities, programming and expertise on site. (e.g. adult day programs, respite services, co-location of services, urgent access, outreach services and private care); and
- housing for special care populations where residents can live with dignity and carry out a fulfilling life.

Community space will be developed so everyone can enjoy the beauty of the St. Joseph's site. This could include walking paths, playgrounds and gardens as well as space for community events and celebrations.

In summary St. Joseph's longer term vision is for a vibrant not-for-profit community of care that includes:

- Campus of care – a range of housing and residential care options, including specialized services for marginalized and special care populations.
- Services and programs to help seniors in the community remain independent through leveraging the physical assets and expertise on the site.
- Engagement with our broader community through partnerships with individuals, organizations and groups to support the Eden goal of creating a human habitat that nurtures the spirit as well as the body.