



NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services

211 PLAN UNDERWAY WITH PROVINCE, UNITED WAY FUNDING

VICTORIA – The Province is providing \$600,000 in combination with \$300,000 from the United Ways of BC to build a plan for a BC211 Service, Oak Bay-Gordon Head MLA and Community Services Minister Ida Chong announced today.

“We are striving to be the first jurisdiction in Canada that will deliver provincewide access to a 211 service,” said Chong. “BC211 will be designed to meet the needs of our communities, and modelled on the service currently available in some Ontario and Alberta cities, as well as in the United States.”

211 is an easy-to-remember telephone number linking people to a full range of non-emergency health and social services offered by community agencies and government. BC211 will be staffed by information and referral specialists trained to assist people in accessing the variety of programs and services delivered across the province and inside communities. The service will be free, confidential, multilingual and also accessible online.

“It can be difficult for those in need of health and social assistance to locate those services,” said Labour and Citizens’ Services Minister Michael de Jong. “211 will encourage people to follow through on important actions that affect their well-being or the well-being of the community.”

“211 will benefit anyone seeking information about community and government services, from a senior citizen wanting home care support to a recent immigrant needing language and employment training, and much more,” said United Ways of BC representative Michael McKnight. “After consultation with information and referral services and working with many organizations in the province, we are pleased to have the Province as a major funding partner for this phase of development of the service, and look forward to its launch in the near future.”

A final implementation plan for BC211 is expected to be ready for presentation at the Union of BC Municipalities’ Convention in Victoria, Oct. 23-27, 2006. The ministries of Labour and Citizens’ Services, Health, Employment and Income Assistance, Children and Family Development, and Public Safety and Solicitor General are working with the Ministry of Community Services in support of 211 planning.

For more information, visit www.bc211.vcn.bc.ca online.

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