



Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ASCHA Set to Move Things Forward for Seniors Housing in Alberta

The Alberta Seniors Communities & Housing Association (ASCHA) is geared-up to move things forward in positive ways for Alberta's seniors housing residents. On March 22, seniors housing leaders from across the province will gather at the 2017 ASCHA Convention and Tradeshow at the Edmonton Marriott at River Cree Resort for three days of discussion on how to better engage communities, government and stakeholders to improve seniors housing in light of the March 16, 2017 Alberta Budget introduction. They will also explore ways to build public understanding to make navigating the complexities inherent in the seniors housing system less complicated.

A large part of the work underway centres around ASCHA's public awareness efforts already in motion. In 2016, ASCHA launched the story of Charlie & Hazel – a fictitious couple not very different from many seniors in Alberta. Every Friday, ASCHA releases a new issue of Charlie & Hazel's story on its [Facebook](#) and [Wordpress](#) platforms, asking for public input on the challenges the couple faces. Readership has grown into the hundreds as more and more Albertans are engaged in the various topics addressed. The campaign celebrates its one year anniversary on March 24 across social media platforms using [#Charlie&Hazel](#).

Seniors housing providers also realize that language surrounding seniors housing is inconsistent, and that seniors and families often grow frustrated. That is why ASCHA has launched a public understanding survey. Rather than dictating language, ASCHA is asking Albertans what terms they use to describe seniors housing, and how much they currently understand. The intent is to collect well over 1000 responses which will be analyzed to inform next steps and communications within the industry. The survey can be accessed [here](#).

Nearly 300 leaders from Alberta's seniors housing organizations will be in attendance at this event, to share best practices and learn from industry experts. The Honourable Lori Sigurdson will be addressing delegates on Wednesday, March 22 at 7:30 pm, and Alberta Seniors Advocate, Sheree Kwong See will be present on Friday, March 24 at 8:15 am to share her vision for collaborative approaches for seniors resource sharing.

"ASCHA is at the forefront of leading collaboration on seniors housing issues with government, stakeholders and communities to ensure seniors are empowered to have choice and a life of purpose, wherein they are honoured, valued and respected." – Raymond Swonek, ASCHA President

This event will include presentations from leaders of Alberta Health, Alberta Health Services, Alberta Seniors & Housing and Energy Efficiency Alberta. Housing providers will explore how to build awareness of the options available for seniors in Alberta and the positive effect seniors congregate living can have on aging. The full event program can be viewed online at [ascha.com](#).

Though this event will be closed to the public, media personnel are invited to attend for the purpose of news coverage.

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