

Dania - Celebrating 80 years!

Torben Hansen, Director, Dania, Burnaby

Together Dania Society and Dania Home Society provide an all-inclusive Campus of Care in the City of Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada. Located on seven acres of lush land adjacent to the Danish Lutheran Church, Dania houses Dania Home, Dania Manor, the Carl Mortensen Manor and a soon-to-be-built new residence for an additional 155 seniors.

It is unlikely that the founders of Dania would ever have imagined that their daring initiative would flourish into the Campus of Care that Dania has become. Yet, here we are as Dania celebrates 80 years of service to the community, while it continues to expand its services.

The initiative to launch a seniors home came from Danish Consul L.L. Jessen who offered up his church bonds worth \$1000 and Mr. Carl Mortensen, then living in Ponoka, Alberta, who donated an additional \$3000. This is how Dania started, then officially chartered as “West Canada Danish Old People’s home”. Over the decades numerous people have generously contributed financially and given their time, labour and wisdom to support Dania.



Main entrance to Dania Home.

Dania has enjoyed steadfast support from the various local authorities, such as the City of Burnaby, B.C. Housing Corporation as well as the Fraser Health Authority. Our building partners, NSDA as architects, CPA as our consultants and VanMar Construction as our building contractor, have been valuable partners. As a daily service we have CareCorp for care staffing and Angel Food Service for meals and housekeeping. Of course there are many other organizations that we value as our partners in our day-to-day activities, such as the maintenance of our buildings and ensuring the safety and comfort of all the residents on our Campus of Care.

Over the years we have also benefitted from close cooperation with our Scandinavian friends at Normanna and the Swedish Canadian Rest Home. In partnership with Normanna, and other

generous donors, Dania has acquired a bus which provides transportation for residents for outings in and around the lower mainland. The success of Dania is our partnerships, our people and our values of trust, respect, caring, commitment and diversity, while maintaining our Danish heritage.



Draft drawing of our new 155-unit independent housing residence on the corner of Canada Way and Norland Avenue, Burnaby.

Dania has changed considerably since it was founded in 1941 with a purse of \$4000 to meet the specific needs of the Danish community. Today Dania serves all nationalities in our community while maintaining Danish values.

Over the years buildings to house seniors have been constructed on the site and later replaced with larger and more efficiently designed accommodation for the various types of care that is needed today. As we celebrate our 80th anniversary a new and larger building with 155 low cost housing units for seniors is in the final stages of planning and moving through the municipal building permit approval process.

Dania today

The Campus of Care that Dania provides, extends from low cost independent housing to assisted living and complex care. Dania Manor, built in 1973, contains fifty assisted living suites. Our funding partner for forty of the units is the Fraser Health Authority and the building is currently undergoing renovation as suites become available.



Carl Mortensen Manor, built in 1993 in cooperation with B.C. Housing, is a social living residence for seniors with moderate income. Residents at Carl Mortensen Manor live independently, and each suite has its own kitchen, even though a meal service is available for a small fee. The Manor has 49 one bedroom suites and two guest suites. The

building also houses the largest auditorium on campus, available not only for various day-to-day activities for the residents, but also for rent to outside organizations and for private functions. A fully equipped kitchen is connected to the auditorium. The Manor is neighbour to the Danish Lutheran Church and between the two buildings there is a popular community garden where tenants can display their gardening skills. Over the years Carl Mortensen Manor has been home to many residents of Danish heritage.

Dania Home, a residential care facility, also funded by the Fraser Health Authority, is our most recently completed building, commissioned in 2015 and now home to 102 residents. It provides residential care for residents with advanced needs on a day-to-day basis. Six of the suites are made available for respite for individuals from the general community in need



Dania Home, seen from Norland Avenue.

of temporary complex care support. All suites are self-contained units with overhead lifts should this be required. The building consists of six neighbourhoods with seventeen suites. Each neighbourhood has its own dining room, living and activity centre in addition to care stations and support services, in order to limit the spread of infectious diseases. In this connection we are pleased to report that throughout the Covid-19 pandemic we have so far been able to keep our campus free of an outbreak of Covid-19.

At present Dania is in the process of realising its latest project, a 155-unit affordable independent housing residence for seniors in cooperation with the B.C. Housing Corporation. A proposal was submitted in September 2018 and already in November Dania was awarded \$14.2 million towards the cost of the building. Since then we have been working with both the B.C. Housing Corporation and the City of Burnaby to advance the project. In April 2021 our proposal obtained third reading, which means we can now proceed with obtaining the building permit. Needless to say we are very excited about this new project and look forward to being able to start building as soon as possible.

The new building will be the largest on campus occupying the land where the former Dania Home was located. Each unit in the building is designed to be 560 sq. ft. and the design of the building incorporates a number of features such as designated areas for social gatherings of residents, including a swanky community garden surrounding the building. The units will be available to a mix of income levels for seniors in the community.



November 2019 Remembrance Service at Dania. From left Dania President Vena Chopra, Pastor Susanne Ivalo Rasmussen, and Guardsmen Kenneth V. Olsen & Knud Nielsen, respectively president and treasurer of PNWGF.

The Dania Campus of Care is accredited by Accreditation Canada. Since 2010 Dania has been accredited with “exemplary status”. In 2018 Dania achieved a score of 98%. Accreditation is a requirement of the B.C.’s Health Authorities to ensure that elderly citizens receive safe, competent care. We are delighted to share our results with you, ultimately exemplifying our commitment to your loved one’s safety, care, quality of life and wellbeing!

For updates and further information please visit our website at <http://www.dania.bc.ca/>
On our website you are able to join Dania and help further our vision.