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New Health Care Assistant pgm at COTR Fernie campus

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The Province is investing \$62,500 to support the delivery of a health care assistant program at the College of the Rockies' Fernie campus, announced Bill Bennett, MLA for Kootenay East.

"The College of the Rockies is an integral part of the Fernie community, and this program will offer new opportunities to local students," said Bennett.

"It's important that we make health care training accessible to more students at home, and our government has made it a priority."

The funding will support the delivery of the six-month program for eight full-time students in 2009-10. Health care assistant graduates will provide front-line care in a variety of institutional and community settings, including both home support agencies and residential care facilities.

"These new seats will help build on our initiatives to boost the rural workforce in the health care sector, making sure all British Columbians have access to top-notch services when they're needed," said Stilwell. "The Province is doing its part to meet the province's current and future demand for health care workers."

This funding is part of a \$614,000 investment in six rural communities that will train 82 health care assistants across B.C. next year. The programs will train health care assistants to provide care that promotes and maintains the physical, emotional, cognitive and social well-being of clients.

Upon completion of the program, graduates will be prepared to work in any level of continuing care, including home support, adult day care, assisted living and complex care.

Since 2001, the Province has invested more than \$102 million in health-related operating and capital funding at post-secondary institutions in the B.C. Interior.

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