BEST AND PROMISING PRACTICE REVIEW

A REPORT TO INFORM THE WINDSOR ESSEX HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS MASTER PLAN 2019 -2028

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INTRODUCTION

The City of Windsor is conducting a five-year review of the Windsor Essex Housing and Homelessness Plan, originally approved in 2014. The Plan guides the work of the City as Service Manager, and the community, in delivering housing and homelessness services. Under the Housing Services Act Service Managers are required to update their plans every five years.

The review of the Plan provides an opportunity to assess current and future housing needs and update the Plan based on current data and current best and promising practices. It also provides an opportunity to ensure efforts are aligned around key goals.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to review and present findings on evidence based and promising practices for housing and homelessness systems. These findings will be used to inform the consultation activities and build greater awareness in the community on best practices. Further, these findings, together with community consultation results and the analysis of the current housing and homelessness system, will help inform the recommendations for future actions.

This document also provides several resources for each of the best and promising practices. These resources are aimed at providing guidance with any further research and/or with the implementation of any aspect of the Plan. In addition to providing the resources for the literature referenced directly within this report, additional tools, guidebooks and other documents identified during the research phase are also provided.

CREATE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

EXPANDING THE SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

DESCRIPTION

For many communities the need for affordable housing is exceeding the supply. While there is no single answer to tackle this complex issue, there are many policy approaches that are being used to help expand the supply of affordable housing. Options include regulatory changes, planning policy, financial incentives, and direct provision and partnerships. Examples are described in the following table along with potential costs and impacts (on affordable housing) of each.

	Direct Cost	Potential Impact (Rural)	Potential Impact (Urban)	Ease of Implementation
Regulatory and Planning Policy Options				
Facilitate Lot Splitting / Severances - Splitting or the severance of a piece of land to form a new lot. This process is also known as a consent.	Low	Medium	Low	Simple
Reduced Parking Standards - Reduced parking requirements for affordable housing in zoning by-law.	Low	Low	Low	Simple
Reduction, or exemption, in the parkland requirements	Low	Low	Low	Simple
Zoning/Standards for Second Units - Provisions to facilitate development of second units (i.e. as-of-right, no additional parking required).	Low	Low	Low	Simple
Incremental/Flex Housing - Official Plan policies that support principles of Flex Housing (housing that is flexible in design to accommodate changes in household need).	Low	Low	Low	Simple
Reduce Restrictions on Manufactured Homes and Shipping Container Housing - Official Plan policies to support manufactured housing and shipping container housing.	Low	Low	Low	Simple
Pocket Neighbourhoods - Provisions within Official Plan to permit pocket housing (small self-contained studio).	Low	Low	Low	Moderate
Inclusionary zoning, which could require new residential development to include a percentage of affordable housing units as a condition of a development application	Medium	Low	Medium	Moderate
Pre-zoning (or pre-designating) lands to permit greater range of housing types, higher densities, more compact or infill development, or reduced unit sizes, etc.	Low	Low	Low	Simple

Regulatory and Planning Policy Options (Continued)	Direct Cost	Potential Impact (Rural)	Potential Impact (Urban)	Ease of Implementation
Height and Density Bonusing - Policies to permit increases in the height and density of development in return for the provision of affordable housing.	Low	Low	Low	Moderate
Short-term Rental Regulations - policies to regulate short-term rentals (i.e. requiring a business license).	Low	Low	Low	Simple
Condominium Conversion Control - Official Plan policies to regulate the conversion of existing residential rental units including the conversion of rental housing to condominium or non-residential use	Low	Low	Low	Simple
Demolition Control - Policies to establish demolition control areas where landlords must get a permit prior to demolition of residence.	Low	Low	Low	Moderate
Second Suite Ready - Policies to require or encourage "suite readiness" provisions to be incorporated into the design of new homes.	Low	Low	Low	Simple
Prohibit Downzoning - Downzoning is the reduction of density allowed for a certain property under zoning by-laws.	Low	Low	Low	Simple

Financial Options	Direct Cost	Potential Impact (Rural)	Potential Impact (Urban)	Ease of Implementation
Charge for social housing in Development Charges By-Law so that new development helps pay for increased capital costs for social housing because of the increased needs for social housing that arise from new development	Low	Low	Low	Simple
Off-set planning application, permit fees, and development charges	Medium	Low	Medium	Moderate
Property tax rate reductions, rebates or exemptions on new affordable housing	Medium	Low	Low	Simple
Tax increment equivalent grants to property owners to offset a portion of the property tax increase resulting from a redevelopment	Medium	Low	Low	Simple
Affordable housing reserve fund to assist municipalities to accrue and access funds to make financial contributions towards affordable housing	High	High	High	Moderate
Provide grants or loans	High	High	High	Simple
Designate the whole or part of the municipality as a **community improvement project** area in order to purchase, hold, lease or sell land or put in place a grant or loan program for affordable housing	High	High	High	Simple
Selling or leasing surplus municipal land at reduced cost	High	Medium	Medium	Simple
Land Banking - Acquiring and holding properties that are later donated or sold below the current market value to support the development of affordable housing.	High	Low	Low	Complex

Direct Provision and Partnership Options	Direct Cost	Potential Impact (Rural)	Potential Impact (Urban)	Ease of Implementation
Affordable Housing Development Corporation - Affordable housing development corporations can be used to negotiate, acquire, purchase, and sell lands and real property, and other activities to directly support affordable housing or indirectly through negotiated partnerships.	High	High	High	Complex
Community Land Trust - Private non-profit corporations established for the purpose of acquiring and holding land for affordable housing.	Medium	Low	Low	Complex
Purchasing and Preserving Existing Rental Housing - The purchase, upgrading, maintenance, and management of existing affordable rental housing.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Complex

RESOURCES

City Spaces (2017). Scalable Municipal Housing Tools for Small Rural Communities. Halifax: CHRA National Congress Conference. Found at: https://chra-achru.ca/sites/default/files/Congress2017/Day%202/3.How%20 Research%2C%20Business/3.%20JadaBasi.pdf

MacArthur Foundation (2001). Window of Opportunity: Preserving Affordable Rental Housing. Found at: https:// www.macfound.org/media/article_pdfs/MAC_1107_SINGLES.PDF

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (2011). Municipal Tools for Affordable Housing. Toronto: Provincial Policy Branch. Found at: http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=9270

PORTABLE HOUSING BENEFITS

DESCRIPTION

A portable housing benefit provides direct financial assistance to households to be used to pay for housing expenses. It may be called a housing allowance, rent assistance, or other terms. Unlike social housing the assistance is tied to a household not the housing unit; providing greater choice to the household on where they would like to live, within the service area. The benefit could also be used to provide emergency assistance to individuals and families in need (i.e. leaving domestic violence, short-term income loss).

KEY COMPONENTS

- Direct assistance to households to promote autonomy of household
- Partial 'gap' coverage to help bridge affordability while minimizing potential for rent inflation or disincentives to work
- Immediate access to benefit, where available
- Flexible and responsive to needs
- Housing choice

Housing allowances are discussed in more detail in the next section.

RESOURCES

County of Renfrew (2018). Portable Housing Benefit Pilot Program. Found at: https://www.countyofrenfrew.on.ca/_documents/RCHC/CoR-PHB-Package.pdf

Nelson, G., & Aubry, T. (2017). A portable housing benefit as an indispensable component of ending homelessness in Canada. Toronto: EENet, Ontario Housing First Regional Community of Interest. Found at: http://eenet.ca/sites/default/files/pdfs/OFHRN-CoI-Policy-Brief_Portable-Housing-Benefit-FINAL-23Oct17.pdf

United Way (2017). A portable Housing Benefit: Tackling Housing Poverty and Homelessness. Found at: http://www.unitedway.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/UWCC-Supplemental-Policy-Paper-Portable-Housing-Benefit.pdf

HOUSING ALLOWANCES

DESCRIPTION

A housing allowance is a form of 'demand-side' financial subsidy provided to low income households towards monthly housing costs. Housing allowance programs are often open enrolment or entitlement programs, for all households below an income threshold, and in many cases other criteria related to the type of household (CMHC, 2006). The subsidy formula often varies by community/program.

DIFFERENT MODELS

Michael Mendelson, in Designing a Housing Allowance Program, outlines five options for a housing allowance program:

- A housing allowance that fills part of the gap between the social assistance shelter benefit maximum and affordable rent.
- A housing allowance that fills part of the gap between the social assistance shelter benefit average and affordable rent.
- A housing allowance that fills part of the gap between actual rent and affordable rent.
- A flat-rate housing allowance based on income, not rent, plus a supplemental housing allowance to fill part of the remaining gap up to an affordable rent.
- A flat-rate housing allowance based only on income so that anyone can afford a reasonable rent regardless of their actual rent.

RESOURCES

CMHC (2006). Housing Allowance Options for Canada. Presentation by June Carter at CFAA. Found at: https://cfaa-fcapi.org/pdf/Summary_CMHC_report.pdf

Mendelson, M. (2016). Designing a Housing Allowance Program. Caledon Institute of Social Policy. Found at: https://maytree.com/wp-content/uploads/1091ENG.pdf

ADDRESSING NIMBYISM (TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING)

DESCRIPTION

CMHC in Gaining Community Acceptance of Affordable Housing Projects and Homeless Shelters (2006) defines 'Not in my backyard' (NIMBY), as "the protectionist attitudes and exclusionary / oppositional tactics used by community groups facing an unwelcome development in their neighbourhood." NIMBY has become a challenge for many communities over the years. Key themes that emerge when talking about NIMBY include property values; crime and safety; density (congestion and infrastructure strain); neighbourhood character; new resident behaviours; and enough affordable housing.

STRATEGIES

Strategies to gain acceptance can be grouped into four categories: apply the existing legislation, use available planning tools, engage the community, and educate.

Apply the Existing Legislation
- Clearly respond to comments about new residents not fitting into the neighourhood by communicating that no one has to ask permission to live in a neighbourhood and that the Planning Act prevents "people zoning"
- Stress that the proposed development meets all the legislative requirements and that the Human Rights Code prevents discrimination against people because of their age, ethnicity, religion, skin colour or physical/mental abilities, or just because they are poor
- Communicate provincial requirements to plan for and support affordable housing

Use Available Planning Tools
- Establish municipal plans (Official Plans and Housing Plans) that demonstrate that affordable housing and supportive housing are planned in a variety of neighbourhoods in ways that complement the broader quality of life goals in the community
- Establish as-of-right zoning to implement strategies for affordable housing

Engage the community
- Have a strategy for engaging the public and use a variety of engagement techniques
- When addressing the public, emphasize the positive aspects of the development
- Be prepared for community meetings by knowing the facts and anticipating objections

Educate
- Share information from existing research to counter the myth that property values will go down
- Communicate that dwellings oriented to seniors and low-income families are likely to attract residents with lower levels of car ownership and that there is nothing to suggest that it will cause too much traffic
- Educate about how higher-density housing required less extensive infrastructure than greenfield development
- Educate about research that has shown that affordable housing will not mean more crime

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

Affordability and Choice Today (ACT). Housing in my Backyard: A Municipal Guide for Responding to NIMBY. Found at: https://fcm.ca/Documents/tools/ACT/Housing_In_My_Backyard_A_Municipal_Guide_For_Responding_To_NIMBY_EN.pdf
- This guide provides municipalities with strategies to prepare and respond to NIMBY opposition. The Guide provides tools and examples from many Canadian municipalities.

Federation of Canadian Municipalities. Responding to NIMBY. Found at: https://fcm.ca/home/programs/past-programs/affordability-and-choice-today/responding-to-nimby.htm
- This link shares ACT funded resources on strategies to engage the community in accepting new residential development.

Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness (N.D). NIMBY to Neighbours: A series of NIMBY fact sheets. Found at: https://victoriahomelessness.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/NIMBY-Package-Print_FINAL.pdf
- This document provides fact sheets on the key themes related to NIMBY. It provides facts on many of the concerns such as property values, and key messages on the importance of affordable housing. Fact sheets are designed to help better inform discussions between community members, project proponents, and municipal staff and elected officials.

Ontario Human Rights Commission (2012). In the Zone: Housing, human rights and municipal planning. Found at: http://www.ohrc.on.ca/sites/default/files/In%20the%20zone_housing_human%20rights%20and%20municipal%20planning_0.pdf
- This document provides information on NIMBYism as a human rights issue. Information includes principles in human rights issues, legislation to prevent discrimination, and strategies for municipalities to address NIMBYism.

Ellen, I. (2008). Spillovers and Subsidized Housing: The Impact of Subsidized Rental Housing on Neighborhoods. In E. Belsky, & N. Retsinas (Eds.), Revisiting Rental Housing (pp. 144-158). Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.
- The study looks at how investments in subsidized, rental housing might affect surrounding neighbourhoods.

MAINTAIN AND PRESERVE EXISTING SOCIAL HOUSING

MODERNIZED SOCIAL HOUSING

DESCRIPTION

Modernizing the social housing system is aimed at moving from a system of rigid regulations to an approach that would provide housing providers with greater flexibility to modify, repurpose and expand programs and housing portfolios to best meet the needs of tenants.

Steve Pomeroy describes potential outcomes of a renewed and modernized social housing sector as creating a more resilient and investible housing sector; balancing a social mission with more entrepreneurial operating culture; focusing new funding on organizations with potential for capacity development and growth; providing low-income renters with increased assistance and choice; and providing support where needed with community partners to vulnerable tenants (Pomeroy, 2017).

KEY COMPONENTS

Key components of a modernized social housing system as described in Pomeroy's Envisioning a Strengthened Social Housing Sector include:

- Financial viability – a reformed rental assistance structure.
- New development activity – providers are positioned to access and reinvest accumulated equity and retained earnings.
- Sector restructuring – willingness to change and consolidate among providers where needed.
- Level and form of government support – funding is reformed to enable greater financial sustainability and sector resilience.
- Creating new sector institutions – modern forms of institutional supports established separate from direct agencies or roles
- Comprehensive local housing and homeless service plans – planning to coordinate delivery of support services to stabilize and strengthen tenancies.
- Outcomes for existing tenants and housing need – existing RGI tenancies are protected. As tenancies turnover, new tenants are eligible for assistance under a new Portable Housing Benefit (PHB).
- Special initiatives for Indigenous and homeless – new initiatives are implemented to add culturally appropriate housing options for Indigenous households.

In Ontario, following the release of the Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy (LTAHS) update and commitment to transforming Ontario's housing and homelessness system, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing developed three overarching elements to modernizing the existing social housing system:

- **System roles and responsibilities** – the province would continue its current role of setting legislation, regulation and program requirements. Service mangers would continue to have responsibility for local housing and homelessness planning and be the primary funders and administrators of housing programs. Housing providers who have reached the end of their operating agreements would have options for how to move forward.

- **Registry of housing providers with a social purpose** – housing providers who have reached the end of operating agreements or their mortgage would have the option to voluntarily participate in a registry of housing providers with a social purpose. Such housing providers would be subject to accreditation and service delivery standards. Housing providers who met the standards would have access to benefits or government funding to help maintain and expand their housing.

- **Capacity building and support** – capacity building opportunities would be available and provided by sector organizations and/or government partners.

RESOURCES

ONPHA (2018). Consultations on a Modern Social Housing Framework for Ontario: A guide for non-profit housing providers. Found at: http://www.onpha.on.ca/Content/Resources/Downloads-Area/Ontario_s_Social_Housing_Modernization_-_A_Guide_for_ONPHA_Members.aspx

ONPHA (2017). Housing Standards: Thoughts from Ireland. Found at: http://qc.onpha.on.ca/2017/10/housing-standards-thoughts-from-ireland/

Pomeroy, S. (2017). Envisioning a Strengthened Social Housing Sector. Centre for Urban Research and Education (CURE). Found at: https://carleton.ca/cure/wp-content/uploads/Envisioning-a-strengthened-social-housing-sector-FINAL-Oct-2018.pdf

ENGAGING LANDLORDS

DESCRIPTION

With a lack of affordable housing and low rental vacancies, community organizations and service agencies are looking for ways to work with landlords/property owners to help people in need find and maintain housing. Forming positive relationships with landlords and providing services to help maintain those relationships is crucial for people seeking housing. (Woolley, 2016)

Based on Employment and Social Development Canada's Landlord Engagement Toolkit, strategies to effectively engage landlords identified in the guide include:

- Laying the groundwork – understanding the local context (i.e. current legislation, housing market, neighbourhoods in need); identify and coordinate with partners; set up a community advisory committee; conduct a landlord survey; secure financial pieces (i.e. guaranteed rent, flexible dollars, mitigation fund); select a lease arrangement (standard lease is preferred approach for Housing First); establish policies and procedures (around evictions, damages, complaints etc.); and train staff.

- Recruiting landlords – understanding landlords concerns; developing marketing strategy; identifying access points; adopt a transparent approach; arrange meetings; and educate landlords and tenants.

- Maintaining relationships – communicate effectively; carefully screen tenants to ensure good fit; provide response support to landlords; anticipate and mitigate risks; establish early warning system; commit to repairing damage; and provide intensive supports to participants.

- Working together – recognize contributions landlords make; conduct evaluation; host landlord forums; and invite landlords to contribute in other ways

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

National Alliance to End Homelessness (2017). Rapid Re-housing Toolkit. Found at: https://endhomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/NAEH-Rapid-Re-housingTooklit_2017-FINAL.pdf

- This toolkit is aimed at providing guidance and tools to current and potential rapid re-housing providers. Within the chapter on Housing Identification (one of three components to an RRH program), a number of practices and tools are shared on recruiting landlords, incentivizing landlords and retaining landlords. Tools include outreach strategies, landlord tenant program agreement, sample brochures etc.

Employment and Social Development Canada (2017). The Landlord Engagement Toolkit: A guide to working with landlords in housing first programs. Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/LANDLORD%20TOOLKIT_ENG_web.pdf

- This toolkit was developed through the collaboration of stakeholders from across Canada. The Guide includes recommendations and strategies for effective communication, recruiting, and education of both landlords and tenants. It also provides examples of, and links to, resources such as surveys, job descriptions and promotional materials from various communities.

Bridging the gap: Regina landlords and renters on social assistance (video). Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/resource/bridging-gap-regina-landlords-and-renters-social-assistance
*   Video and research synopsis are based on a study by the University of Regina looking at the challenges facing low-income renters. The research includes a survey of landlords to identify potential barriers. The research also provides potential solutions such as changes to security deposit policies and changes to shelter allowances.

Homelessness Network (2017). Greater Sudbury Landlord Toolkit. Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/resource/greater-sudbury-landlord-toolkit
*   The toolkit is aimed at providing landlords, social service providers, and housing caseworkers with information on Housing First and how to support people who have experienced homelessness transition to housing stability and prevent eviction.

Woolley, E. (2016). What are the best ways to engage landlords? Toronto: The Homeless Hub Press. Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/blog/what-are-best-ways-engage-landlords

Ontario RentSmart (Found at: http://www.rentsmartontario.ca/
*   RentSmart Ontario is a Tenant Life Skills and Landlord Education Program aimed at promoting successful tenancies

BOARD CAPACITY AND SUCCESSION

DESCRIPTION

The non-profit housing sector is currently facing several challenges including expiration of operating agreements, changing legislation, and the retirement of long-term board members and staff. As such, providers are looking at ways to ensure current and future boards are equipped to succeed (CHRA, 2016). Steve Pomeroy, in CHRA Congress Session Series: Increasing Leadership Capacity in the Non-Profit Housing Sector, argues that the sector needs to become more entrepreneurial and enhance skills in financial management in order to be able to effectively manage assets and remain financially feasible. Further, in Business Transformation: Promising Practices for Social and Affordable Housing in Canada, the authors argue that the sector needs to re-envision how it operates and focus more on asset management, "the key to surviving and to thrive in the new operating environment is a strategic commitment to both business and social value" (CURE, 2015). During a period of transition or change, the authors highlight the need to recommit to organizational values as a way of keeping focused.   Their conclusions also find that well-functioning and effective organizations often have a scale that facilitates efficiency, "without organizations of sufficient scale to support professionals and an executive team, it is hard to develop and retain the type of leadership and critical supporting expertise that is needed to help transform more organizations in this sector from good (or merely mediocre) to great" (CURE, 2015:68).

In a Salary Survey conducted by ONHPA, nearly 75% of member organizations' CEOs and property managers were 46-65 years old, "this aging population represents the need for the sector to develop innovative, effective and efficient ways of transferring knowledge to emerging employees in the sector" (CHRA, 2016).   Other research findings highlight the need to adapt to the changing expectations of younger employees.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

Centre for Urban Research and Education (CURE, 2015). Business Transformation: Promising Practices for Social and Affordable Housing in Canada. Edited by Housing Services Corporation and BC Housing in partnership with Housing Partnership Canada. Found at: https://www.bchousing.org/research-centre/library/sector-transformation/business-transformation-practices-housing-report&sortType=sortByDate
*   This study conducted a survey of 33 non-profit housing organizations in Canada. The case studies look at changes in activities as well as changes in organization structure. Several case studies, for example, have moved away from a 'typical' non-profit structure and adopted a more revenue development business model. Other changes include amalgamation with other organizations, entering business partnerships and creating subsidy organizations.

ONPHA (2016). The Competency Project. Found at: https://chra.olasoft.com/document/3641/
*   This initiative collected information about what housing staff believe are current and future competencies, as well as sector and organizational standards.

CHRA (2016). Increasing Leadership Capacity in the Non-Profit Housing Sector. CHRA Congress Sessions Series. Found at: https://chra-achru.ca/sites/default/files/increasing_leadership_capacity_in_the_non-profit_housing_sector.pdf

HOUSING VULNERABLE RESIDENTS

DESCRIPTION

Social housing is aimed at increasing affordability for low to moderate income residents. Generally, an individual is able to live independently, however, housing providers often house vulnerable individuals with a range and mix of support needs.

The Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association (ONPHA) study, Strengthening Social Housing Communities, finds that the greatest impact resulting from a lack of supports is on housing staff and neighbouring tenants. Another critical impact is the reduced quality of life for vulnerable tenants, as well as increased unit damage, increased complaints from neighbouring tenants, clutter / hoarding, vulnerable tenants at greater risk for injuries, staff spending more time managing relationships with support agencies, increased pest infestations, increased evictions and increased after-hours emergencies. Another issue highlighted is that often non-professionals are stepping in to fill support gaps.

The ONPHA report outlines an approach for identifying needs and offering supports to vulnerable tenants:

For existing social housing tenants, the intent is to strengthen communities:
- Restore community development in social housing management
- Create support hubs in buildings where vulnerable tenants are concentrated
- Strengthen visiting supports where vulnerable tenants are dispersed
- Provide training for front line staff and tenants to spot emerging problems and know whom to call
- Use the eviction process to link tenants to supports

A robust community support system:
- Recognizes the importance of prevention for both new and existing tenancies
- Provides continuing supports including supports to maintain housing and health supports
- Promote collaboration with landlords
- Make effective use of technology in rural communities

The report also calls for the need to build relationships with tenants, identify problems before they become a crisis and coordinating strong partnerships.

EXAMPLES AND RESOURCES

ONPHA (2013). LHINs and the Housing System. Found at: https://www.onpha.on.ca/Content/PolicyAndResearch/focusONs/LHINs_and_the_housing_system.aspx

- The report identifies on-site supports in social housing as a key strategy in collaborating health and housing systems. From a health perspective, unmet needs can be detrimental to health and result in the inefficient use of the health care system. Unmet needs can also lead to a loss of housing which has an even greater effect on the health system. Targeting support services to clustered populations that are more likely to use health and emergency services (i.e. social housing buildings) can reduce unnecessary emergency room admissions.

ONPHA (2015). "Strengthening Social Housing Communities". Found at: https://www.onpha.on.ca/Content/PolicyAndResearch/Other_Research/Stengthening%20social%20housing%20communities.aspx

Mental health Commission of Canada (2013). Turning the Key. Found at: https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/PrimaryCare_Turning_the_Key_Full_ENG_0_1.pdf
- Assesses the housing and support needs of people living with mental health challenges. The research calls for a holistic basket of services including housing support services, health and mental health services, and peer support.

Toronto Community Housing (2009). TCH Mental Health Framework. Found at: https://www.torontohousing.ca/events/Documents/Archives/61772010-16MentalHealthFrameworkAll.pdf
- Addresses the needs of tenants living with mental health or addiction issues. The Framework aims to address not just the needs of tenants but neighbours, staff and the housing corporation as well.

Institute of Urban Studies (2014). Best Practice Research Report: Holding On! Supporting Successful Tenancies for the Hard to House. University of Winnipeg. Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/2014%20Successful%20Tenancies%20-%20FINAL.pdf
- Study looks at addressing the needs of people with mental health challenges or substance abuse issues who have experienced homelessness. The study looks at structural barriers and identifies potential strategies including Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) and Intensive Case Management.

CMHA Nipissing Regional Branch Needs Assessed: Needs Addressed: How can we keep people housing in Nipissing (NANA Project)
- The report outlines a set of recommendation to address high needs buildings. The recommendations look at primary, secondary and tertiary prevention approaches. The report outlines many strategies to support successful tenancies.

HOUSING LINKED WITH SUPPORTS

DESCRIPTION

Housing linked with supports is the combination of housing with supportive services designed to help vulnerable individuals and families access and maintain appropriate safe housing. Housing with supports can be found within a full range of housing types with distinct program elements and criteria. Various models are described below.

DIFFERENT MODELS

Scattered-site Housing

Scattered-site Housing has been used as a key component of many Housing First initiatives. Scattered-site housing is largely owned by private sector landlords. In the At Home/Chez Soi study, for example, over 260 landlords and property management companies participated with over 1,200 housing units provided (MHCC, 2014). Clients living in scattered-site housing receive customized housing supports such as ICM or ACT depending on their level of need. By definition, scattered-site housing is not located in one structure - housing units can be located in properties in many areas across a community depending on availability and affordability.

Permanent Supportive Housing

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) provides long-term housing and supports to individuals who are homeless and experiencing complex mental health, addiction, and physical health barriers. A key feature of PSH is its appropriate level of service for chronically homeless clients who may need support for an uncertain length of time (Turner, 2015). Turner estimates a case manager ratio of 1:10/15 for high acuity clients and 1:20 for moderate acuity clients.

Permanent supportive housing requires the creation (new construction or acquisition/renovation) of buildings with the specific purpose of housing homeless and vulnerable populations.

Rapid Re-housing

Rapid re-housing (RRH) is an intervention aimed at helping individuals and families quickly exit homelessness, return to housing, and prevent homelessness in the future. RRH programs will vary in level and type of support provided depending on needs. RRH programs targets clients with lower acuity levels using case management and financial supports, and clients who can live independently after receiving subsidies and support services (Turner, 2015:13). Turner estimates the caseload for RRH at 1:25. RRH have a lower expected timeframe than PSH (Ibid.:26). Key elements of a successful RRH program include individualized and flexible assistance, progressive engagement, and the ability to make program modifications when needed (NAEH, 2017). RRH uses a Housing First approach.

The National Alliance to End Homelessness (with several other partners and agencies) identify three core components to RRH:

- Housing identification – recruitment of landlords, addressing potential barriers to landlord participation, and assisting households find and secure appropriate rental housing.

- Move-in and rent assistance – provide assistance to cover move-in costs, deposits needed to allow people to move immediately out of homelessness and to stabilize in permanent housing.

- Case management and services – help people experiencing homelessness identify and select permanent housing options based on their unique needs, preferences and financial resources.

Intensive Case Management

Intensive case management (ICM) in the context of a Housing First approach is designed to serve moderate/ higher acuity clients who have more complex needs. Based on the Toolkit for Intensive Case Management in Canada, the client ratios for case managers should not exceed 1:15, compared to the traditional 1:20 for traditional case management, and more time should be dedicated to clients with an average of 2.5 hours per client per week. Turner, in Performance Management in a Housing First Context estimates, 1:20 as a case manager ratio for ICM. The toolkit identifies five core components of ICM:

- Assessing – programs use a series of assessment tools to capture information about clients.
- Managing – includes agency responsibilities such as developing program documents, sustaining community engagement, developing and maintaining partnerships, and research and evaluation.
- Staffing – building a stable program workforce.
- Housing – includes landlord retention, housing retention, and housing support policies and strategies.
- Ending homelessness – a client has a home with affordable rent and rent subsidy if needed and is connected with all necessary support and care.

Assertive Community Treatment (ACT)

Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) programs provide longer-term case management and housing support to very high acuity homeless clients facing addictions and mental health. Turner estimates a caseload ratio of 1:10 for an ACT program. ACT programs ultimately aim to move clients toward increasing self-sufficiency (Turner, 2015: 14).

RESOURCES

CSH (2013). Dimensions of Quality Supportive Housing. Found at: https://www.csh.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/CSH_Dimensions_of_Quality_Supportive_Housing_guidebook.pdf

Employment and Social Development Canada (2018). Toolkit for Intensive Case Management in Canada: A resource for those using case management program for the Housing First model. Found at: https://www.stepstonesforyouth.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Toolkit-for-Intensive-Case-Management-in-Canada-1.pdf

Mental Health Commission of Canada (2014). National Final Report. Cross-Site At Home/Chez Soi Project. Found at: https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/mhcc_at_home_report_

national_cross-site_eng_2_0.pdf

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Point Source Youth (2019). Rapid Re-Housing Handbook: A resource guide for rapid re-housing programs. Version 1.0. Found at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DQniOOQ5BwRfkybubyX1C7G0v5GttMGY/view

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PREVENT AND REDUCE
HOMELESSNESS

▌HOUSING FIRST

DESCRIPTION

Housing First is a homelessness assistance approach that prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness (NAEH, 2016). Housing First is guided by the notion that people need the necessities of a safe place before being able to address other needs such as employment and mental health. Housing First is further guided by the belief that client choice is valuable in housing selection and support service participation. Housing First can be available through several different building forms including scattered site apartments and multi-unit apartment buildings with various types of landlord-tenant and rent subsidy arrangements (Waegemakers and Rook, 2012).

There is growing evidence to show that Housing First is an effective approach to supporting individuals and families in accessing housing faster and program participants are more likely to remain housed (NAEH, 2016). The Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) engaged more than 2,000 participants for two years in five Canadian cities in the world's largest test of Housing First. MHCC concluded that "Housing First can be effectively implemented in Canadian cities of different size and different ethnoracial and cultural composition". Also "Housing First rapidly ends homelessness" (MHCC, 2014). See also NAEH (2016). The Housing First principles stated by MHCC include:

1.   immediate access to housing with no housing readiness conditions

2.   consumer choice and self-determination

3.   recovery orientation

4.   individualized and person-driven supports, and

5.   social and community integration

MHCC goes on to note that At Home/Chez Soi used "a rent supplement approach. Participants were largely able to choose the neighbourhood and type of housing they wanted, as At Home Chez/Soi was grounded in the HF principle of choice and self-determination as the foundation of recovery. HF operates on the assumption that people know their own needs best, including where they want to live and the kinds of services they would like to access".

KEY COMPONENTS

Taking a Housing First approach means that that anyone experiencing homelessness can access housing without prerequisites (i.e. income, participation in services, substance use), services are voluntary and client-driven, and people are assisted to access permanent housing options as quickly as possible.   Housing First programs typically provide rental assistance,

with a standard lease, and a range of voluntary services to promote housing stability and well-being.

Core elements of a system-wide Housing First Approach include:

- Community-wide coordinated access process

- Low-barrier entry to service

- Outreach and crisis response are coordinated to the local coordinated entry process

- Services are informed by a harm reduction philosophy

- Data-driven approach to prioritizing housing assistance

- Staff are trained in and employ evidence-based practices

DIFFERENT MODELS

Scattered-site Housing

Scattered-site housing has been used as a key component of many Housing First initiatives. "This housing model - known as "scattered-site independent housing" honours clients' preferences such as choosing apartments in neighbourhoods with which they are familiar" (Tsemberis, 2010). Scattered-site housing is largely owned by private sector landlords. In the At Home/Chez Soi study, for example, over 260 landlords and property management companies participated with over 1,200 housing units provided (MHCC, 2014). Individualized supports are then provided to the client according to their needs in the scattered-site housing unit. By definition, scattered-site housing units can be located in properties in many areas across a community depending on availability and affordability.

Permanent Supportive Housing

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) is aimed at individuals and families with chronic illnesses, disabilities, mental health issues, or substance use disorders who have experienced long-term or repeated homelessness. It provides long-term rental assistance and support services.

Rapid Re-Housing

Rapid-re-housing provides short-term rental assistance and services with the goal of assisting individuals and families obtain housing quickly, increase self-sufficiency, and remain housed. Core components of rapid re-housing include identification, rent and move-in assistance, and case management and services.

RESOURCES

Canadian Housing First Toolkit. Found at:
http://housingfirsttoolkit.ca/wp-content/uploads/CanadianHousingFirstToolkit.pdf

HUD, Housing First Program Assessment Tool. Found at: https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5294/housing-first-assessment-tool/

Mental Health Commission of Canada. Turning the Key. Found at: https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/PrimaryCare_Turning_the_Key_Full_ENG_0_1.pdf

Mental Health Commission of Canada (2014). National Final Report. Cross-Site At Home/Chez Soi Project. Found at: https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/mhcc_at_home_report_national_cross-site_eng_2_0.pdf

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USICH (2016). Housing First Checklist. Found at: https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Housing_First_Checklist_FINAL.pdf

Waegemakers Schiff, Jeannette; Rook, John (2012). Housing first - Where is the Evidence? (Toronto: Homeless Hub). Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/HousingFirstReport_final.pdf

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN A HOUSING FIRST CONTEXT

DESCRIPTION

Performance management is aimed at evaluating a system's impact on priority populations. As outlined by the Homeless Hub, performance management articulates what the homeless-serving system, as a whole, is trying to achieve; illustrates whether progress is being made towards preventing and reducing homelessness in a particular community; keeps programs accountable to funders; quantifies achievements towards the goals of the Community Plan and Reaching Home (RH) targets; uses information gathered for continuous improvement; aligns program-level results to client outcomes at the individual and system-levels; and informs the next round of strategy review and investment planning.

KEY COMPONENTS

A Guide to Performance Management in the Housing First Context, written by Alina Turner and published by the Homeless Hub, provides direction specifically for Community Entity organizations to help manage Reaching Home funding in order to align and evaluate efforts to national-level goals and benchmarks. Within this framework, several elements are outlined:

- Develop key program and system-level performance indicators – to monitor performance at the program and system-level

- Gather and analyze program and system data – to understand populations served (and that may not be served well) in the system

- Establish performance targets – to track progress in meeting program level and system-level goals

- Analyze performance – in order to understand the relationship between outputs and outcomes at the program and system-level (output is typically an activity or action (what a program does) and an outcome is the change in client as a result of the activity or action)

- Working with diverse funders – to develop targets and indicators that match local context and priorities

- Engaging key stakeholders – to determine what is occurring in the system (not just at program-level).

- Leveraging data – to gauge whether funded programs meet the expected results.

RESOURCES

Alina Turner (2015): Performance Management in a Housing First Context: A Guide for Community Entities. Toronto: The Homeless Hub Press. Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/CEGuide-final.pdf

MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT OF PEOPLE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE

DESCRIPTION

In designing and implementing approaches and programs to reduce homelessness, it is important that people who are impacted by these initiatives are included in the process; "it is critical to a rights-based approach to poverty reduction that people with lived experience of poverty are included and engaged in the decision-making processes that affect their lives and those of their communities" (Vlachoyannacos, 2016).

The Lived Experience Advisory Council (LEAC) developed a set of principles for the inclusion and leadership of people with lived experience that aim to address homelessness. Principles outlined include:

- Bring the perspective of our lived experience to the forefront
- Include people with lived experience at all levels of the organization
- Value our time and provide appropriate supports
- Challenge stigma oppression and promote dignity
- Recognize our expertise and engage us in decision-making
- Work together towards our equitable representation
- Build authentic relationships between people with and without lived experience

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

Lived Experience Advisory Council (2016). Nothing about us without us: Seven principles for leadership and inclusion of people with lived experience of homelessness. Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/LEAC-7principles-final.pdf

- In addition to identifying seven principles to engagement with people with lived experience, the document provides a rationale for each principle as well as ideas on how to implement each one.

Maytree (2016). Let's Talk Housing: A discussion guide to support local community conversations. In partnership with United Way Centraide-Canada and the Lived Experience Advisory Council. Found at: https://maytree.com/wp-content/uploads/National-Housing-Strategy-CC-guide-english.pdf

- This guide was used to inform Canada's National Housing Strategy (NHS). Although the consultation process has been completed, there are several useful recommendations found within the guide.

Vlachoyannocos, E. (2016). Real Solutions Start with Lived Experience. Opinion for Maytree. Found at: https://maytree.com/publications/real-solutions-start-lived-experience/#

OUTREACH

DESCRIPTION

Effective outreach includes ensuring people in need know that help is available and how to access it (Gaetz, S., and Dej, E. 2017). Effective outreach and engagement bring services to people experiencing homelessness who may not seek them out on their own or who may distrust current systems. Outreach can take many forms such as meeting a person at a service or visiting them at their home. The "common element of all outreach work is to actively approach clients with the intention of offering supports related to service provision and/or to establish engagement" (Homelessness NSW).

Outreach strategies require understanding of individual circumstances, including cultural barriers. Varied, flexible, and responsive professional support services, often including assertive outreach are important tools. A deliberate strategy is required to reach people who are couch-surfing or living without shelter, for example on public lands, such as in parks and ravines.

KEY COMPONENTS

The following key components are based on the US Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) and aligned with the Homelessness New South Wales' (NSW) approaches to good practices in assertive outreach:

- Housing First – using a Housing First approach can facilitate connecting individuals to services that can help address other needs such as health and employment.

- A systemic documented approach – a systemic approach allows greater participation by community partners and a more efficient response to homelessness. Documents may include maps, schedules, assessments, and other outreach materials.

- Collaboration with non-traditional partners – outreach workers need to be able to connect individuals with multiple agencies across sectors.

- High quality data – having high quality client-centred data helps communities to better monitor progress and respond to needs faster.

- Coordinated entry – coordinated entry processes create opportunities for providers to communicate and collaborate regularly and encourages collective prioritization of individuals with highest need.

- Targeting – targeting individuals based on vulnerability and high service utilization allows workers to more quickly identify people experiencing homelessness and connect them to the most appropriate supports.

- Data sharing – with data sharing across the system individuals with highest need are identified more quickly.

- **Hot-spotting** – hot-spotting is a process to identify concentrations of high-need individuals geographically.

- **Institutional "in-reach"** – In-reach refers to collaborative outreach efforts with other institutions (i.e. corrections, health care) to meet needs of individuals experiencing or at-risk of homelessness.

- **Warm hand-offs** – effective outreach ensures there is a gradual, warm handoff to housing and service providers.

- **Training on evidence-based practices** – Trauma-Informed Care, Motivational Interviewing, and Critical Time Intervention are examples of evidence-based practices helpful to people working with individuals with lived experience.

  - Trauma-Informed Care- trauma-informed care is practices that promote a culture of safety, empowerment, and healing

  - Motivational Interviewing- is a counseling approach that is a directive, client-centered counseling style for eliciting behavior change by helping clients to explore and resolve ambivalence

  - Critical Time Intervention- helps vulnerable people during times of transition in their lives by strengthening their network of support in the community

- **Diversity of approach** -engagement efforts should be diverse and robust (i.e. on the street, social media, at drop-in centres).

RESOURCES

20KHomes (2018). Coordinated Outreach Coverage: Key considerations, tips and resources. Found at: http://www.20khomes.ca/wp-content/uploads/Coordinate-Outreach-Coverage-Key-Considerations-Tips-Resources.pdf

Stephen Gaetz & Erin Dej. (2017). A New Direction: A Framework for Homelessness Prevention. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/COHPreventionFramework_1.pdf

Homelessness NSW (N.D). Assertive Outreach Good Practices Guidelines. Found at: https://www.homelessnessnsw.org.au/sites/homelessnessnsw/files/2017-08/Assertive%20Outreach%20Practice%20Guidelines%201%20%28002%29.pdf

USICH (2016). The Role of Outreach and Engagement in Ending Homelessness: Lessons learned from SAMHSA's expert panel. Found at: https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Outreach_and_Engagement_Fact_Sheet_SAMHSA_USICH.pdf

EMERGENCY SHELTER

DESCRIPTION

Emergency shelters and other forms of crisis housing have a critical role in a system's response to homelessness. Effective emergency shelters have a strong housing orientation and are aimed at having the shortest possible length of stays and the least number of returns to shelter possible (Org Code, 2017). In effective shelter systems, the eligibility criteria, policies, and practices in all shelters are aligned with a Housing First approach.

The National Alliance to End Homelessness defines the role of a shelter in the crisis response system as diverting people from entering shelter if they have safe and appropriate housing alternatives, providing access to shelter beds, enabling 'flow' through to housing, and being connected to permanent housing solutions.

KEY COMPONENTS

There are six key components of effective shelters systems:

- A Housing First Approach – anyone experiencing homelessness can access shelter without prerequisites, services are voluntary, and people are assisted to access permanent housing options as quickly as possible.

- Immediate and Low-Barrier Access – having no sobriety and income requirements and other policies that make it difficult to enter shelter, stay in shelter, or access housing and income opportunities. Shelters must accommodate people regardless of criminal history, or other perceived barriers to entry, like previous non-compliance with a housing plan. It also means taking approaches that address reasons why people may be reluctant to access shelter, such as being pet friendly and providing safe storage for possessions.

- Diversion Supports – focus on helping households avoid shelter stays. Supports may include problem-solving assistance to help identify barriers and solutions to the household's current situation; housing help (support to find housing, advocacy and coaching through the process of applying for a lease); eviction prevention (financial support, legal advice, mediation); re-housing assistance (financial support, housing).

- Practices that Promote Dignity and Respect – having values, policies and measurable goals and actions/practices promoting inclusion, cultural competence, dignity and respect.

- Housing-Focused, Rapid Exit Services – focused on helping people obtain permanent housing. This includes practices to intentionally link people to permanent housing resources and re-house people as quickly as possible. All messaging to clients from the shelter should be focused on housing.

- Data to Measure Performance – involves establishing targets, regularly reporting on performance measurements, and using the information to evaluate the effectiveness of the shelter system and

improve outcomes. Targets should be established and data on percentage of exits to permanent housing, time spent homeless, and returns to homelessness, should be measured and regularly reported on.

Another form of interim housing is:

- Transitional Housing – Transitional housing programs offer homeless individuals and families housing for up to (typically) three years. Wrap-around support services, including case management and tenancy supports, are provided along with housing in order to create a more stable environment and ultimately transition into independent permanent housing. Many transitional housing programs are retooling their programs to reduce length of time in the program and increase successful exits to permanent housing.

Another key emergency support program is:

- Discharge Planning – Effective discharge planning includes preparing someone who has lived in an 'institutionalized' setting to live independently or with some supports in a non-institutionalized setting.

Discharge and aftercare planning should: prevent consumers from falling into homelessness, identify appropriate housing, have individualized, comprehensive planning that is coordinated with community-based services, have consumers, institutional staff and community partners participate in the planning.

RESOURCES

National Alliance to End Homelessness (2017). Emergency Shelter Learning Series. Found at: https://endhomelessness.org/resource/emergency-shelter/

Org Code (2017). Housing Focused Shelter. Found at: http://www.orgcode.com/housing_focused_shelter

INDIGENOUS HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

DESCRIPTION

Of the 773,000 Indigenous households living in Canada in 2016, 13 per cent live in First Nation communities (on reserve lands). Most Indigenous families and individuals are not living on reserve lands with 62 per cent living in urban areas and 25 per cent living in small towns, rural and remote areas for a total of 87 per cent (2016 Census quoted in CHRA, 2018). Using CMHC's definition of core housing need and data from the 2016 Census, the incidence of core housing need is much higher among Indigenous households than among non-Indigenous households (18.3 per cent vs 12.4 per cent) (Ibid).

Indigenous homelessness refers to First Nations, Métis and Inuit individuals, families or communities lacking stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means or ability to acquire such housing. Unlike the common colonialist definition of homelessness, Indigenous homelessness is not defined as lacking a structure of habitation; rather, it is more fully described and understood through a composite lens of Indigenous worldviews. These include individuals, families and communities isolated from their relationships to land, water, place, family, kin, each other, animals, cultures, languages and identities. Importantly, Indigenous people experiencing these kinds of homelessness cannot culturally, spiritually, emotionally or physically reconnect with their Indigenous culture or lost relationships (Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness, 2012).

Indigenous People experience homelessness at a disproportionate rate to the overall population. Belanger et al (2013) found that 1 in 15 Indigenous People in urban centres are homeless compared to 1 in 128 for the general population. Contributors of Indigenous homelessness include the historical trauma, discrimination, and oppression tracing back to colonization, and a result of the Indian Act, residential schools and the Sixties Scoop.

KEY COMPONENTS

The literature puts forward many recommendations in addressing Indigenous homelessness and housing needs. Key components based on Patrick's Aboriginal Homelessness in Canada: A Literature Review, and the Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness and the Indigenous Housing Caucus Working Group of CHRA include:

- Culturally appropriate – provide culturally appropriate housing initiatives and services
    - Understanding of cultural competencies
    - Establish safe, culturally relevant and sensitive discharge plans
    - Housing strategies should honour Indigenous desire for self-determination.
- Indigenous engagement - involve Indigenous peoples in every stage of program and policy development

- Initiate greater consultation with Indigenous organizations and agencies in the creation of centralized intake system
- Talk to, and learn from, the Indigenous people who have been previously or are currently homeless or have faced housing issues.

- Housing subsidies – provide subsidies and support services that allow Indigenous People to obtain, retain and maintain safe and culturally appropriate housing.

- Focus on prevention

- Government collaboration – collaboration among all levels of government

  - National policies to support Indigenous rental and ownership housing.

- Expand and support existing organizations – support agencies currently providing housing to homeless Indigenous youth and children

  - Create an urban Indigenous cultural support system/centre with culturally specific wrap-around programs
  - Provide more opportunities for urban Indigenous people to earn income and receive education.

- Collaboration – allow for more engagement and involvement with stakeholders, leaders, committee members, and First Nations communities.

- Community engagement – educate the non-Indigenous community about Indigenous poverty, homelessness and history of colonial oppression.

- For Indigenous By Indigenous - affordable housing and service support needs for Indigenous families and individuals who are homeless or poorly housed designed, owned and operated by Indigenous housing and service providers.

RESOURCES

Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness (2012). Plan to End Aboriginal Homelessness in Calgary. Found at:
http://calgaryhomeless.com/content/uploads/Aboriginal-Plan-2012.pdf

Belanger, Y. et al. (2013). Homelessness, Urban Aboriginal People, and the Need for a National Enumeration. Aboriginal Policy Studies, 2(2), 4-33. Found at: http://www.habitation.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/internet/centredoc/CC/NS23248.pdf

Indigenous Housing Caucus Working Group, Canadian Housing and Renewal Association (CHRA) (2018). A For Indigenous by Indigenous National Housing Strategy. Addressing the Housing Needs of Indigenous Families and Individuals in the Urban, Rural and Northern Parts of Canada. Found at: http://www.chra-achru.ca/sites/default/files/documents/2018-06-05_for-indigenous-by-indigenous-national-housing-strategy.pdf

Patrick, C. (2014). Aboriginal Homelessness in Canada: A literature review. Toronto: Canadian Homelessness

Research Network. Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/AboriginalLiteratureReview.pdf

Thistle, J. (2017.) Indigenous Definition of Homelessness in Canada. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. Found at: https://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/COHIndigenousHomelessnessDefinition.pdf

YOUTH-FOCUSED RESPONSE

DESCRIPTION

Youth homelessness refers to "the situation and experience of youth people between the ages of 13 and 24 who are living independently of parents and/or caregivers, but do not have the means or ability to acquire stable, safe or consistent residence" (A Way Home: Youth Homelessness in Canada). A Way Home, a national coalition dedicated to preventing and ending youth homelessness in Canada, finds that approximately 20% of all people that experience homelessness in Canada are between the ages of 13 and 25, and that 6,000 youth experience homelessness on any given night, either sleeping outdoors or in emergency shelters. In addition, it is found that young people who identify as LGBTQ2S make up an estimated 25-40% of the youth homeless population, and that Indigenous groups are over represented in the youth homeless population.

Long-term consequences of youth homelessness include increased risk of exploitation; greater involvement with police and justice system; disengagement from school and difficulty getting a job; mental health and addiction problems; chronic homelessness (A Way Home: Youth Homelessness in Canada).

KEY COMPONENTS

Stephen Gaetz in Ending Youth Homelessness in Canada is Possible: The Role of Prevention, describes a prevention framework for ending youth homelessness which includes three key components that can be implemented at the national, provincial or community levels.

- Prevention – the investment in supports and the coordination of services to reduce the likelihood that people will become homeless in the first place; "working upstream to identify those at risk of homelessness and develop interventions that reduce the risk that young people with become homeless". [Gaetz further outlines three interconnected domains to youth homelessness prevention: primary prevention, systems prevention, early intervention].
- Emergency response – set of interventions available once someone has become homeless. The goal is to provide emergency supports to address basic and pressing needs for shelter and food.
- Accommodation and supports – providing supports (income, health care etc.) to rapidly transition people into housing.

Effective responses to youth homelessness involve all three components with emphasis on prevention and strategies that move people quickly out of homelessness rather than on managing homelessness. Based on a review of integrated and strategic responses to youth homelessness from the UK, Australia, and the US, Gaetz puts forward five key components to support integrating prevention into a more strategic response:

1. Develop a plan with clear goals and objectives, timelines, responsibilities and benchmarks, and measurable targets with the right players engaged.

2.   Create an integrated system response where homelessness sector services are coordinated and integrated with clear roles and mandates for agencies. System coordination also needs to extend beyond homelessness sector to include services such as health care, supports for those with addictions and mental health, housing services, child welfare and corrections (i.e. 'system of care').

3.   Facilitate active, strategic and coordinated engagement by all levels of government, and interdepartmental collaboration (health, corrections and justice, housing, education, child welfare).

4.   Adopt a youth development orientation (focus on needs of adolescents and young adults) and acknowledge diversity among youth in particular sexual and racial minorities.

5.   Incorporate research, data gathering and information sharing.

RESOURCES

A Way Home Canada (N.D). Youth Homelessness in Canada. Website. Found at: http://awayhome.ca/youth-homelessness-in-canada/

A Way Home (N.D). National Youth Collaboration Toolkit. Found at: http://awayhome.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/National-Youth-Collaboration-Toolkit.pdf

A Way Home Canada. LGBTQ2S Toolkit. Found at: http://lgbtq2stoolkit.learningcommunity.ca/

Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (2016). Canadian Definition of Youth Homelessness. Found at: https://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/Definition_of_Youth_Homelessness.pdf

Gaetz, S. (2014). Coming of Age: Reimagining the Response to Youth Homelessness in Canada. Toronto: The Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press

Gaetz, S. (2013). Ending Youth Homelessness in Canada is Possible: The Role of Prevention. Toronto: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press. Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/27Conclusionweb.pdf

Gaetz, Stephen; O'Grady, Bill; Buccieri, Kristy; Karabanow, Jeff; & Marsolais, Allyson (Eds.) (2013). Youth Homelessness in Canada: Implications for Policy and Practice. Toronto: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press. Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/YouthHomelessnessweb.pdf

National Alliance to End Homelessness (2012). Housing and Outreach Strategies for Rural Youth: Best Practices from the Rural Youth Strategy. Found at: https://endhomelessness.org/resource/rural-homelessness/

Turner, A. (N.D). A Way Home: Youth Homelessness Community Planning Toolkit. Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/download-chapter/AWH%20Community%20Planning%20Toolkit.pdf

FAMILY-FOCUSED APPROACH

DESCRIPTION

Family homelessness is extremely complex, and its extent is underestimated (NAEH, 2006). Children who live in homelessness are at risk of doing poorly in school, developing negative health and mental health outcomes, having behavioural issues, and struggling to exit poverty as adults (Gulliver-Garcia, 2016).

COMPONENTS

The NAEH puts forward five strategies to ending family homelessness:

- Prevention – target outreach and assistance to at-risk families to prevent them from becoming homelessness and entering the emergency shelter system.

- Housing First – focus on helping families quickly access and then sustain housing. Includes crisis intervention, rapid re-housing, follow-up case management, and housing support services.

- Helping families pay for housing – providing financial support such as security deposit and first month's rent, short-term subsidy, or longer-term subsidy (i.e. more than one year).

- Targeting services – targeting services to meet unique needs of each family. Services include helping families successfully manage conflicts with landlords, manage unanticipated expenses and their budget, and providing assistance to help families access and sustain employment, as well as more intensive services such as income support programs, employment services, child care and recreation, mental health or substance abuse services, and support services for children.

- Data and planning – data gathering in order to plan effectively to prevent and reduce homelessness.

Similar to the above, in Putting an End to Child & Family Homelessness in Canada, the author puts forward three components within the framework for addressing family homelessness:

- Primary prevention – targeting at-risk families and addressing systemic barriers and structural failures.

- System-based response – addressing homelessness in a collaborative and cross-sectoral manner; 'a system of care'. Includes aligning services, improving information sharing, increasing efficiency, and providing a seamless care experience.

- Early intervention – identifying and addressing problems and conditions shortly after they occur or when they are at risk of occurring (also called secondary prevention). Includes coordinated assessment, case management, shelter diversion, as well as family mediation, rent banks and landlord-tenant mediation.

RESOURCES

National Alliance to End Homelessness (2006). Promising Strategies to End Family Homelessness. Found at:

https://www.cdaid.org/files/municipal_services/PromisingStrategies.pdf

Gulliver-Garcia, T. (2016). Putting an End to Child & Family Homelessness in Canada. Toronto: Raising the Roof. Found at:
https://www.raisingtheroof.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/CF-Report-Final.pdf

Noble, A. (2014). Child and Family Homelessness: Building a comprehensive framework to address child and family homelessness in Canada: Phase 1: an environmental Scan. Toronto: Raising the Roof. Found at: http://www.raisingtheroof.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/RtR_EnvScan_March2014-FINAL.pdf

United Way Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley (2017). The Startling Numbers Behind the Increase in Family Homelessness. Found at:
https://unitedwaymassbay.org/blog/5-strategies-for-ending-family-homelessness/

FEMALE-FOCUSED APPROACH

DESCRIPTION

According to the State of Homelessness in Canada (2016), women represented 27.3% of the overall homelessness population and represented 36.9% of the homeless population between the ages of 16 and 24. Women's homelessness is often hidden, with women often staying temporarily with family or friends or living in a household where she is a victim of family violence (Homeless Hub). In addition to women's experiences of intimate partner and family violence, immigration issues, lack of social supports and other barriers to stability also play a role in the pathways to homelessness for women (Ibid). Women experiencing homelessness have high rates of post-traumatic stress disorder, mental health issues such as depression, and report high rates of sexual exploitation, violence, and assault (Milaney, K. et. al., 2017).

COMPONENTS

Milaney et. al., through A Gendered Approach to Finding Solutions to Family Homelessness, put forward several key strategies to addressing homelessness among women:

- Expand and enhance the continuum of care to support families
- Promote strong social networks for women including peer support
- Recognize the complexity of family homelessness and focus on culture and trauma
- Scan the eligibility criteria and data collection approaches for affordable housing
- Increase efforts to prevent family violence

In a Framework for Ending Women's and Girl's Homelessness, the authors put forward three key components for responding to female homelessness including

- Long-term solutions – such as ending violence against women, coordinating research, ending poverty and discrimination, and an effective justice system.
- Community transformation – including becoming a trauma informed community, prioritizing choice, mobilization of community organizations, leadership by women including women with lived experience, and collaboration across systems.
- Local strategies – including taking a Housing First approach and incorporating peer support, rapid response and crisis intervention, intensive case management, flexible supports, and a variety of housing options.

RESOURCES

Berkum, A., Oudshoorn, A. (2015). Best Practice Guideline for Ending Women's and Girl's Homelessness. Found at:
http://londonhomeless.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Best-Practice-Guideline-for-Ending-Womens-and-Girls-Homelessness.pdf

Stephen Gaetz, Erin Dej, Tim Richter, & Melanie Redman (2016): The State of Homelessness in Canada 2016. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/SOHC16_final_20Oct2016.pdf
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PREVENTION

DESCRIPTION

Homelessness prevention refers to policies, practices, and interventions that reduce the likelihood that someone will experience homelessness. It also means providing those who have been homeless with the necessary resources and supports to stabilize their housing, enhance integration and social inclusion, and ultimately reduce the risk of recurrence of homelessness (Gaetz, S. and Dej, E., 2017).

Prevention requires an approach where various elements are working together. The Canadian Observatory on Homelessness' Framework for Homelessness Prevention defines three prevention interventions that should occur simultaneously; primary, secondary and tertiary. Primary prevention refers to structural-level initiatives to reduce the risk of homelessness. Secondary prevention is aimed at those who are at imminent risk of homelessness or those who have recently become homeless to help them regain housing as quickly as possible. Tertiary prevention includes supporting individuals and families who have previously experienced homelessness to ensure it does not happen again.

The National Alliance to End Homelessness outlines five key principles to effective homelessness prevention:

- Crisis resolution – Understanding that every situation that could result in homelessness is a crisis for the person experiencing it. Responses include rapid assessment and triage, focus on personal safety, de-escalation of emotions, setting achievable action steps, assistance in taking action steps (where appropriate), and returning the individual to have control over their problem solving.

- Client choice, respect and empowerment – Homelessness prevention services must help people in crisis regain a sense of control and feeling of empowerment. Respect for strengths and reinforcement of progress.

- Provide the minimum assistance necessary in shortest time possible – Providing 'just enough' assistance to prevent homelessness.

- Maximize community resources.

- The right resources to the right people at the right time – Target people who have the highest risk of becoming homeless and who are likely to remain housed if assisted.

KEY COMPONENTS

Key components of effective homelessness prevention include (Gaetz, S. and Dej, E., 2017):

- Structural prevention – addresses factors that leave people at risk of homelessness through legislation, policy and investment.

- Systems prevention – responds to institutional and system failures to ensure people have access to the supports they need to prevent homelessness. It includes fixing policy and procedural barriers, enhancing access to public systems and supports, and facilitating effective transitions from public institutions or systems.

- **Early Intervention** – prevention policies and initiatives aimed at those at imminent risk of homelessness. May include outreach, coordinated assessment, place-based supports as well as more targeted interventions such as family mediation, school-based early intervention, and victims of violence support.

- **Evictions Prevention** – strategies to reduce the risk that people will lose their housing. Strategies may include landlord mediation, rental assistance, legal support.

- **Housing stability** – support people to access and retain housing. Supports may include rent supplements and/or income supports, recovery-oriented supports, educational and/or employment supports, life skill supports, and supports for social inclusion.

RESOURCES

Stephen Gaetz & Erin Dej. (2017). A New Direction: A Framework for Homelessness Prevention. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/ANewDirection

Gaetz, S., Schwan, K., Redman, M., French, D., & Dej, E. (2018). The Roadmap for the Prevention of Youth Homelessness. A. Buchnea (Ed.). Toronto, ON: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/YPRfullreport_2.pdf

Homeless Hub (2017). "Evictions Planning and Prevention". Found at: http://homelesshub.ca/solutions/housing/evictions-planning-and-prevention

National Alliance to End Homelessness (2009). Homelessness Prevention Guide. Found at: https://endhomelessness.org/resource/homelessness-prevention-creating-programs-that-work/

DIVERSION

DESCRIPTION

Diversion is an approach to preventing homelessness by helping people seeking shelter identify immediate alternative housing arrangements and, if necessary, connecting them to services and financial assistance to help them return to permanent housing (NAEH, 2011). Diversion targets people as they are applying for shelter or at the 'front door' of a system entry point. Diversion programs can reduce the number of families becoming homeless and the demand for shelter beds. "Diversion exists because the majority of people that use shelters exit within a short period of time, suggesting they may not have needed shelter at all in the first place" (OrgCode, 2013). Diversion should be attempted with all people seeking shelter. Evidence from shelter diversion programs in North America and the UK suggest that between 30%-50% of people seeking emergency shelter can be diverted (OrgCode, 2013).

While the services (i.e. housing search, housing subsidy/financial assistance, case management, connection to resources) may not differ significantly from those provided by shelters and/or homelessness assistance organization, the timing of the intervention is the key difference. Diversion targets people as they are applying for shelter or at the 'front door' of a system entry point. Rapid re-housing, on the other hand, targets people who are already homeless.

KEY COMPONENTS

Based on NAEH's Creating a Successful Diversion Program for Families, components of a successful diversion program include:

- Screening tools and process – screening process that can quickly determine whether an individual or family can be diverted.

- System entry point(s) – assessment for diversion should take place at the 'front door' (the initial access point (or points) to the homelessness assistance program.

- Cooperation from other providers – organizations direct families coming to them for service to the designated intake/assessment centre.

- Cooperation from service providers – diversion often requires the involvement of service providers from outside the homelessness assistance system.

- Flexible funding – may require the provision of financial assistance to help individual/family get back into their former housing, enable them to stay a bit longer in their current situation, to unify with family, or help move them quickly into a new housing unit.

- Resourceful staff members – staff should be familiar with intake and assessment processes, have experience with landlord mediation and conflict resolution, and be knowledgeable about rental subsidies and financial literacy programs.

RESOURCES

National Alliance to End Homelessness (2011). Creating a Successful Diversion Program for Families. Found at: http://endhomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/creating-a-successul-diversion-program.pdf

National Alliance to End Homelessness (2018). Key Takeaways: The role of emergency shelter in diversion. Found at: https://endhomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/NAEH-Emergency-Shelter-Diversion-Key-Takeaways.pdf

National Alliance to End Homelessness (2018). Key Takeaways: The role of emergency shelter in diversion. Webinar. Found at: https://endhomelessness.org/resource/role-emergency-shelter-diversion/

OrgCode (2013). Diversion 101. Webinar. Found at: https://vimeo.com/69965862

DISCHARGE PLANNING

DESCRIPTION

Effective discharge planning includes preparing someone who has lived in an 'institutionalized' setting to live independently or with some supports in a non-institutionalized setting. An effective discharge planning process can help achieve goals of stable housing, recovery, and increase quality of life in the community (Backer, 2007). An institutionalized setting might include jail or other corrections facilities, hospitals, addiction treatment facilities, child welfare facilities, or mental health programs (Homeless Hub, 2018). Currently, discharge programs vary by system and by area and, as such, many people are released from jail/court or hospital to the streets/ shelters without a fixed address.

KEY COMPONENTS

The National Health Care for the Homeless Council, a US network of doctors, nurses, social workers, patients and advocates, outlines six recommendations for providers of mental health, health, penal institutions and foster care for the successful implementation of discharge and aftercare planning:

- The plan should prevent consumers from falling into homelessness.

- Identification of appropriate housing is critical.

- Discharges to emergency shelters are inappropriate for any situation.

- Discharges to homeless programs that have 24-hour transitional programs may be made on a case-by-case basis.

- Discharges to supportive housing and/or halfway houses are beneficial.

- Planning must be individualized, comprehensive and coordinated with community-based services.

- Consumers must participate in the planning.

- Institution staff (inclusive of professional staff) and community partners should be included.

- For consumers with substance use disorder, appropriate treatment must be included.

Research focusing on effective discharge planning for youth emphasize early, frequent, and youth-led engagement centered on providing youth with a range of housing options post-care, including family reunification. Planning should address employment, education, health and mental health, life skills, and social inclusion, and connection with family, friends, and community post-care (Homeless Hub, 2018).

RESOURCES

Backer, T., Howard, E. & Moran, G. (2007). The role of effective discharge planning in preventing homelessness. The Journal of Primary Prevention, 28(3-4), 229-243.

Homeless Hub (2018). Discharge Planning. Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/service-provision/discharge-planning.

Los Angeles Coalition to End Hunger & Homelessness (2008). Best Practices manual for Discharge Planning. Found at:

http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/emergency-preparedness-and-response/healthcare-system-preparedness/discharge-planning/_documents/best-practices-dp.pdf

Schwan, K. et. al (2018). Preventing Youth Homelessness: An international review of evidence. Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/180910_WCPP_international_evidence_review__report_submission.pdf

COORDINATED AND SYSTEM RESPONSE TO HOMELESSNESS

SYSTEM APPROACH

DESCRIPTION

A system planning approach uses Housing First as a guiding philosophy to establish a system-wide approach to addressing homelessness. Essentially, it "is a method of organizing and delivering services, housing, and programs that co-ordinates diverse resources to ensure that efforts align with homelessness-reduction goals. Rather than relying on an organization-by-organization, or program-by-program approach, system planning aims to develop a framework for the delivery of initiatives in a purposeful and strategic manner for a collective group of stakeholders". (Turner, 2014)

KEY COMPONENTS

In Beyond Housing First, Turner outlines seven practical elements of homeless-serving system planning, including:

- Planning and Strategy Development process follows a systems approach grounded in the Housing First philosophy.
- Organizational Infrastructure is in place to implement homelessness plan/strategy and coordinate the homeless-serving system to meet common goals.
- System Mapping to make sense of existing services and create order moving forward.
- Co-ordinated Service Delivery to facilitate access and flow-through for best client and system level outcomes.
- Integrated Information Management aligns data collection, reporting, intake, assessment, referrals to enable coordinated service delivery.
- Performance Management and Quality Assurance at the program and system levels are aligned and monitored along common standards to achieve best outcomes.
- Systems Integration mechanisms between the homeless-serving system and other key public systems and services, including justice, child intervention, health, immigration/settlement, domestic violence and poverty reduction.

RESOURCES

Turner, A. (2014). Beyond Housing First: Essential Elements of a System-Planning Approach to Ending Homelessness. The School of Public Policy, University of Calgary Vol. 7(30). Found at: https://www.policyschool.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/beyond-housing-turner.pdf

SYSTEMS INTEGRATION

DESCRIPTION

Historically, the response to homelessness has been through a range of programs and initiatives that have been developed across sectors in parallel with one another. For example, housing is separate from health services, which are separate from mental health services and all have different funding streams (Nichols and Doberstein, 2016). More recently, however, there is an increasing effort towards greater collaboration both among service providers and across systems. System integration recognizes that homelessness is too complex to be solved by a single sector. An integrated system of care is defined as a local system that addresses the needs of individuals through the coordination and connection of programs, services and resources from planning through to delivery (Calgary Homeless Foundation, 2014).

A systems integration approach attempts to move from a disjointed system to an organized and unified homeless-serving system that is easy to access and effective in its response. These systems include healthcare, corrections, education, child welfare and emergency shelters, and are managed at different levels of government and non-profit community organizations (Nichols and Doberstein, 2016: 462).

Strategies to end homelessness require sustainable, long-term approaches that are supported by integrated systems and community-level resourcing that prioritizes prevention and housing and supports (Nichols and Doberstein, 2016: 198).

KEY COMPONENTS

The following key components are adapted from the Community Strategy to End Youth Homelessness in Edmonton.
1. Coordination of activities of homeless-serving agencies and systems partners
2. Collective principles and values
3. Coordinated access and assessment strategy
4. Coordinated research, data collection, information sharing and evaluation

The literature on youth homelessness also emphasizes that youth be active participants in the planning, delivery and evaluation of programs and services. Another key component to systems integration from the literature is the establishment of an Interagency Council; a collaborative partnership of cross-system and stakeholders from community and government.

RESOURCES

Calgary Homeless Foundation (2014). Calgary Homeless System of Care: System Planning Framework. Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/CHSS-System-Planning-Framework-online-jan2012_1.pdf

Nichols, N., & Doberstein, C. (Eds.). (2016). Exploring Effective Systems Responses to Homelessness. Toronto: The

Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. Found at: https://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/Systems_Book_-_Web.pdf

Ohio Interagency Council on Homelessness and Affordable Housing. Permanent Supportive Housing Policy Framework. Found at:
https://www.csh.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/OH_supporitivehousing_finalframework.pdf

SYSTEM REDESIGN

DESCRIPTION

System redesign involves making systemic changes to care practices and systems to improve quality and effectiveness. A collaborative project in the UK, Care Design 2016, between NHS Improving Quality and Nuffield, aims to identify system redesign principles towards the implementation of new care models (North East Transformation System, 2016).

KEY COMPONENTS

Ten system redesign principles identified by the Care Design project include:

- Understand the health of the population and segment by need so that services can be matched to patient/user characteristics based on need and risk

- Mobilize the assets of the wider community to enable self-care, shared decision making, 'patient activation', and investments in community development

- Develop capacity to deal with complexity of needs (i.e. understanding needs, multi-disciplinary team, appropriate levels of care)

- Align the different parts of the system and the pace at which they work (i.e. demand led rather than supply-led)

- Use the network as a key organizing principle (i.e. shared approaches, cross system accountability, knowledge sharing)

- Share information across the network and standardize processes to ensure co-ordination, continuity, improved access, anticipation of need, consistent response

- Design a platform rather than 'vending machine' so that people are connected to what they need and want

- Purposely focus on the design and improvement of the system

- Design on a model of living systems not a machine that is based on open systems (continuous flow, non-linear, self-generating) and networks of communication

- Measure outcomes and key processes across the network of care

RESOURCES

North East Transformation System (2016). System Redesign Principles for Care Models. Found at: https://www.nelean.nhs.uk/care-design-2016/

COORDINATED ACCESS

DESCRIPTION

Coordinated access is a community-wide system that streamlines the process for people experiencing homelessness to access housing and support services needed to end their homelessness (CAEH, 2018). A coordinated access system follows the principles of Housing First and real-time data sharing. "By standardizing the intake and assessment process, sharing information in real-time within a community, adopting uniform prioritization policies and coordinating referral processes, coordinated access systems connect people to the right housing and supports as efficiently as possible based on their preferences and level of need" (CAEH, 2018).

KEY COMPONENTS

There are seven key components of effective coordinated access models:

- **Access Point(s)** – Designated method(s) or location(s) where an individual or family in need of assistance connects with service providers and accesses the coordinated entry process. This could be a single point of access or multiple points of access. Single point of access may be helpful in urban areas to centralize all aspects of intake. Multiple location access will still use standardized processes and tools and may facilitate client contact in a larger geographic area and/or where services are not well integrated in one area.

- **Diversion** – A process that uses standardized questions and assistance with problem-solving to determine whether an individual or family seeking homelessness assistance can be safely stabilized in their current situation or alternative housing arrangements can be immediately identified to address their housing situation without entering emergency shelter.

- **Assessment** – A standardized assessment process to identify a person's needs.

- **Prioritization** – Set of criteria to determine a person's level of vulnerability and how they will be ranked and assigned for openings in housing and intensive supports programs rather than a chronological wait list.

- **Referral** – Shared referral processes and protocols used to connect an individual to the best service and housing intervention based on prioritization policy.

- **Data Sharing** – A process to collect and share information, including but not limited to, assessments and referrals, in real-time within a community.

- **Governance** – A governance mechanism to evaluate the impacts of coordinated access and ensure that all programs or service providers who participate in the coordinated access system remain aligned with the system's overall goals and adhere to shared procedures.

DIFFERENT MODELS

The evidence suggests that different types of housing and support programs are best for people with different levels of need:

- **Rapid re-housing** - Rapid re-housing (RRH) is an intervention aimed at helping individuals and families

quickly exit homelessness, return to housing, and prevent homelessness in the future.   RRH programs will vary in level and type of support provided depending on needs. RRH programs targets clients with lower acuity levels using case management and financial supports, and clients who can live independently after receiving subsidies and support services. (Turner, 2015:13) Turner estimates the caseload for RRH at 1:25. RRH have a lower expected timeframe than PSH (Ibid.:26).

- Intensive Case Management - Intensive case management (ICM) in the context of a Housing First approach is designed to serve moderate/higher acuity clients who have more complex needs. Based on the Toolkit for Intensive Case Management in Canada, the client ratios for case managers should not exceed 1:15, compared to the traditional 1:20 for traditional case management, and more time should be dedicated to clients with an average of 2.5 hours per client per week.

- Assertive Community Treatment - Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) programs provide longer-term case management and housing support to very high acuity homeless clients facing addictions and mental health. Turner estimates a caseload ratio of 1:10 for an ACT program.

- Permanent Supportive Housing - Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) provides long-term housing and supports to individuals who are homeless and experiencing complex mental health, addiction, and physical health barriers. A key feature of PSH is its appropriate level of service for chronically homeless clients who may need support for an uncertain length of time. (Turner, 2015). Turner estimates a case manager ratio of 1:10/15 for high acuity clients and 1:20 for moderate acuity clients.

RESOURCES

20,000 Homes (2018). Coordinated Access System (CAS) Scorecard Guide. Found at: http://www.20khomes.ca/wp-content/uploads/Coordinated-Access-System-Scorecard-Guide.pdf

Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (2018). What is Coordinated Access. Website. Found at: http://caeh.ca/cas/

National Alliance to End Homelessness. The Five Keys to Effective Emergency Shelter. Found at: https://endhomelessness.org/resource/emergency-shelter/

National Alliance to End Homelessness (2013). Coordinated Assessment Toolkit. Found at: https://endhomelessness.org/resource/coordinated-entry-community-samples-resource-library/

Social Planning, Policy and Program Administration (2014). Ending Family Homelessness in Waterloo Region. Waterloo, ON: Regional Municipality of Waterloo. Found at: https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/living-here/resources/Documents/Housing/ending-family-homelessness-in-waterloo-region-2014-full-report.pdf

St. John's. Homeless-Serving System Coordination Framework. Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/StJohnsHomelessServingSystem-Final.pdf

Alina Turner (2015): Performance Management in a Housing First Context: A Guide for Community Entities. Toronto: The Homeless Hub Press. Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/CEGuide-final.pdf

COORDINATED CASE MANAGEMENT

DESCRIPTION

Coordinated case management is an integrated and holistic response to meeting the needs of people experiencing homelessness.   Through the case plan, coordinated case management is delivered collaboratively with multiple organizations. Sectors involved may include shelter/housing providers, emergency response services, health services, social services, and other agencies such as youth services, and Indigenous organizations.

KEY COMPONENTS

- Systems approach - addresses the needs of individuals through the coordination and connection of programs, services and resources.

- Shared vision – organizations have a common understanding of the issues and joint approach to solving it.

- Person-centred – plans and activities are differentiated and individualized based on need while still coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.

- Communication and knowledge sharing – ongoing communication and knowledge sharing to define, and assess needs, goals, and actions.

- Shared data – activities and outcomes are recorded and monitored in shared database.

RESOURCES

Homelessness NSW (N.D). Assertive Outreach Good Practices Guidelines. Found at: https://www.homelessnessnsw.org.au/sites/homelessnessnsw/files/2017-08/Assertive%20Outreach%20Practice%20Guidelines%201%20%28002%29.pdf

Calgary Homeless Foundation (2011). Standards of Practice: Case Management for Ending Homelessness. Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/CHF%20Case%20Management%20Accreditation%20Manual.pdf

DATA SHARING AND REPORTING

DASHBOARDS AND SHARING INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION

As outlined in many of the above evidence informed practices (i.e. Housing First, coordinated access, system planning), the collection, analysis, sharing and evaluation of data is a critical component in effectively responding to homelessness. Tools such as dashboards can help communities connect and report on client and program statistics. A dashboard is an information management tool that visually displays key indicators, often on a website.

In Ontario, the Expert Advisory Panel on Homelessness, in A Place to Call Home (2015), recommended that the Province develop a dashboard of indicators to measure progress on preventing and ending homelessness. Indicators recommended include measures for housing affordability, housing need, poverty, evictions, vacancy rates, precarious employment, mental health and addictions issues, child welfare activity, and violence against women.

EXAMPLES

Community Technology Alliance. Found at: https://ctagroup.org/data-analytics/
- Community Technology collaborated with Tableau Foundation to develop tools to help analyze and evaluate data. Reports and dashboards may include: length of time homeless; recidivism rate of homelessness; number of homeless persons; jobs and income growth; homelessness prevention and housing placement; successful housing placement.

Los Angeles Homelessness Analysis Collaborative. Found at: https://hacollab.weebly.com/
- Interactive tools on their website are aimed at helping people better understand homelessness and the efforts to respond to them. Examples of dashboards include:
    - Homelessness Count Dashboard (general public): https://www.lahsa.org/homeless-count/
    - Homeless Initiative Dashboard (general public): http://homeless.lacounty.gov/impact-dashboard/
    - Coordinated Entry Dashboard (coordinated entry lead and service providers): https://www.lahsa.org/homeless-count/
    - Proposition HHH (supportive housing development) (general public): https://www.lamayor.org/HomelessnessTrackingHHH

Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness. Found at: https://cceh.org/data/interactive/can/
- The Coordinated Access Interactive Dashboard includes 211 level data; age range and household type; appointment outcomes; wait times.

PRIVACY AND CONSENT (TO DATA SHARING)

DESCRIPTION

Further to the above, and as part of achieving a coordinated and integrated approach to responding to homelessness, the collection of data will contribute to the development of policies and measures to reduce and prevent homelessness. As part of this coordinated approach, service agreements and consent are required to share information. In Canada, as part of Reaching Home, for example, information is gathered through the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) and each user is required to sign a Data Provision Agreement (DPA). This agreement details the responsibility of all service providers that are entering data into the HIFIS software with respect to data collection, privacy and security.

RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

City of Peterborough (2017). Homelessness Coordinated Response Team Addition and Consent Form. Found at: http://www.peterborough.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?vid=54809&dam=1. And Service Resolution Protocol for Persons Experiencing Homelessness Form. Found at: http://www.peterborough.ca/Assets/City+Assets/Forms/Social+Services+Forms/Emergency+Shelter+and+Assistance+Forms/Service+Resolution+Consent+Form.pdf

Georgia Homeless Management Information System (2017). Collaborative Client Consent to Share Information. Found at: https://www.dca.ga.gov/sites/default/files/ga_hmis_policies_sop_appendix_d_2017.pdf

Turner, A. (2015). Performance Management in a Housing First Context: A Guide for Community Entities. Website. Found at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/performancemanagement
- This link provides examples from various Community Entities with respect to risk management, including critical incidents, grievances, safety and privacy related documents.