

WHAT WE HEARD

2016



Stakeholder Input Session



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Overview	2
Regional Table Discussions: Discussion #1	4
Regional Table Discussions: Discussion #2	5
Regional Table Discussions: Discussion #3	7
Conclusion	10

Annex

A: Survey Questions

B: Participant's Workbook

C: Groups Represented at Sessions

D: Presentation

E: Housing First Presentation



Executive Summary

In an effort to engage stakeholders on the issue of housing and homelessness across the province, Newfoundland Labrador Housing Corporation (NLHC) has been holding Stakeholder Input Sessions since 2010. This year's sessions took place between February 23-26, 2016. During the sessions, participants from a variety of associated fields meet to discuss concerns, suggestions, and ideas to improve the delivery of housing as well as the services provided by all groups who participate in these discussions. In 2016, 77% of participants were representatives of the private sector and non-profit groups, and 23% represented provincial and municipal government organizations.

NLHC did not limit discussions to its own programs or services and encouraged discussion around all services available in this province and elsewhere. In order to prepare for this year's sessions, an online survey was sent to participants prior to the event. NLHC used the results of the survey questions to develop the agenda and the topics for discussion at the four regional stakeholder input sessions. The topics identified were: the practicality of the Housing First Philosophy in NL; groups vulnerable to housing concerns (seniors, youth, people with prior convictions, and people with complex needs); and eviction triggers and prevention. Participants were provided workbooks during the sessions so that they could add any additional thoughts by detailing them in a written submission.

The following "What We Heard" document is meant to provide a breakdown and general overview of what participants discussed at the sessions, as well as what they submitted via the participant workbooks.



Overview

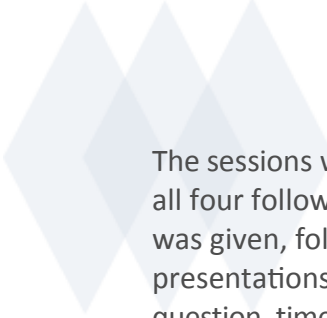
In August 2009, the province released *Secure Foundations* – a 10-year Social Housing Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador. In the development of this plan, extensive input was provided by a broad range of stakeholders including community-based housing providers, government departments, municipalities, tenant associations, community centres, housing developers, private-sector landlords, community-based service delivery organizations and social advocacy groups.

In 2016, four regional sessions were held across the province between February 23-26. The Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Corner Brook and Grand Falls-Windsor sessions were held at the regional NLHC offices while the St. John's session was held at the NL Housing and Homelessness Learning Centre. These sessions serve as an opportunity for stakeholders from a variety of organizations to engage in discussions surrounding housing and homelessness. The input sessions allow NLHC and stakeholders to continue this dialogue around these important matters.

In order to prepare for this year's sessions, a survey was sent to all invitees. The survey asked demographic questions as well as more open-ended questions pertaining to important issues around housing and homelessness in Newfoundland and Labrador. The results of this survey helped inform session structure and content (see Annex A for survey questions and results).

Leading up to the sessions, participant workbooks (Annex B) were sent to attending stakeholders. The workbooks included background information on the stakeholder input sessions as well as the Housing First Philosophy. Also included were the discussion questions for the sessions, allowing participants to be prepared for the topics to be discussed. Copies of the same workbooks were provided to stakeholders at the sessions and they were encouraged to write any suggestions, ideas or comments about the topics of discussion or any housing or homelessness related issues and to return those booklets to NLHC staff.

The 2016 sessions were attended by a total of 48 people, representing various groups including government departments, non-profit organizations, community groups, town councils and community advisory boards among others (see Annex C for a list of the organizations represented). Invitees who were unable to attend were provided the opportunity to submit written responses.



The sessions were moderated by Morley Linstead, Director of Policy, Research & Monitoring and all four followed the same format. A presentation on NLHC's programs and services (Annex D) was given, followed by a presentation on the Housing First Philosophy (Annex E). Following the presentations, three discussion questions were posed to the stakeholders and following each question, time was given for the stakeholders to discuss amongst themselves and then report back to the moderator. Notes were taken during the entire session to capture stakeholder comments, and these notes were used as the basis for this document. Stakeholders were encouraged to make notes in their participant workbooks during the session. The workbooks were collected at the end and all comments were compiled; those comments were used to supplement the findings presented during the discussion report-back.



Regional Table Discussions

Discussion #1

Housing First Philosophy: What do you think are the greatest practical challenges in a NL context?

During the report-back process, stakeholders stated that the greatest challenge in implementing Housing First in Newfoundland and Labrador is the lack of available housing. Specifically mentioned was housing which is accessible, affordable, and/or safe; and the general lack of rental housing located in rural areas. Lack of regulation or enforcement in the private market often means that units are in disrepair, unsafe or not accessible.

Stigma around homelessness as well as NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) sentiments were communicated as being real challenges surrounding implementing Housing First and effectively dealing with housing and homelessness concerns. It was suggested that the stigma is also associated with the belief that homeless individuals are homeless by choice, signifying a basic misunderstanding of homelessness. It was noted that some municipalities have NIMBY policies or attitudes towards low-income housing and homeless shelters/transition houses. This was mentioned as a significant problem which hinders the implementation of services required by people seeking housing services.

Stakeholders noted that the volume and variety of supports that will be required to implement Housing First in the private sector as well as the difficulty of sustaining these supports represent a significant challenge. In addition, supports are often not available to clients after they are housed and this has the potential of setting individuals up for failure. Mental health and addictions supports can be particularly difficult to obtain but represent some of the most integral supports required to keep individuals housed.

Rural Lens:

Stakeholders expressed that due to a lack of rental housing in rural areas, individuals who find themselves homeless are often forced to leave the community in which they often have lived their entire lives and where their supports are located. It was suggested that this issue is particularly common for individuals who require accessible housing in rural communities. Stakeholders communicated that this upheaval puts additional stress on individuals.

Stakeholders voiced concerns about how smaller rural communities can actually implement Housing First when there are no supports or services readily available to them.



Urban Lens:

Another challenge expressed by stakeholders was landlord engagement and its effect on successful housing. It was recognized that private landlords are largely missing from the table when it comes to discussions around housing and homelessness. Some stakeholders did note that there is relationship building happening in some areas but it is a slow process and takes time. Feeding into this challenge is a reality that landlords experiencing difficulties and challenges with renters have nowhere to go and no supports to help them deal with these situations, causing them to disengage. Improved engagement with landlords, together with a better understanding of their needs/ challenges to provide supports to them, was expressed as one solution to this challenge.

Stakeholders suggested that a practical concern for the implementation of Housing First is the fact that there is no “single point of entry” or “no wrong door” system in place. A “single point of entry” refers to one central intake service for direction to programs and services and a “no wrong door” approach means that wherever individuals seek assistance, either via private, non-profit or government entities, they will receive the same information and direction to services. While there are many services available, different organizations have been established as a result of different organizational philosophies; and this can impact how or where clients are assisted. It was suggested by stakeholders that a more centralized approach could be beneficial.


Discussion #2

Senior and Youth Homelessness: In a Social Housing context and in addressing homelessness, two distinct populations have been raised as areas of interest: seniors and youth. Please discuss with your table, the group (seniors or youth) which you have been assigned.

Seniors (adults):

The transition from receiving Income Support to receiving Old Age Security Pension (OAS) at the age of 65 is often a difficult transition. Individuals accustomed to having their rent and possibly other expenses paid automatically via the Department of Advanced Education and Skills, often do not understand that they are responsible for taking over their expenses or may not know how to pay for these expenses. The lack of income support for seniors over 65 years of age was identified by stakeholders as a barrier and risk factor for homelessness.

A lack of financial literacy (a problem mentioned in reference to both seniors and youths) may be the cause of some seniors losing their housing or becoming vulnerable to financial elder abuse.



Stakeholders pointed out that many seniors find it difficult emotionally and financially to transition when a partner dies. Many senior females in particular find their incomes drastically decrease with the death of their partner, and this can leave them in a very precarious situation in terms of housing.

Women who leave their partner, either after their children are grown or later in life, may not have worked outside of the home during their marriage or may not have personal savings or any means of supporting themselves. It was suggested that many people in situations do not wish to make waves by seeking financial remuneration from their former spouses. Alternatively, women who leave abusive domestic situations often do so without important financial and legal documents, social insurance cards, passports and birth certificates; and they often are not aware of what they own financially, in terms of savings, RRSP's, mortgages, etc.

Youth:

Transitions for youth from the foster care system and Child, Youth and Family Services was also mentioned as a concern in terms of housing. In particular, the transition can be abrupt and young people without adequate life skills can find it very challenging to adapt. The lack of supports for youth during the ages of 16-18 was noted as being problematic. At a time when young people are aging out of one system they are often left unaware of what to do and can end up in unfortunate situations.

Being suddenly responsible for themselves can be difficult enough for young people, but stakeholders also noted that it can be very challenging to find suitable housing as many landlords are not willing to rent to younger people. There is a stereotype associated with youth and this can be a real barrier for them when trying to find lodging. Stakeholders voiced their opinion that many young people have not developed the life skills necessary to maintain their own space. Life skills such as cooking, cleaning, maintenance and budgeting were given as examples by stakeholders. "Culture shock" was a term used to describe how some individuals feel when they are suddenly responsible for taking care of themselves in an apartment. Stakeholders suggested that there needs to be services available to young people to allow them to learn basic skills and successfully maintain accommodations.

Finally, it was suggested that the factors mentioned above can conspire to keep young people in the world of hidden homelessness whereby they end up sleeping at friends' homes or on the couches of relatives. If they couch surf, it takes longer to find appropriate accommodation as they may not reach out to service providers for support.



Happy Valley-Goose Bay:

Stakeholders were encouraged to discuss any target group and were not confined to discussing seniors and youth only. The pre-event survey results showed that in Labrador the two groups of interest were people with complex needs and people with prior convictions. During this session, participants spoke about people with complex needs and people with prior convictions as listed below.

People with Complex Needs:

Some complex needs are such that they require more than is currently available to them via service providers. This may keep them from finding a place to live as their needs cannot be met because they are not properly understood.

People with Prior Convictions:

Many people who have prior convictions tend to have complex needs; and after their sentence has ended, there is no one to actually provide services to them. Stakeholders stated that there needs to be services and programs to fill that particular gap. Trying to find supports for these people after mandated supports fall away is extremely difficult. There is a lack of services available to integrate people with prior convictions back into the community.

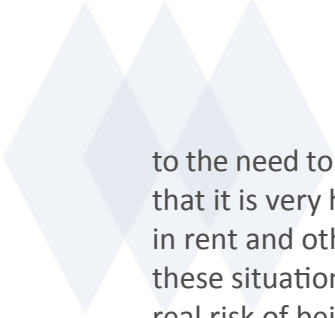
NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) sentiments are a concerning or barrier issue, particularly for people with prior convictions. In smaller communities where people are known to one another, it is much more difficult to find appropriate housing.

Discussion #3

Eviction Prevention: Prevention and diversion are key components of a Plan to End Homelessness. Today we would like for each table to discuss the triggers leading to eviction and practical solutions to preventing eviction of renters in NL, whether they be tenants of social housing or the private market.

Triggers:

A trigger mentioned often by stakeholders during discussions was arrears — both rent and utilities. There are many reasons for arrears: loss of income due to the death of a spouse or not understanding that they are responsible for paying rent on their own when their income changes from Income Support to Old Age Support. Stakeholders noted that the change from receiving Income Support to working can be a dangerous time for individuals. If work is inconsistent or earnings require supplementing, there can be a significant wait to receiving the earning supplement due



to the need to manually report earnings and await processing by government. Stakeholders noted that it is very hard to catch people in this situation before they find themselves very far behind in rent and other expenses. Often landlords may be understanding and willing to defer rent in these situations, but frequently there is a lack of communication and individuals are at a very real risk of being evicted.

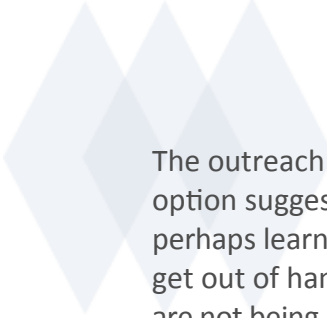
Lack of landlord engagement and communication was another frequently mentioned trigger. Stakeholders indicated that a lack of relationship with landlords often means that when there are issues with tenants, rather than working through them, landlords tend to evict. Stakeholders suggested that concerns and problems which can cause eviction, such as anti-social behaviour and issues with basic life skills such as cleaning and upkeep, could be resolved through intervention with the landlord.

Not having tenant liaisons or enough support for tenants experiencing difficult times was identified as another trigger. Stakeholders elaborated on this by saying that individuals are falling through the cracks because they do not have programs or services to help them when they find themselves in difficult circumstances. It was noted that service providers often do not find out about issues regarding tenants until it is too late.

As mentioned previously, a lack of life skills including budgeting, cooking, cleaning and maintenance represent triggers for eviction. Many tenants, not just young people, either do not know how or cannot live without some ongoing supports and encouragement. With some basic life skills, many tenants could successfully avoid the likelihood of being evicted.

Prevention:

Landlord education and engagement were suggested by stakeholders as being pivotal to eviction prevention; specifically, building engaging relationships between service providers, tenants and landlords. These relationships would be based around the education of landlords in terms of various needs and challenges which many individuals are facing. As stakeholders mentioned, many landlords are willing to work with housing service providers and NL Housing, but these relationships take time to build and there are currently only a handful of instances where this is occurring. With more education about homelessness and housing challenges, eviction and the threat of eviction could be reduced for many people. Landlords also need information on where to go for advice when they are faced with challenges and concerns which they do not know how to address. Instead of simply evicting an individual, a landlord outreach service could provide them with the tools needed to work toward resolution or at least to make that attempt. Stakeholders suggested that if such services provided access to mediators who have a solid and empathetic understanding of the challenges of all involved, it would be a great benefit and could serve to reduce evictions.



The outreach services suggested for landlords, as recommended by stakeholders, was also an option suggested for tenants. If tenants were able to reach out to services where they could perhaps learn life skills or seek advice about personal, financial or health issues before problems get out of hand, evictions could be decreased. For tenants to have a place where they feel they are not being judged and can seek advice or direction to find help, this would be a great advantage. Stakeholders mentioned that many individuals have concerns which could cause eviction or necessitate them moving; however, with an investment and/or creative thinking these problems could be solved. One example given by a stakeholder reiterated that people with physical or mental health concerns may not be able take care of necessary tasks such as shovelling their walks during the winter. With an investment, someone could be paid to provide this service, without which people may feel there is no solution and that their only option is to move. While financial support would help alleviate some concerns, the outreach services and supports reinforce the need for more communication and engagement with tenants and landlords.

Education was mentioned by stakeholders frequently, specifically education around homelessness and housing concerns. Many groups need more education — specifically landlords, service providers and the general public. Stakeholders noted that the culture around Housing First would need to be better understood in order for the philosophy to be effective. This means that there is a need for education among individuals working in housing and homelessness services.

Finally, a rent and/or utilities arrears bank was suggested by stakeholders as being an option to help prevent eviction. If tenants were able to access such funds for one time support, it could help them get through a particularly dire financial situation. Many people are being evicted due to rent or utility arrears simply because they are going through a period of hardship but have no family or friend supports to provide financial aid. Such a rent/utility arrears bank would provide this service and stop many people from being evicted due to short-term or one-time circumstances.



Conclusion

After the sessions, all responses were compiled. The most frequent issues raised overall were: lack of affordable housing available in both the private market and social housing; lack of housing options in rural areas; difficult transitions for youth to adulthood and adults to senior status; lack of private landlord engagement; and lack of various skills among renters that are required to live independently.

While four separate sessions took place across Newfoundland and Labrador, it was evident that most of the themes which emerged from all of the discussions were similar. While different regions and communities certainly have unique concerns, challenges and innovative ways of handling housing and homelessness, it is clear that the regions share more similarities than differences in terms of their commitment to support people who require housing and support services to live independently.



Annex A

Survey Questions



1. Which region of the Province do you call home?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
St. John's CMA	51.2%	21
Labrador	17.1%	7
Stephenville - Port aux Basques	9.8%	4
Grand Falls Windsor - Harbour Breton - Baie Verte	7.3%	3
Corner Brook - Rocky Harbour	4.9%	2
Burin Peninsula	2.4%	1
Gander - New Wes Valley	2.4%	1
Northern Peninsula	2.4%	1
Rural Avalon	2.4%	1
Clarenville - Bonavista	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		41

2. How many years have you been involved in the provision of housing services?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1-4	38.5%	15
5-9	20.5%	8
10-14	12.8%	5
15+	28.2%	11
<i>answered question</i>		39

3. Which area do you most represent?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Homeless Service Provider	34.1%	14
Other (community centres, finance sector, etc.)	34.1%	14
Provincial Government	12.2%	5
Housing Advocacy	7.3%	3
Federal Government	4.9%	2
Municipal Government	2.4%	1
Religion/Faith Organization	2.4%	1
Social Housing Tenant	2.4%	1
Academia	0.0%	0
Affordable Housing Owner	0.0%	0
Landlord	0.0%	0
Person with Lived Homelessness Experience	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		41

4. In your region of the Province, in the PAST YEAR, do you believe that the need for affordable housing has:		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Increased	75.6%	31
Stayed the same	19.5%	8
Decreased	4.9%	2
<i>answered question</i>		41

5. In terms of unmet “affordable housing” needs; what are your top 3, please rank:				
Answer Options	1	2	3	Response Count
Affordable Rental Housing	24	8	4	36
Smaller rentals for singles	3	10	10	23
Improved condition of the social/affordable housing stock	4	7	10	21
Accessible Housing Options	3	7	4	14
Housing options for youth	3	2	7	12
Senior’s Housing	3	3	5	11
Homeownership Support	1	1	0	2
Other	0	1	1	2
Larger rentals for families	0	1	0	1
<i>answered question</i>				41

6. What would you say is the SINGLE, BIGGEST need in your region?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Housing for people with complex needs	53.7%	22
Rental housing that is affordable	22.0%	9
Other (supportive housing, subsidized housing, etc.)	7.3%	3
Housing for single people	4.9%	2
Seniors’ housing	4.9%	2
Homeownership opportunities	2.4%	1
Housing options for youth	2.4%	1
Improved condition of the social/affordable housing stock	2.4%	1
Accessible housing	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		41

7. In your region; the target population most in need in terms of “affordable housing” is (check all that apply):		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Persons with complex needs	70.7%	29
Seniors	53.7%	22
Youth	46.3%	19
Singles	43.9%	18
Families	34.1%	14
Other (please specify)	9.8%	4
<i>answered question</i>		41

8. What are the greatest barriers that limit “affordable housing” opportunities for residents?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Increasing rents	36.6%	15
Limited housing choices	26.8%	11
Access to services that allow clients to live independently	17.1%	7
Other (please specify)	9.8%	4
Housing pressure due to industry/large scale projects	7.3%	3
Not-In-My-Backyard syndrome	2.4%	1
Lack of landlord engagement	0.0%	0
Low wages	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		41

9. In your region of the Province, in the PAST YEAR, do you believe that the number of people homeless:		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Increased	61.0%	25
Stayed the Same	36.6%	15
Decreased	2.4%	1
<i>answered question</i>		41

10. What do you believe are the top three(3) housing gaps contributing to homelessness, please rank:				
Answer Options	1	2	3	Response Count
Housing Options for Families	0	3	3	6
Housing options for Youth	2	2	3	7
Housing options for Seniors	3	3	2	8
Supportive Housing	7	5	4	16
Emergency Shelter/Homeless Shelter	6	5	2	13
Housing for persons with serious mental illness	5	7	7	19
Housing for persons with addictions	3	6	5	14
Housing for persons with prior convictions	0	1	4	5
Housing related supports for persons with complex needs	14	7	7	28
Housing for persons with physical disabilities	1	1	1	3
Housing for persons with cognitive disabilities	0	1	0	1
Other	0	0	2	2
<i>answered question</i>				41

11. What would you say is the SINGLE, BIGGEST service gap to preventing ending homelessness in your region?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Housing related supports for persons with complex needs	36.6%	15
Supportive housing	19.5%	8
Housing for persons with serious mental illness	14.6%	6
Housing options for seniors	7.3%	3
Emergency shelter/homeless shelter	7.3%	3
Housing for persons with addictions	4.9%	2
Other (please specify)	4.9%	2
Housing options for youth	2.4%	1
Housing options for single people	2.4%	1
Housing Options for families	0.0%	0
Housing for persons with prior convictions	0.0%	0
Housing for persons with cognitive disabilities	0.0%	0
Housing for persons with physical disabilities	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		41

12. In your region, the most prominent contributing individual factor to “homelessness” is:		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Mental illness (other than addictions)	35.0%	14
Other (combination of all, lack of supports, etc.)	25.0%	10
Addictions	25.0%	10
Employment/economic challenges	15.0%	6
Domestic violence	0.0%	0
Involvement with the Justice System	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		40

13. In your region, the most prominent contributing system related factor to “homelessness” is?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Lack of affordable housing	31.7%	13
Lack of supports to help sustain housing	29.3%	12
Lack of coordination of services	24.4%	10
Other (please specify)	7.3%	3
Conflicting/competing government policies	2.4%	1
Low income	2.4%	1
Not knowing where to go for help/services	2.4%	1
Discrimination	0.0%	0
Lack of landlord engagement	0.0%	0
Lack of social housing	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		41

14. If there was one recommendation you could make to NLHC to improve the way we serve the Province, what would it be?	
Responses	29

15. If there was one topic of discussion you would like to have discussed at the 2015 Stakeholder Input Session, what would it be?	
Responses	26

16. Have you read or are you familiar with the OrgCode report "A Road Map for Ending Homelessness in Newfoundland and Labrador"?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	65.9%	27
Somewhat familiar	19.5%	8
No	14.6%	6
<i>answered question</i>		41

17. Are you familiar with the Housing First Philosophy?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	85.4%	35
No	7.3%	3
Somewhat familiar	7.3%	3
<i>answered question</i>		41

18. If you are familiar with the Housing First Philosophy, what are some of the aspects of it that you would like to discuss/have clarified?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Challenges faced when using this philosophy	48.8%	20
How this philosophy works in practice	22.0%	9
Examples of success	12.2%	5
Other (how to implement, etc.)	12.2%	5
Not familiar with this philosophy	4.9%	2
The principles of the philosophy	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		41

19. How familiar do you feel the public is with NLHC's programs for home repairs and modifications for homeowners?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Familiar	39.0%	16
Not familiar at all	36.6%	15
Moderately familiar	22.0%	9
Very familiar	2.4%	1
<i>answered question</i>		41

20. How well do you feel these programs are serving the public? (5 being very well and 1 being poorly)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
5	2.6%	1
4	12.8%	5
3	56.4%	22
2	20.5%	8
1	7.7%	3
<i>answered question</i>		39

21. What are some ways in which these programs could be more accessible and/or beneficial to clients?	
Responses	22

22. How familiar do you feel the public is with NLHC's Rent Supplement program?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Not familiar at all	40.0%	16
Familiar	37.5%	15
Moderately familiar	20.0%	8
Very familiar	2.5%	1
<i>answered question</i>		40

23. How well do you feel the Rent Supplement program is serving the public? (5 being very well and 1 being poorly)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
5	0.0%	0
4	18.4%	7
3	31.6%	12
2	34.2%	13
1	15.8%	6
<i>answered question</i>		38

24. What are some ways in which the Rent Supplement program could be more accessible and/or beneficial to clients?	
Responses	28

*Survey questions 14, 15, 21 and 24 required written responses.



Annex B

Participant's Workbook





2016 Stakeholder Input Session

Participant Workbook



Please leave your booklet on the table when you leave

Stakeholder Input Sessions

In 2009, in an effort to support a stronger social housing system, the Social Housing Plan *Secure Foundations* was released by NLHC. Since this time, the landscape around housing and homelessness in our province has changed, and continues to change; however, the plan and its strategic action priorities remain as relevant today as when it was created. The three goals included in the plan are :

- increased emphasis on individual well-being and strengthened communities
- strengthened partnerships and management practices
- improved housing assistance

Since 2010, NLHC has been holding Stakeholder Input Sessions in order to consult with those in the community who work for and with those affected by housing concerns and homelessness. In these sessions, NLHC seeks to collect the input around current issues and use the information gathered to inform the following year of activities to be carried out through the Social Housing Plan.

Housing First– Background

In 2015, the Provincial Government, through Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation, released an independent consultant's report on homelessness entitled *A Road Map for Ending Homelessness in Newfoundland and Labrador*. The report recommended the adoption of the Housing First philosophy in addressing homelessness in our province, shifting the focus from managing homelessness to ending it.


The following information, retrieved from housingfirsttoolkit.ca, gives a brief overview of the Housing First philosophy and its principles and components:

“Housing First is a consumer-driven approach that provides immediate access to permanent housing for people experiencing homelessness, without requiring psychiatric treatment or sobriety as determinants of “housing readiness”” Housing First was created to address chronic homelessness but can be applied to other types of homelessness as well.

- The Key Components to Housing First are:

- 1. Housing:** Access provided to those who require it without pre-requisites. There should be a level of choice involved so that participants are able to have input on the situation. Participants should also not make up more than approximately 20% of an

Please leave your booklet on the table when you leave



2. Housing Supports: These may include helping participants search for and choose suitable accommodations; creating ongoing relationships with landlords; helping participants set up their new living space including direction regarding life skills development (e.g., cleaning skills, grocery shopping, money management, etc.); helping participants connect with the correct programs and services required for their individual needs.

3. Clinical Supports: These supports would come from a group of people who would provide supports for physical health, mental health and social needs. Proper assessment would allow individuals to access the supports they require, improving quality of life and encouraging independent living.

Some services which can come from clinical supports include:

- Life skills
- Vocational support
- Income support and financial education
- Addiction management and support
- Community engagement

- The **Core Principals** of Housing First are:

1. Immediate access to permanent housing with no readiness requirements
2. Consumer choice and self-determination
3. Individualized, recovery- oriented and client-driven supports
4. Harm reduction
5. Social and Community integration

Additional information on Housing First can be found at:

<http://www.housingfirsttoolkit.ca/>

<http://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/HousingFirstInCanada.pdf>

Please leave your booklet on the table when you leave



Stakeholder Input Session Agenda

- ◇ Introductions
- ◇ Opening Presentation
- ◇ Topic #1 Housing First
- ◇ Break
- ◇ Topic #2 Youth and Seniors: Social Housing and Homelessness
- ◇ Topic #3 Eviction Prevention
- ◇ Wrap up/ Evaluation

Please leave your booklet on the table when you leave

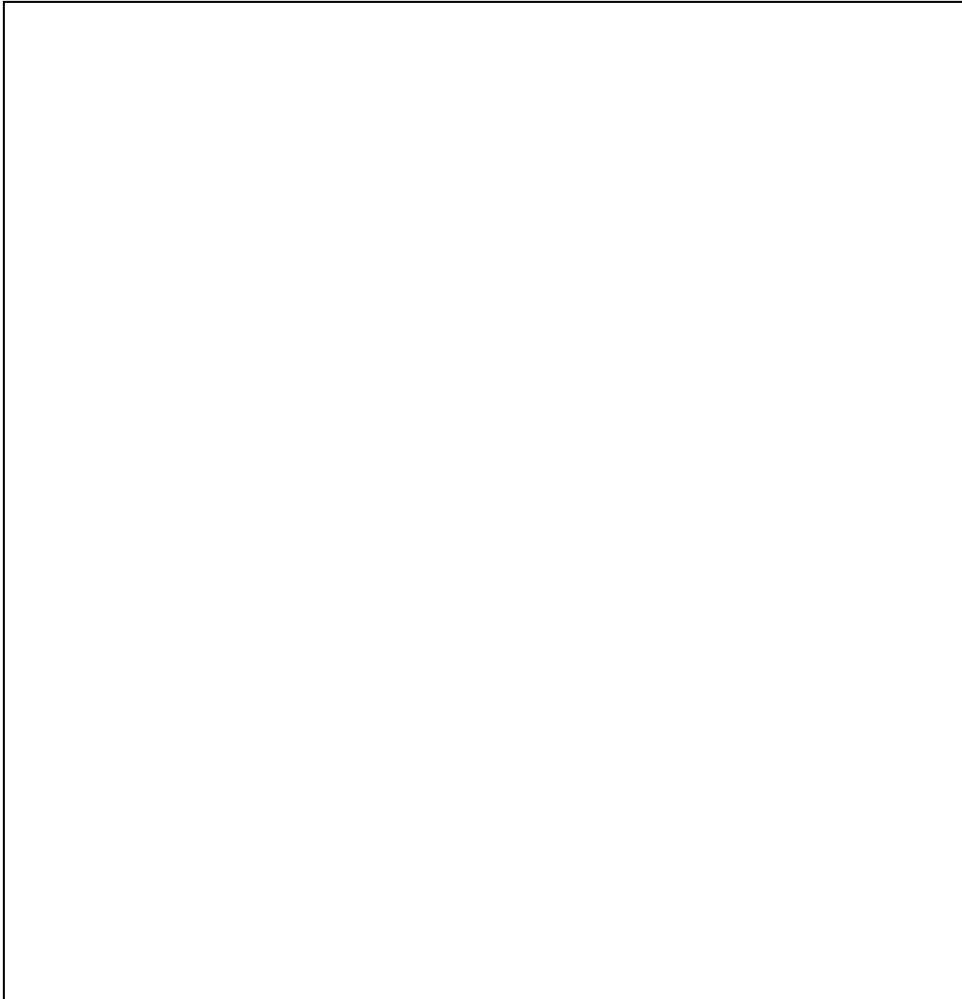


TABLE DISCUSSION #1

Housing First Philosophy:

What do you think are the greatest practical challenges in a NL context?

Please discuss with your table and write any thoughts you would like to submit to NLHC in the space below. There is additional space at the end of this booklet.



Please leave your booklet on the table when you leave



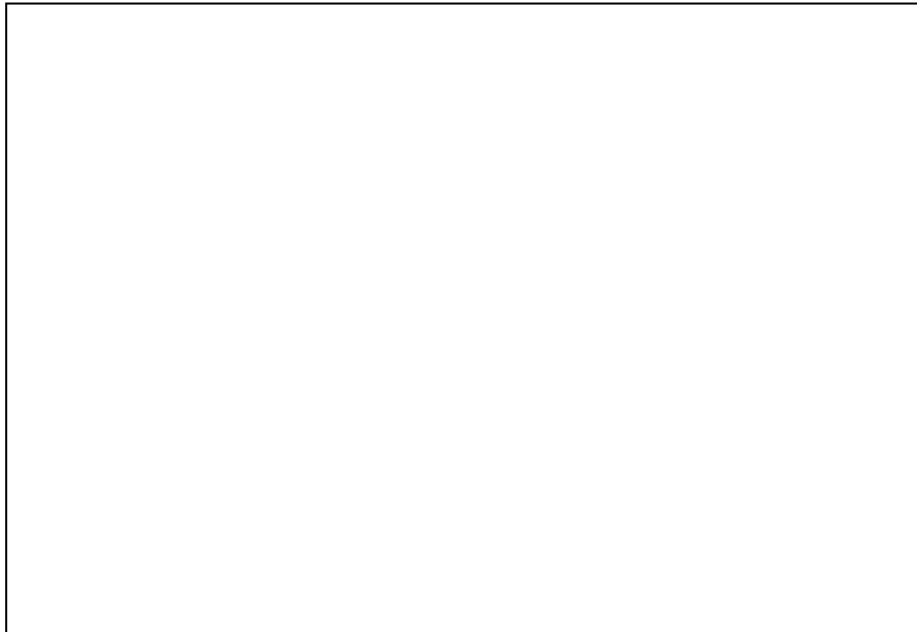
TABLE DISCUSSION #2

Senior and Youth Homelessness:

In a Social Housing context and in addressing homelessness, two distinct populations have been raised as areas of interest: seniors and youth. Please discuss with your table, the group (seniors or youth) which you have been assigned. Potential topics include:

- What factors are forcing members of this group into homelessness?
- What are the greatest challenges in your region which effect the ability of members of this group to find suitable, stable housing?
- What preventative measures would be most effective in helping to avoid homelessness among members of this group?

Please feel free to use the space below and to include any additional thoughts you may have and would like to pass on to NLHC. Additional space can be found at the end of the booklet.



Please leave your booklet on the table when you leave

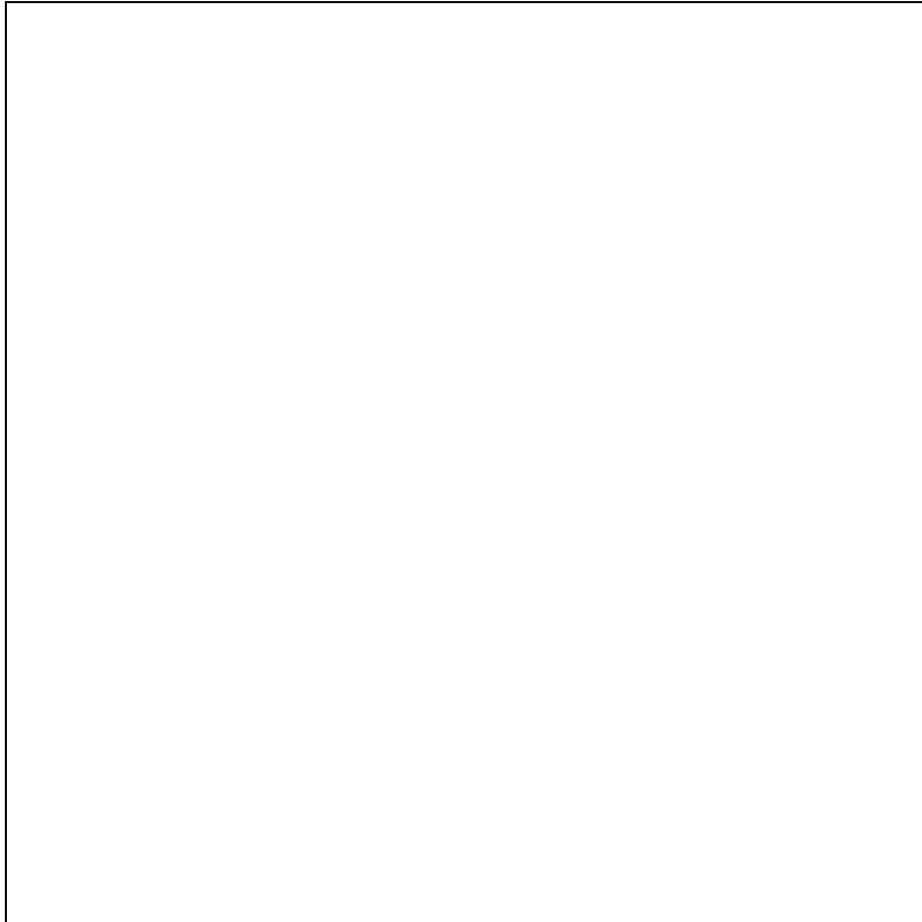


TABLE DISCUSSION #3

Eviction Prevention:

Prevention and diversion are key components of a Plan to End Homelessness. Today we would like for each table to discuss the triggers leading to eviction and practical solutions to preventing eviction of renters in NL, whether they be tenants of social housing or the private market.

Please feel free to use the space below and to include any additional thoughts you may have and would like to pass on to NLHC. Additional space can be found at the end of the booklet.



Please leave your booklet on the table when you leave

Select Survey Responses

The responses from the survey sent to all invitees of the 2016 Stakeholder Input Sessions have helped to shape this years sessions. The following responses are for those questions which are of particular interest.

What would you say is the SINGLE, BIGGEST need in your region?

Top Responses	Number
Housing for people with complex needs	17
Rental housing that is affordable	8
Total responses for all answers	35

In your region; the target population most in need in terms of “affordable housing” is (check all that apply):

Top Responses	Number
Persons with complex needs	24
Seniors	18
Youth	16
Total responses for all answers	88

What are the greatest barriers that limit “affordable housing” opportunities for residents?

Top Responses	Number
Increasing rents	13
Limited housing choices	10
Access to services that allow clients to live independently	7
Total responses for all answers	36

Please leave your booklet on the table when you leave

What do you believe are the top three(3) housing gaps contributing to homelessness, please rank:

Top Responses	Number
Housing related supports for persons with complex needs	24
Housing for persons with serious mental illness	15
Supportive Housing	13
Emergency shelter/homeless shelter	13
Total responses for all answers	107

What would you say is the SINGLE, BIGGEST service gap to preventing ending homelessness in your region?

Top Responses	Number
Housing related supports for persons with complex needs	12
Supportive housing	8
Housing for persons with serious mental illness	5
Total responses for all answers	36

In your region, the most prominent contributing individual factor to “homelessness” is:


Top Responses	Number
Mental illness (other than addictions)	14
Other	9
Addictions	7
Total responses for all answers	35

Please leave your booklet on the table when you leave

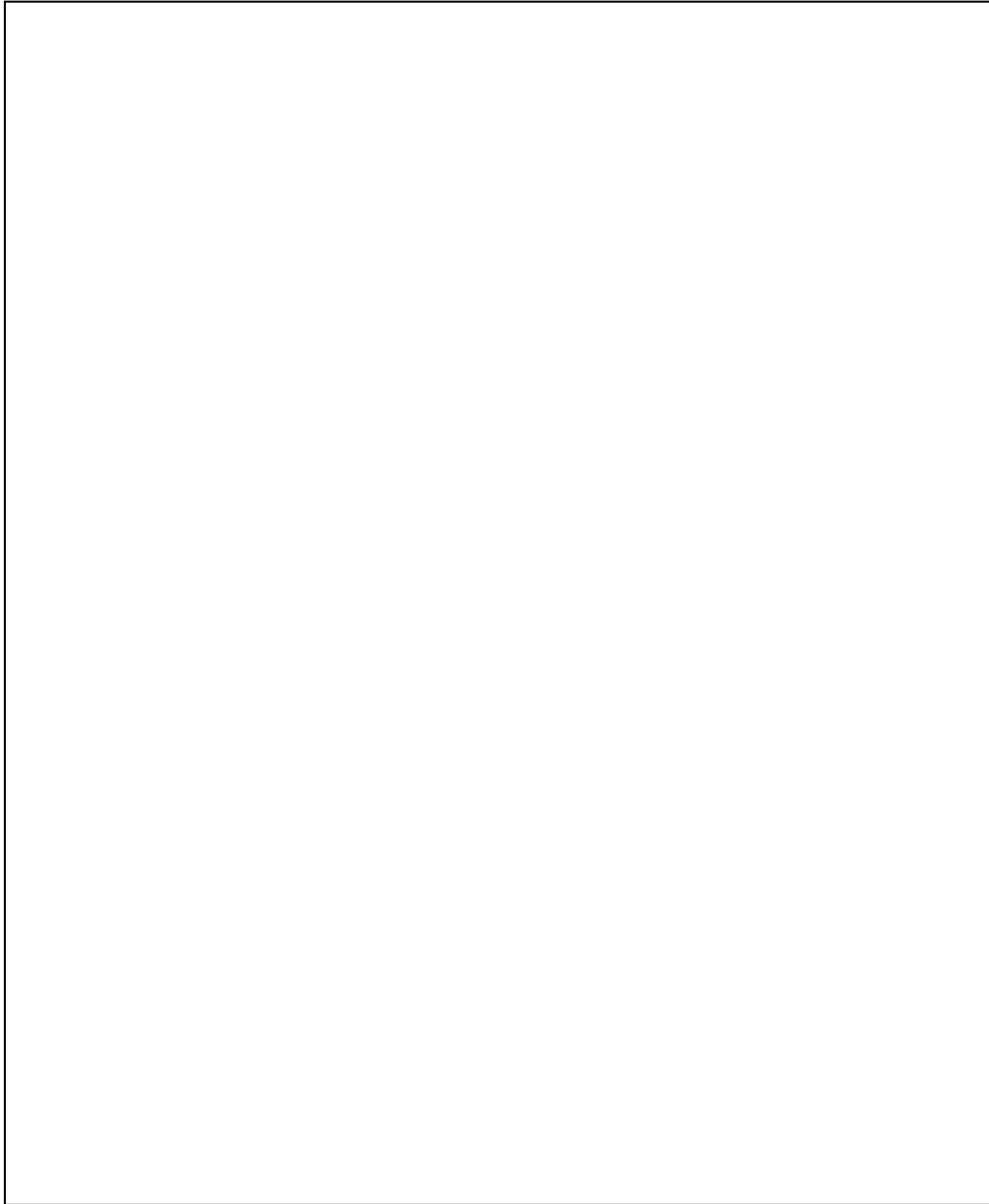
In your region, the most prominent contributing system related factor to “homelessness” is?

Top Responses	Number
Lack of affordable housing	12
Lack of supports to help sustain housing	10
Lack of coordination of services	9
Total responses for all answers	36

Please leave your booklet on the table when you leave



If there is anything you would like to add to the topics discussed today, or if you have any other thoughts you would like to pass on to NLHC, please feel free use the space below:



Please leave your booklet on the table when you leave




Annex C

Groups Represented at Sessions



Community Groups/Organizations	City/Town	Participants
1. Canadian Mental Health Association	St. John's	2
2. Thrive	St. John's	1
3. Chanal	St. John's	2
4. Salvation Army	St. John's	2
5. Cara House	Gander	1
6. Transition House	Corner Brook	2
7. NL Housing & Homelessness Network	St. John's/ Happy Valley-Goose Bay	3
8. Provincial Advisory Council of Status of Women	St. John's	1
9. Seniors Resource Centre of NL	St. John's	1
10. Marguerites Place	St. John's	1
11. Tommy Sexton Centre	St. John's	1
12. Stella Burry Community Services	St. John's	2
13. Iris Kirby House	St. John's	1
14. Virginia Park Community Centre Board	St. John's	1
15. MacMorran Community Centre Board	St. John's	1
16. St. Vincent de Paul Society	St. John's	2
17. Rabbittown Community Centre	St. John's	1
18. John Howard Society	St. John's	1
19. Pleasant Manor	St. John's	1
20. Corner Brook Status of Women Council	Corner Brook	1
21. AIDS Committee of Newfoundland and Labrador	Corner Brook	1
22. Northern Peninsula Community Advisory Board	Northern Peninsula	1
23. Housing Stability Initiative	Stephenville	1
24. Bay St. George Status of Women	Bay St. George	1
25. Mokami Status of Women Council	Happy Valley-Goose Bay	1
26. Libra House	Happy Valley-Goose Bay	2
27. Labrador Friendship Centre	Happy Valley-Goose Bay	1
28. Central Housing & Homelessness Network	Grand Falls-Windsor	1
Total		37



Government Groups	City/Town	Attended
1. Advanced Education & Skills	St. John's	1
2. Dept. Health & Community Services	St. John's/ Happy Valley- Goose Bay	3
3. Dept. of Child, Youth & Family Services	St. John's	1
5. Dept. of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development	St. John's	2
8. City of Mount Pearl	St. John's	1
9. City of St. John's	St. John's	1
10. Town of Grand Falls- Windsor	Grand Fall- Windsor	1
11. Town of Gander	Gander	1
Total		11



Annex D

Presentation





SOCIAL HOUSING PLAN



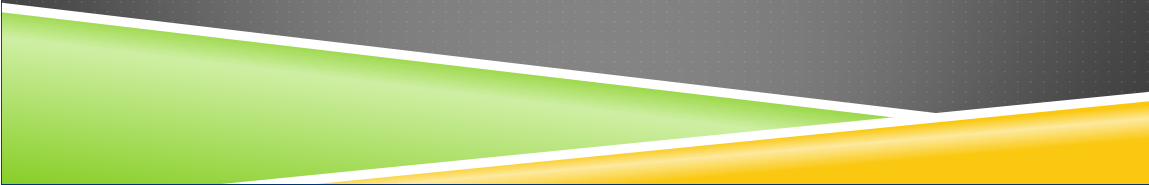
Newfoundland
Labrador
Housing





2009 ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

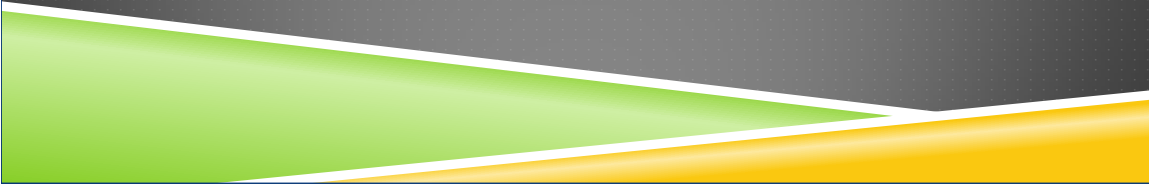
- ▶ Significant housing need
- ▶ Demographic change, particularly in rural areas
- ▶ Increasing demand for housing with integrated support services
- ▶ The capacity of the private rental market to meet the needs of low- and moderate- income households
- ▶ Financial challenges of operating social housing
- ▶ An aging social housing portfolio that requires repairs





2014 ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

- ▶ Need for an increase in housing supports for individuals with complex needs
- ▶ Need for engagement with all levels of governments
- ▶ Housing affordability and stabilization
- ▶ Increase in rental supplements (portability/availability to rural)
- ▶ More supportive housing





CAPITAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

- ▶ Home Modification Program
- ▶ Residential Energy Efficiency Program
- ▶ Provincial Home Repair Program



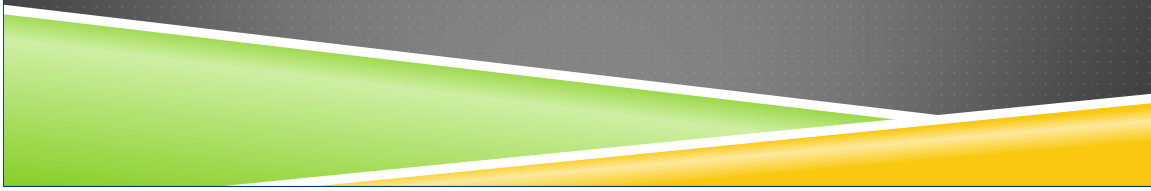


LOW-INCOME HOUSING

- ▶ Social Housing Infrastructure
 - ▶ Modernization and Improvement
 - ▶ Neighbourhood Renewal Work
- ▶ Investment in Affordable Housing



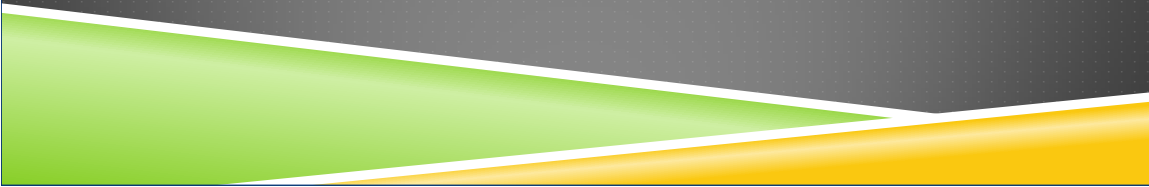
HOMELESSNESS RESPONSES

- ▶ Private Sector Involvement
 - ▶ 1,852 rent supplements as of April , 2015
 - ▶ Supportive Living Program
 - ▶ ≈ 2,382 people assisted in 2014-15
 - ▶ Provincial Homelessness Fund
 - ▶ Since 2009, 86 PHF loans have been provided to 54 non-profit agencies across the province.
- 



FUTURE DIRECTION

- ▶ Focus on homelessness
- ▶ Continued invested in infrastructure
 - ▶ Own property
 - ▶ Affordable housing
- ▶ Addressing gaps and barriers
- ▶ Community engagement and partnerships





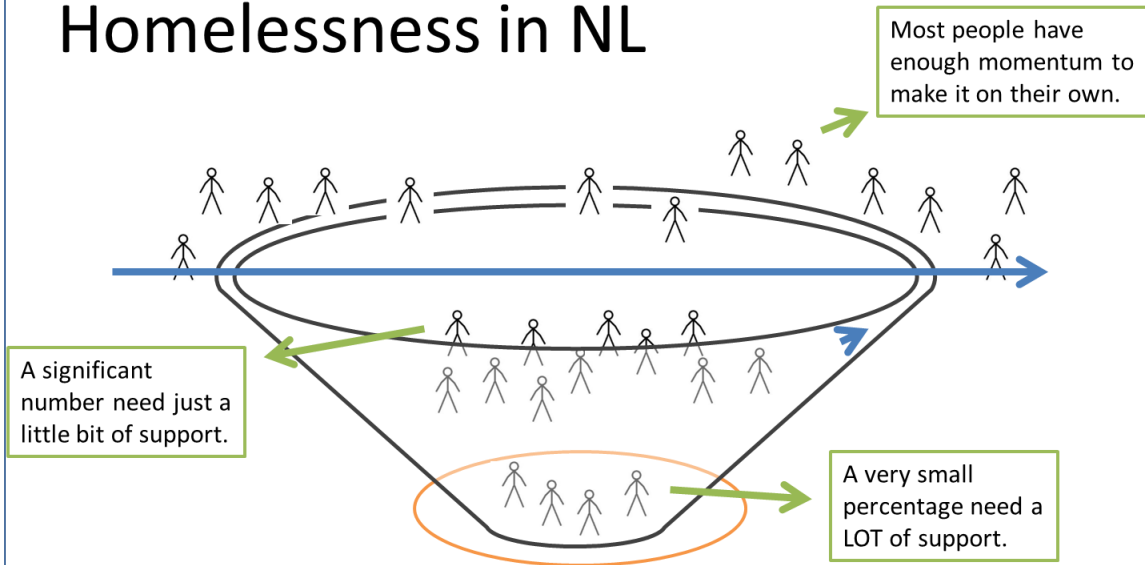
Appendix E

Housing First Presentation





Homelessness in NL

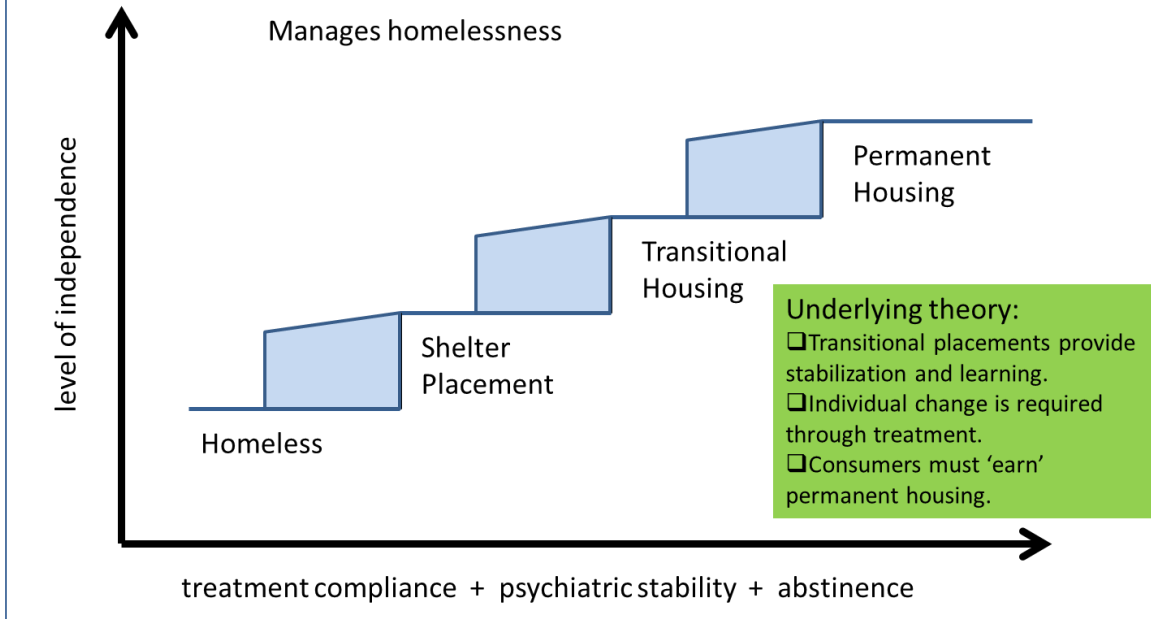


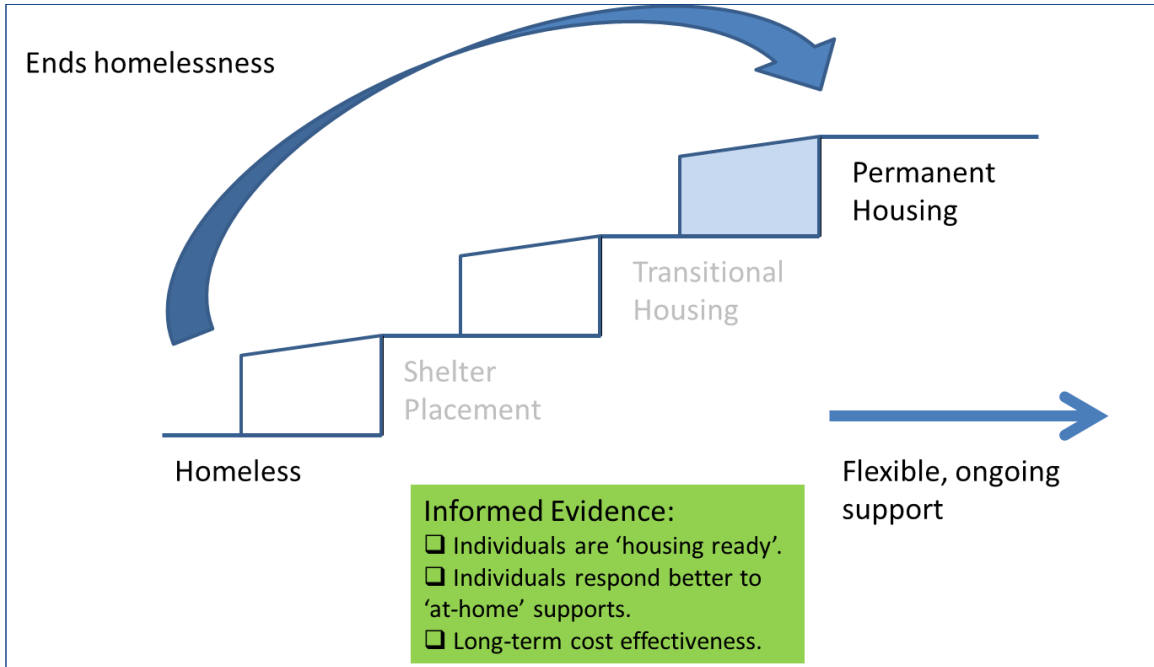
- Government, through various other departments still supports emergency shelters, domestic violence shelters, transition houses and programs etc... But these programs do not end homelessness....there is only one cure...that cure is a House!





Traditional Response to Homelessness







Housing First

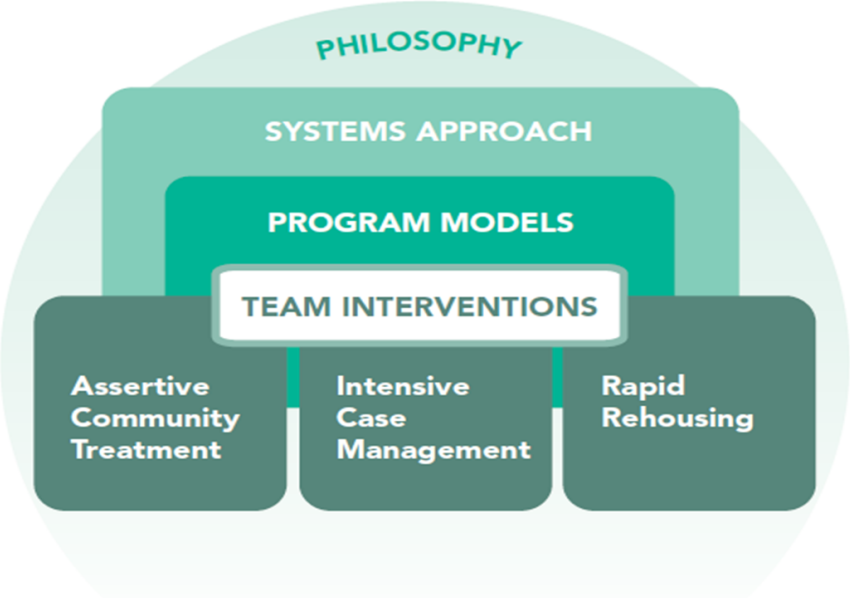
- Is based on the belief that homeless individuals should be assisted in accessing housing as quickly as possible with supports delivered in community to help sustain that housing.
- Core Principles:
 - Immediate access to permanent housing with no housing readiness requirements
 - Consumer choice and self determination
 - Recovery orientation (harm reduction)
 - Individualized and client-driven supports
 - Social and community integration





Housing First

FIGURE 1 Application of Housing First



6

