How A ‘Prescription’ for Supportive Housing Can Reduce Hallway Medicine & Why Every Government and Community Should Care

10th Annual IMFG Toronto City Manager’s Address
Chris Murray
November 23, 2021
“The highest 200-300 users of emergency room services — with over 75 thousand visits per year — consume 30% of resources.”

Dr. Kevin Smith, President & CEO
University Health Network (UHN)
“It is homes we must give our people, not merely shelter.”

- Dr. Charles Hastings, Toronto Medical Officer of Health, 1918
Financial Impact of COVID-19

Operating temporary shelter spaces accounts for the City’s largest pandemic expense.

$1.596 billion
(2021 financial impact of COVID-19)

City on track to deliver minimum 1,500 new supportive housing opportunities by end of 2022 with federal and City resources.

$1.521 billion
(2021 funding received from the Federal and Provincial Governments to cover financial impact of COVID-19)

$1.1 billion
(2022, Anticipated impact and funding requested from the Federal and Provincial Governments to cover financial impact of COVID-19)
A Historic and Present Reality

• Approximately 8000 people currently experiencing homelessness in Toronto – 77% chronically homeless

• Indigenous people and racialized individuals continue to be overrepresented among the homeless population

• Approximately 61% of people experiencing homelessness stayed in overnight shelter services only

• Approximately 50% of shelter users have a mental health issue
Challenges Faced by Homeless Population

- Discrimination
- Lack of affordable housing
- Impact of colonization on Indigenous peoples
- Traumatic events
- Family violence and abuse
- Mental health issues
- Addiction issues
- Other physical and health issues

77% Chronically Homeless
# System Pressures and Cost Avoidance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emergency Shelters</th>
<th>Justice System</th>
<th>Hospital Stays</th>
<th>Affordable Rental Housing</th>
<th>Supportive Housing</th>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Emergency Shelter" /></td>
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<td>• $3,347 per month pre-COVID-19</td>
<td>• $4,900 per month per homeless person in the justice system</td>
<td>• $12,200 per month for each homeless person in hospital</td>
<td>• $1,148 per month for permanent, stable housing</td>
<td>• $2,000 per month to help individuals who need affordable housing with wrap around health supports</td>
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Evidence for a Housing First Approach

- Can be successfully implemented in an ethnically diverse, large urban centre
- Can rapidly reduce homelessness
- Results in cost savings, particularly for high-needs participants
- Improves community functioning and quality of life
- Lessons were learned to successfully implement and adapt a Housing First program
- Change is not always measured in numbers
Whole-of-governments and whole-of-community cooperation and coordination are required for a systems approach to address homelessness.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government of Canada</th>
<th>Province of Ontario</th>
<th>Municipal Governments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• National Housing Strategy</td>
<td>• Health and mental health services</td>
<td>• Emergency and other shelters</td>
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<td>including funding partnerships</td>
<td>• Employment and income supports</td>
<td>• Social housing, affordable housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Health and mental health funding</td>
<td>• Education, training and labour market</td>
<td>• Emergency services: police,</td>
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<td>• Canadian Drugs and Substances</td>
<td>integration</td>
<td>paramedics, fire</td>
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<td>Strategy</td>
<td>• Housing policies, programs</td>
<td>• Urban planning</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and funding</td>
<td>• Community investment, infrastructure</td>
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<td>• Justice system</td>
<td>• Public transit</td>
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Supportive Housing: An Integrated Systems Approach
Toronto’s Investments in a Systems Approach
Parkdale Modular Supportive Housing: The Power of Partnerships

- University Health Network (UHN), United Way Greater Toronto (UWGT), City of Toronto partnership
- First of its kind in Canada
- Support for 51 people from historically marginalized groups
- Estimated occupancy Spring 2022
Victoria, BC: Principles for Supportive Housing

- Resolve the housing crisis by re-aligning policies and programs to realize the human right to housing.
- Lead a full-scale transformation of the homeless-serving system.
- Improve standards and introduce accountability mechanisms.
- Engage people experiencing homelessness as equal partners.
Supportive Housing Prescription

“This is a profound social issue — to make sure that people have the sense of inclusion and dignity to be able to live in an affordable home in our city. So everybody can find a home here.”

Mayor John Tory
City Council
November 10, 2021
Imagine: Toronto as the first major city in North America to end chronic homelessness

Thank you