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The Institute of Urban Studies,
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The Social Planning Council of Winnipeg

AMR Associates

End Homelessness Winnipeg

Advancing Coordination of the Winnipeg Homeless Sector

Final Report

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End Homelessness Winnipeg



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Advancing Coordination of the Winnipeg Homeless Sector

Final Report

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Executive Summary

Over the last year, there have been efforts in the homeless serving community to map out service gaps and needs, and to discuss the alignment between the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) funding and its administration and the priorities of the community. The current project, *Advancing Coordination of the Winnipeg's Homeless Sector*, advances these efforts to integrate more community knowledge, planning, and engagement into HPS funding processes. The project is designed to identify service gaps and coordination opportunities that can be utilized by the Community Advisory Board (CAB) and Community Entity (CE) in their roles relating to HPS funding and administration.

Purpose of the Project:

1. Identify gaps, incongruities, and challenges within Winnipeg homeless sector, and opportunities to address them
2. Support the CAB and CE in proposal review for 2017-19 and beyond
3. Develop a shared understanding of alignment opportunities
4. Support CAB and CE with information and community input to make recommendations and decisions for the future

Methodology:

Five separate discussion groups were held (lived experience, frontline services, Housing First services, Indigenous-led organizations, and system-level stakeholders), offering multiple opportunities for people across the sector to participate. Following an analysis and preliminary report on the discussion groups, individual interviews were held with key system level stakeholders and leaders in other jurisdictions. Additional information was gathered through system mapping, analysis of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report, and reviews of documents from the system level stakeholders and from other jurisdictions.

This Executive Summary draws together the key themes from the research, and summarizes the recommendations based on the themes and analysis:

1. The Distinctiveness of Indigenous Homelessness
2. Governance, Roles, Planning, and Coordination
3. Policy, Administration, and Funding
4. Programs and System Development
5. Fostering Collaboration, Capacity Building, and Clarifying Communications

Each of these has a number of specific and detailed recommendations, based on suggestions from service providers, stakeholders, and other jurisdictions. These recommendations are further summarized and prioritized into a Guiding Principle and the "Top 5 Recommendations" to assist the CAB and CE in planning out their first steps over the year.

1. The Distinctiveness of Indigenous Homelessness

For the Indigenous-led organizations working with people experiencing or at risk of homelessness Indigenous culture cannot be separated from service delivery. It “is and should be part of everything.” Culturally appropriate service delivery goes beyond specific activities or programming. As representatives of Indigenous organizations noted, Indigenous cultures involve ways of knowing, understanding, and being that are rooted in connections to and relationships between people, other living things, and the earth.

The extent to which service delivery is culturally appropriate cannot easily be measured, because whether or not it exists depends on the experience of individuals receiving services, that is, whether or not they feel culturally safe, welcome, or have a sense of belonging or connection to the people or organization from which they receive services. To support this, organizational staff members must know the population they are serving and understand the intergenerational impacts that historical and present-day experiences of personal and systemic racism, marginalization, exclusion and violence may have had on Indigenous people. For some, these impacts include homelessness, trauma, addictions and other complex needs. These experiences and impacts are understood to be at the root of the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the population experiencing or at risk of homelessness in Winnipeg.

When attempting to assess whether or not culturally appropriate services are being provided, consider:

- The cultural identity of staff, and how many are in leadership or decision-making positions
- The extent to which Indigenous people influence program development and service delivery
- Do the values and actions of individual staff members and the organization as a whole align with Indigenous ways of knowing, understanding and being?

An additional way to determine way whether culturally appropriate services exist is to question whether Indigenous people receiving those services feel culturally safe:

- Do they feel welcome? Do they have a sense of belonging or connection to the people or organization they’re receiving those services from?
- Or do they feel like their access to services, the quality of their services they are receiving, or the outcomes that might result from the services they are receiving, are compromised because they are Indigenous people seeking services in a system that was not designed to meet the distinct needs of Indigenous peoples?

Reconciliation and the Homelessness Sector

In *What We Have Learned: Principles of Truth and Reconciliation*, The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada defines reconciliation as “an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships” that requires “following through with concrete actions that demonstrate real societal change” (p. 121). It offers ten principles to guide this process, including several that can be taken up by CAB and the CE and other bodies that advise and oversee the allocation of funding within the homelessness sector; including the right to self-determination and the right to participate in decision-making, the right to improvement of their economic and social conditions and the right to be actively involved in developing, determining and administering housing and other economic and social programs that affect them. CAB and the CE and other bodies that advise, administer and oversee the homelessness service system have the opportunity to show leadership and take action that will move that system forward on the goal of generating equitable outcomes for Indigenous and non-Indigenous

people. The principles developed and presented by the TRC are consistent with principles that were developed to guide the homelessness sector in Winnipeg.. In reviewing the findings and recommendations developed from this project, we found that the nature, scope and scale of work being done by Indigenous organizations and Indigenous-serving organizations are significantly different from those of most other organizations:

- Generally speaking, Indigenous organizations are attempting to generate equitable outcomes in the population they serve by providing culturally appropriate services and culturally safe service experiences that meet the culturally distinct needs of Indigenous clients in the context of a system that has not been designed to do so.
- Given that Indigenous people are grossly overrepresented in the population experiencing homelessness in the city, generating outcomes for Indigenous people that are equitable to those generated for non-Indigenous must be central to any plan to end homelessness in Winnipeg.

We also understand, from our consultations, that CAB, the CE, and other bodies that advise, administer, oversee or resource the homelessness sector are making significant efforts to support the allocation of funding to Indigenous organizations that reflects the scope, scale and nature of the work that they are doing. There is an apparent misalignment between the experiences and perceptions of these bodies with those of Indigenous service providers. To support equitable outcomes for Indigenous people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, the following considerations ought to guide the implementation of all recommendations put forward in this report:

- How the recommendations can be implemented in ways that affirm Indigenous peoples' right to participate in decision-making and the development, determination, and administration of the programs we support;
- The extent to which programs address the ongoing legacies and destructive impacts of colonialism on Indigenous people (that is, the root causes of the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the population experiencing homelessness);
- Progress made towards closing the gaps between outcomes for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people;
- The value of culturally appropriate service delivery, culture-based approaches, and the cultural safety of participants; and
- The extent to which activities support the development of trust, accountability, transparency and joint leadership in their relationships with Indigenous organizations and Indigenous people.

2. Governance, Roles, Planning, and Coordination

Homelessness is often described as a fusion policy issue because there is no one department, agency, or body that is solely responsible for addressing it. The people who most frequently fall through the cracks or experience barriers to accessing supports from most mainstream social service systems are also the people who most frequently experience homelessness. This is why coordination related to preventing, reducing, and ending homelessness can be so complex. With the creation of Winnipeg's Plan to End Homelessness and the shift towards a Housing First (HF) framework, the roles of different stakeholders in the homelessness sector have also shifted, with the lines of responsibility often blurring as service providers and system-level organizations work together differently. These are positive changes because it means more shared responsibilities towards addressing homelessness. However, shifting and unclear roles come with their own challenges, often due to unstated expectations that arise in misunderstandings, communication, and accountability.

There is a recognized need for more coordination across the sector, but there is not common agreement about what should be coordinated or how. This is balanced or occasionally resisted by a strong fear of a centralized, unresponsive, or bureaucratic system. Additionally, there is confusion across many in the sector about the roles and responsibilities of key system stakeholders. This confusion erodes understanding and cooperation. Participants in the project agreed that the main challenge to coordination is the lack of an organized and understood structure for it to take place. Although there are multiple tables where coordination activities currently take place, there is limited communication between them. Moreover, there is either a lack of clear purpose for some of them, or too constrained a purpose for others. It is also important to note that none of these planning and coordination gaps are the responsibility of any single body.

Throughout this project, a number of challenges and gaps in coordination were raised:

- Lack of a community driven ‘vision’ for the future and common understanding of how the sector should evolve
- Misunderstandings related to coordination terminology and processes between stakeholders. There is not common understanding regarding the terms alignment, coordination, collaboration, and centralization
- Unclear roles and purposes related to coordination (who is doing what and what we are trying to achieve together)
- Lack of formal coordination and communication mechanisms between funders, government agencies, and community-based organizations. Where mechanisms exist, they are exclusive to some service providers (e.g. coordination based on funding source or Housing First designation)
- The Call for Proposal (CFP) process of the CE and HPS limits coordination, creates a culture of competition, and is not well-suited to developing the holistic ‘system of care’
- Limited tools to assess coordination between agencies regarding proposal and outcome evaluation, particularly regarding shared services

The above suggests that there are varying levels of coordination required to address homelessness in Winnipeg. These include a governance structure whereby there are clear decision-making processes and shared accountability, a planning body, a common funders’ table, and the creation of a community of practice among direct service workers (frontline staff).

Governance, Roles, Planning, and Coordination Recommendations

It is recommended that the various ‘system level’ stakeholders meet to develop a strategy for planning and coordination that all stakeholders agree on. This strategy should include:

- Establish a single ‘Planning and Coordination Table’
- Move forward with the proposed ‘Common Funder’s Table’
- Create a ‘Community of Practice’ among direct service workers in the sector

Additionally, the CE should consider:

- Hiring an Indigenous liaison to develop and expand the Indigenous funding portfolio
- Publicly post the Terms of Reference, minutes of meetings, Plans, research reports, and activity reports of the CAB and CE; preferably on a website

Over the long term, as a whole the community should work towards a governance structure that facilitates a coordinated, comprehensive, complete system of care.

3. Policy, Administration, and Funding

The CE and CAB's administrative roles can better foster the collaboration needed for the planning and coordination processes to be effective. This is where the CAB and CE can have the largest impact. Shifting administrative processes can build trust and provide a clear reason to bring people to a common table. The challenges and opportunities for CAB and CE include:

- Misunderstandings on the use of indicators and burdens associated with their use. This limits the use of the indicators to inform planning and coordination
- The burdens associated with financial reporting are problematic for some organizations, especially smaller ones. The burden lies in the level of detail required, the high level of knowledge necessary, the lack of budget flexibility, and the amount of time involved

Policy and Administration Recommendations

- Collaboratively improve outcome reporting priorities, processes, and tools to reduce the burden on organizations and collect meaningful, consistent data as a community
- The Planning and Coordination Table with the Funders' Table should decide on the outcome priorities and benchmarks that are most important to all stakeholders
- Address financial reporting burdens
- Address misunderstandings and confusion relating to HPS and CE policies and procedures
- Modify the Call-for-Proposal (CFP) process to reduce unnecessary competition, and to foster trust and collaboration (see below)
- Over the Long Term: All stakeholders develop shared system indicators

Call-for-Proposal (CFP) Process and Funding

The CFP process in use for the Winnipeg HPS funding has been almost universally identified by stakeholders as problematic for advancing coordination. It was widely felt that CFPs contribute to increased competition amongst service providers and exacerbate existing silos in the system. The CFP process does not lend itself to clearly 'targeted programming', resulting in general proposals that fit within the HPS eligibility, and can result in random and inconsistently operated programs. The current process does not support submissions that have potential to address homeless but require further development, skewing the process to larger organizations. The current process undervalues partnerships within the sector, and there is a lack of transparency around the selection process.

CFP and Funding Recommendations

To address the barriers some smaller, Indigenous-led organizations face in developing successful proposals and services:

- Provide opportunities for development of proposed programs/services
- CE should develop an open and fair process to develop weaker proposals
- Funding to Indigenous Organizations should reflect the scope and scale of the work being done
- CAB and CE should consider inequities when expecting matching funding (smaller and Indigenous organizations often don't have a donor base)

To improve coordination across the sector:

- CE should increase the value placed on partnerships as should CAB's assessments
- CE should target gaps in the system with CFPs
- CE should publish the selection criteria and process for proposals online
- CE should undertake analysis of proposals and submit to CAB

Medium Term: CE should develop a new process to fund programs that reduces competition. One alternative suggested is *Qualification Based Selection*.

4. Programs and System Development

A number of gaps in systems and services were identified throughout this project. Some of these gaps relate to populations that are underserved, others relate to services that people need but are not provided. HPS funding, since 2014, has been focused on “using a Housing First approach to prevent and end homelessness.” For this reason, many of gaps focused on in this report relate to a housing first system of care, recognizing that HF “programs” are only one part of the overall system. The CAB and CE need an inclusive and ongoing process to gather information about existing gaps in services and prioritize how, in partnership with other funders and with service providers, they can be filled. Addressing gaps in services should be seen as an ongoing process of system development.

Identified gaps include:

- not all services are available to all service providers (for example, only HF providers were said to be able to access housing procurement services, intake and assessment services).
- the provincial rent supplement program is still developing, resulting in an inability to transition people in HPS funded HF programs off emergency rent supplements.
- new HF programs are not assessed for fidelity, which has consequences for the services participants can expect to receive.

Community representatives also expressed frustration with access to HF services for the participants they serve, both due to the narrow definitions of chronic and episodic homelessness established by HPS and the acuity requirements established by Winnipeg's centralized intake body¹. People who experience homelessness for fewer than 180 days per year or with less than 3 episodes per year are ineligible. The same is also true for people experiencing hidden homelessness and those in abusive relationships, regardless of the risks they face or how high their acuity is. Service providers also report situations where people who they believe would greatly benefit from HF supports but whose acuity level was identified as 'low' were denied services, while others needed less intensive housing supports than a HF program offers, but few are available. These challenges are exacerbated by the lack of a rapid re-housing

¹ Winnipeg's centralized intake body, Doorways, utilizes the Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool developed by OrgCode to assess acuity.

program in Winnipeg, which would handle many people with lower acuity or short-term homelessness. Finally, people with complex support needs or specialized support requirements were also identified as a population that is not served well by existing services. This is surprising given that HF is an intervention designed specifically for this population. To some extent, this gap relates to HF programs' inability to connect people with other clinical or specialized services.

In other communities, a planning group sets priorities for the population HF should serve first, such as the chronically homeless, youth, veterans, or, families. Some in the sector thought it would be beneficial to have community consensus and a shared vision on priorities for HF services, and thereby resolve the discord regarding who is eligible for services in Winnipeg.

Programs and System Development Recommendations

- CE should work with the Planning and Coordination Table to create a targeted CFP to support Rapid-Rehousing Programs
- CE should work to ensure 'system wide resource' services are available to all providers in the sector
- Manitoba Housing should prioritize creation of provincial rent supplement program
- The Planning and Coordination Table should support the development of information sharing protocols with Employment and Income Assistance (EIA), Manitoba Housing, Health and Justice systems
- The CE should work towards improving assessment of programs, including fidelity, and long-term cost analysis

5. Fostering Collaboration, Capacity Building, Communication

Several stakeholders observed that HPS funding, through its administrative and CFP processes, favours larger organizations that have received funding previously or have the capacity and resources to undertake proposal writing. Small organizations without those advantages are easily excluded, in spite of the fact that many small organizations are successful and efficient providers. Indigenous organizations in particular tend to have shorter organizational histories, lack a donor base, rarely have core funding, and yet bear supporting the larger portion of the homeless population. While the CAB, CE, and HPS make significant efforts to fairly and transparently address conflicts of interest, additional process changes could make the overall process more equitable. The timing of the CFPs (which is driven, in part, by federal budgetary processes) has also been criticized by service providers. Most stakeholders agreed that short timeframes for CFPs reduce the ability to coordinate as a sector or partner appropriately, which furthers the need for detailed and ongoing planning in advance of funding cycles.

All of the previously discussed areas of action (responding to the distinctiveness of Indigenous homelessness, coordination, planning, and collaboration) require organizational capacity. There is

therefore **a need to build capacity amongst smaller organizations** so they can play an effective role in Winnipeg's system of care.

There is an underlying problem of clear communication amongst all the stakeholders on issues of: roles, goals, policy, priorities, procedures, best practices and responsibilities. Communication is about accountability, building trust and relationships amongst the stakeholders through a foundation of understanding and open dialogue. There is a huge opportunity to clarify understanding amongst stakeholders and thereby help build relationships and trust. Examples of opportunities for clearer communication:

- Widely and clearly communicate the meanings of Alignment, Collaboration, Centralization, and Coordination so discussion can begin
- Articulate the roles of the principle system stakeholders
- Continue to inform service provider organizations about the HPS funding and what activities can be funded
- Continue to inform service provider organizations about project budgeting and flexibility for unanticipated costs (re-allocation policies and procedures)
- CE should hold regular information sessions on accessing HPS program funding
- CE continue to inform service providers about the link between selecting activities-performed, and resultant indicators to be reported on
- Clarify how HPS funded programs can access services provided by Housing Plus, including requirements for meeting Provincial standards

Conclusions

All agree that more coordination is needed in Winnipeg's homeless sector, but many spoke of coordination as if it was a thing 'to get', a single management activity, a distant goal, or an almost idealized state, and therefore difficult to comprehend or act upon. But "coordination" is a process; it is the means, not the end goal. The results of coordination will take time, and continue indefinitely. And coordination activities should not be overwhelming. They should be understandable, practical, and recognizable, because they are actions familiar to the not-for-profit sector such as yearly planning, and working with partners. Yet each action will imperceptibly improve the coordination of the system as a whole, and ease burdens. Coordination activities are already occurring - and can be brought together under one umbrella to be more strategic, inclusive, and impactful. So let us begin by **building a process called coordination**. Towards that end, the following guiding principle and recommendations are intended to be concrete, achievable actions that improve the functioning of the current system and contribute to a coordinated, comprehensive, and complete system of care.

Guiding Principle:

When implementing the recommendations it must be kept in mind that Indigenous people constitute approximately three-quarters of the population experiencing homelessness in Winnipeg. Ending homelessness in Winnipeg will not happen unless the distinct needs of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous organizations are addressed, and distinct rights of Indigenous peoples upheld. It bears restating, then, that the following considerations should be incorporated into the development of any plans to address the recommendations presented in this report and, more generally, into future funding-related decision-making:

- ❖ How does this affirm Indigenous peoples' right to participate in decision-making and the development, determination and administration of the programs we support?
- ❖ To what extent do activities and programs address the ongoing legacies and destructive impacts of colonialism, which is the root cause of Indigenous overrepresentation in the population experiencing homelessness? Will this help make progress towards closing the gaps between outcomes for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people?
- ❖ Does this support the provision of culturally appropriate services, culture-based approaches, and culturally safe service experiences for Indigenous people?
- ❖ To what extent will this support the development of trust, accountability, transparency and joint leadership in our relationships with Indigenous organizations and Indigenous people?

Top 5 Recommendations

1. **Develop a Planning and Coordination Table**
2. **CE should reduce the competition inherent in the CFP process**
 - a. **Stage 1 is ongoing information sharing with proponents emphasizing a non-competitive nature, principles such as paying a standard living wage, and making sure there is adequate funding for all activities; while supporting greater partnerships and accountability**
 - b. **Stage 2 will be a shift to an alternate open and transparent funding model such as Qualification Based Selection, or other process**
3. **CAB / CE / Service Canada should prepare for 2019 funding cycle end. Confirm and stabilize a long-term CE**
4. **CE should continue and expand efforts to reduce and/or improve financial reporting requirements**
5. **Improve communication and information sharing through information sessions, feedback sessions, publication of policies and procedures, and the development of a website to host the information**

1. Introduction & Background

Over the last year, there have been efforts in the homeless serving community to map out service gaps and needs, and to discuss HPS funding and how it aligns with community priorities. The impetus from these efforts stem from a combination of forces: 1) The At Home/Chez Soi research study demonstrated that Housing First is a successful and cost-effective intervention for a range of populations experiencing chronic and episodic homelessness; 2) End Homelessness Winnipeg was established to implement a 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness, which focuses on the creation of a Housing First System of Care; and 3) The Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) shifted its focus to using a Housing First Approach to prevent and reduce homelessness, which requires a different level and type of coordination than previous homelessness responses. The current project, *Advancing Coordination of the Winnipeg's Homeless Sector*, advances these efforts to integrate more community knowledge, planning, and engagement into the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) funding process. The project is designed to identify service gaps and coordination opportunities that can be utilized by the Community Advisory Board (CAB) and Community Entity (CE) in their roles relating to HPS funding and administration. In doing so, the findings from this project also can be drawn upon by organizations that work directly with people experiencing homelessness in Winnipeg to enhance and build upon the services and supports they already offer.

The research team, in consultation with the CE, strategically chose a phased delivery schedule with the objective of supporting the CAB and CE for the 2017-19 proposal review term while providing long-term recommendations based on further analysis. A *Preliminary Report* brought forward initial recommendations from the community, based on a series of discussion groups with sector stakeholders, held in late November 2016. Five separate discussion groups were held, one each with People with Lived Experience of homelessness (9 people attended), representatives from Indigenous Organizations, Housing First (HF) Providers, and Frontline Service Providers (a total of 24 individuals representing 21 different agencies attended), and Senior Administrators (8 individuals representing 6 departments/organizations) within the sector (see Appendix 4). There was significant overlap between participants in the Indigenous Organizations, HF Providers, and Frontline Service Providers groups, offering multiple opportunities for people to participate. Each discussion group session (except for the Senior Administrators) was broken into three smaller tables to allow for deep and diverse conversation amongst all participants and ensure quieter voices had opportunities to express their perspectives. Discussion group participants were asked similar sets of questions that probed the project's areas of interest:

- ❖ Gaps in the service system
- ❖ Challenges and opportunities with coordination with funders
- ❖ Challenges and opportunities with coordination between organizations

- ❖ Understanding culturally appropriate services
- ❖ Identifying the most critical thing to address in the current system.

The notes from all of the discussion groups were combined and analyzed according to the various theme questions and new themes that arose from the groups. From this analysis, a number of initial recommendations were developed for CAB and CE that could inform the Call for Proposals process (in progress at that time). It must be emphasized that these initial recommendations were based on what we learned from participants in the discussion groups. This *Final Report* brings new material to the CAB and CE on opportunities for coordination in the sector, including:

- ❖ An assessment of the Community Plan as it relates to Indigenous communities' priorities, including the relationship to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. The outcome of this analysis will be to strengthen the understanding of cultural appropriateness for service providers.
- ❖ A comparison the roles and funding strategies of system level stakeholders including Manitoba Housing, End Homelessness Winnipeg (EHW), and the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA). The goal is to help identify funding incongruities, and suggest possible options and solutions.
- ❖ System mapping of the Winnipeg homeless serving sector. The goal is to identify gaps in a system of complete care and suggest system alignments / activities that will address these gaps.
- ❖ Identification and description of best coordination practices from other jurisdictions. These strategies will help inform recommendations for coordination / organization of the sector in Winnipeg.

This final report builds upon the preliminary report and includes information gathered through individual interviews with key stakeholders from EHW, Manitoba Housing (n=2), the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA), Service Canada, and the City of Winnipeg Community Entity (CE) (n=2), interviews with leaders in other jurisdictions, system mapping, and analysis of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report and other documents. The additional information gathered further clarified, contextualized, or supported what was learned through the discussion groups. This *Final Report* is therefore a collation and analysis of all information gathered over the previous six months. In some cases, initial recommendations from the *Preliminary Report* have been revised based on new information and focused on the objectives of stakeholders across the homelessness sector.

2. Limitations

This study has a number of limitations to its scope that are important to acknowledge. First, the study emphasized system coordination relating to HPS Funding and funding structures, including the Community Entity and Community Advisory Board. It was not designed to assess in depth or provide recommendations toward the coordination roles of other entities, including End Homelessness Winnipeg, the Province of Manitoba, the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, or community based organizations, though these are relevant to the sector.

Second, much of the emphasis of the analysis relates specifically to Housing First (HF) specific services, including Intensive Case Management and Assertive Community Treatment Teams and shared Housing First services (e.g. intake, assessment, and housing procurement). There are good reasons for this, as described at the beginning of the report:

- At Home/Chez Soi project demonstrated Housing First to be an effective intervention for a diversity of the population experiencing homelessness
- End Homelessness Wpg and the Plan to End Homelessness focuses on creation of a Housing First ‘system of care’
- HPS has shifted the emphasis of all program funding to Housing First, although the majority of HPS funding in Winnipeg over the previous three years has still been spent on activities considered to be “non-HF.”

Though the Focus Groups had a balance of Housing First Service Provider organizations and non-Housing First Service Provider organizations, Housing First requires a different level of participation in sector coordination activities, and therefore the analysis emphasized the views of the Housing First providers as it relates to these activities (intake, assessment, housing procurement, other Housing First eligible services).

This overemphasis on the Housing First Provider viewpoint is somewhat balanced by three factors. Many of the HF Providers who attended Focus Groups also provide non-HF services. These representatives did NOT distinguish challenges as being isolated to HF part of the sector. This was particularly apparent in these representatives views that many administrative and policy challenges were associated with all HPS funding.

Secondly, this report also drew upon information gathered at a July 2016 *Community Meeting* hosted by Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre and End Homelessness Winnipeg. This meeting had attendance with broad representation across the homeless serving sector. This meeting broke into working groups to discuss the strengths, challenges, gaps, and opportunities that exist in Winnipeg related to:

1. Programming for people experiencing homelessness
2. The administration of HPS funding, and
3. Other gaps in addressing homelessness

Upon analysis of the notes, it was determined that the “other gaps in addressing homelessness” discussions generally focused on the issue of coordination in the homelessness sector. Again, the opinions and comments raised in these discussions were similar across service providers working in the homelessness system and NOT specific to HF parts of the system.

Lastly, interviews with key system stakeholders were extensive and focused on the whole sector. In fact, the words ‘Housing First’ were not included in the interview questions. The questions asked more broadly about gaps and coordination of the ‘homeless sector’. Therefore, the opinions gathered during these interviews were taken as being about the entire sector.

Finally, due to limitations in availability, timing, and other constraints, not all service providers in the homelessness sector or other stakeholders could participate in either the Focus Groups or the interviews. The list of Focus Group invitees and attendees is included in Appendix 4. The intent was to speak to coordination of the entire homeless sector in Winnipeg, and invitations were directed towards organizations that had experience with HPS funding, emergency shelters, and Indigenous-led organizations. This likely excluded a number of relevant service providers.

3. What We Heard from the Community: Preliminary Report

Main Findings

The *Preliminary Report* of this project described efforts in the homeless serving community to map out service gaps and needs, and to discuss HPS funding and how it aligns with community priorities. While some information from the discussion groups is discussed in more detail in the sections below, the following section highlights main findings from the preliminary report.

The focus of the preliminary report derived primarily from discussion groups with stakeholders in the sector, held in late November 2016, and reflected what we learned from participants in these discussions. Following the submission of the preliminary report, funders and others participated in interviews. We learned new information from these interviews that added to and clarified some of the challenges put forward by discussion groups. However, the community's perception around several major challenges and gaps (funding eligibility for key supplies and activities, for instance), which were shared by most organizations, point to a clear need to improve communication between funders and the organizations that they fund. The considerations from the preliminary report that remain relevant are addressed in detail in the remaining sections.

Addressing Homelessness from Indigenous Perspectives

Within a service delivery model based on Indigenous values and ways of being, “everyone is family” and Indigenous organizations have a responsibility to offer support to whoever might contact them by phone or email or come through their door. Indigenous and community organizations often provide resources, services and support “off the book” in response to needs presented by individual community members.

*“Funding needs to be allotted to the right places,
the places where homeless people are walking through the door for whatever reason.”*

An organization's capacity to provide “culturally appropriate” services to Indigenous people depends primarily on who is part of the organization (how many staff members, organizational leaders and board members are Indigenous) and how they work with clients (the extent to which Indigenous people influence and contribute to program development and service delivery, and the extent to which the values and actions of individual staff members and the organization as a whole align with Indigenous ways of knowing, understanding, and being).

It was suggested that funders do not recognize Indigenous organizations' expertise or capacity, including their ability to manage the amount of money they would need to do what is expected of them. The current funding structure does not recognize the complexity or difficulty of their work or the number of

people they actually serve. Discussion Group members spoke at length about the need for stable and sustainable funding.

“We know what our community needs, but still don’t get adequate resources to provide enough services to meet those needs.”

Coordination and Alignment

It was agreed that all stakeholders had leadership roles to play in bringing others to the table, working together, and communicating transparently and openly with each other, while there was disagreement on whose role it is to actually lead coordination (CE, CAB, EHW, government representatives, and community agencies were put forward).

Coordination Between Community-Based Agencies

For those experiencing homelessness, discontinuity in services is frustrating and often prolongs their homelessness. People described going from place to place trying to get the help they needed, but never quite finding it.

“Why is everyone on a different page?”

Navigating the complexity of the homelessness sector is also challenging for frontline staff who are HF case managers. Coordination between agencies could be better supported through sharing information, networking, and sharing resources.

“The community can work as hard as they want, but the people pulling the strings need to work together too.”

Coordination Between Funders

A significant challenge identified by service organizations is the lack of coordination amongst funders, which is seen to result in system and service gaps, restrictive eligibility criteria, exclusion of particular populations (especially in HF programs), program and project-based approaches, and a lack of overall system planning when making funding decisions.

“We need leadership from everyone who thinks they know what’s best for us – they don’t want to meet, talk, engage with us, and hear us. They make deals without consulting with us. Meetings like that should be happening in an ongoing basis. Get our voices out and be heard.”

Coordination Across the Homelessness Sector

There are many critical components and stakeholders of the homelessness sector, which can lead to barriers in access or transition points for people who are experiencing homelessness. The connection to other ‘systems,’ in particular Employment and Income Assistance (EIA) and mental health, was something all HF teams struggled with, often independently.

“There’s a big assumption that systems are high functioning and they’re working. They don’t take into account lack of addiction treatment, mental health services, EIA conflicts, etc. – Housing First relies on these systems working perfectly and they don’t.”

Those who had been part of the At Home/Chez Soi project said that coordination with these systems was much more effective through At Home and the Manitoba Government’s Cross Departmental Coordination Initiative (CDCI) than what exists now. Primary factors in their success included: 1) direction/leadership from the top about the need for systems to be part of coordination, and 2) a coordination process that was inclusive and equitable, with community based agencies participating to share their knowledge and experience.

System Gaps

Systemic challenges, including systemic racism, create barriers to and gaps in service that programs alone cannot address. This impacts Indigenous participants in unique ways, because they struggle to access systems that tend to focus on equal access rather than equitable access, and because these systems support wellness and healing from a Western perspective.

Service providers frequently raised the definition of Chronic and Episodic Homelessness and eligibility for HF programming as the most critical issues they face. This is discussed in more detail in later sections of the report. Additionally, two main challenges were raised by discussion group members: challenges around housing, and challenges around services and supports.

Challenges Around Housing

- ❖ **Rapid Rehousing:** This is a major gap that produces problems felt across the entire sector. Rapid Rehousing should be seen as a preventative measure, where persons are redirected out of the homeless sector. All programs in the sector should be able to directly access the Rapid Rehousing supports.
- ❖ **Available Housing Types:** There is need for a broader range of housing options that service programs can access, in particular for people with high acuity, transitional housing, supportive housing options, youth and women’s shelter and housing options, and safe housing for people who identify as LGBT2SQIA+.
- ❖ **Available Housing Supply:** HF programs spend the majority of their time simply looking for housing, rather than providing the services and supports necessary to help individuals move to more independent, healthy lives.
- ❖ **Rent Supplements:** While programs do have access to rent supplements, there remains a perception amongst clients and the programs themselves of differing opportunities and challenges in accessing rent supplements.

Challenges Around Services and Supports

Many gaps in services were identified by people experiencing homelessness and representatives working in the sector, which covered a wide range and scale of issues, from the need for bus tickets, to serious challenges accessing mental health and addictions care. Many of the services identified as missing or in short supply are already provided by programs but are curtailed or limited in significant ways. We heard that often there are limits on usage, the need for pre-approval or bureaucratic rules.

“We’re doing Housing First, but without all the pieces. This is an incomplete system of care.”

Beyond these expansions to what organizations and programs can do, there are gaps in the complete system of care, or insufficient capacity in other systems with which the homeless serving sector interacts.

- ❖ **Trauma:** Likely the single most recognized need was for more trauma-informed services including trauma informed mental-health services.
- ❖ **Low Acuity:** As with Rapid Rehousing, efforts here can be seen as a preventative step, keeping people from entering into longer-term homelessness.
- ❖ **24/7 Supports:** Problems are more likely to occur after business hours, and additional services are needed. Drop in programs are helpful in setting a routine and providing a place to go. A 24/7 drop-in centre could fill a significant need in Winnipeg.
- ❖ **Mental Health and Addictions System:** Currently, mental health supports are only provided by the ACT and PACT teams, which have long waiting lists. Getting appropriate prescriptions for psychiatric medications can also be challenging. Underlying many of these challenges is the assumption that Housing First programs have access to, and integrate smoothly with, fully functioning health care systems, which is not the case.
- ❖ **Transitions:** Transitioning between systems and services (e.g. aging out of care of CFS, leaving the Justice system, entering an addictions treatment program, etc.) often leads to a loss of supports and therefore homelessness. There is a need for programs and services to bridge gaps through these transitions to prevent homelessness.

Conclusion from the Preliminary Report

A complete system of care for people experiencing homelessness is needed to end homelessness in Winnipeg. Achieving this requires coordination and a willingness from all stakeholders to operate differently than they have in the past.

CAB and CE are in unique positions to be leaders in ending homelessness through the promotion of collaborative planning and coordination. They should progress from a position of funder and administrator, imposing burdens on agencies, to enabler and problem solver, supporting those agencies.

4. Understanding Winnipeg's Homelessness Sector and System

Homelessness in Winnipeg

According to the Winnipeg Street Census (2015), on any given night, at least 1,400 people experience homelessness. This point-in-time snapshot vastly underestimates the population experiencing hidden homelessness, and less dramatically underestimates the population who is unsheltered. Yet, important information can be gleaned from this census, including demographics, reasons for homelessness, and service needs. The following facts come from the *Winnipeg Street Census 2015 Final Report*, and from secondary analysis of the street census data for the current report:

- ❖ Indigenous peoples are grossly overrepresented among those who experience homelessness: 71.1% of the overall population and 84.0% of youth identified as Indigenous
- ❖ About half of First Nations people experiencing homelessness grew up in a First Nations community
- ❖ Over half (57.9%) of Indigenous people had been in foster care or group homes, compared with 21.0% of non-Indigenous people
- ❖ LGBT2SQIA+¹ youth are overrepresented among those who experience homelessness; 23% of youth identified as LGBT2SQIA+
- ❖ The Homelessness Partnering Strategy defines chronic and episodic homelessness as including only those staying outside, in emergency sheltered situations, or places unfit for human habitation. However, in Winnipeg people experiencing hidden homelessness were more likely to be homeless for 5 year or longer
- ❖ Using the HPS definition of chronic and episodic homelessness, the point-in-time count identified 230 people experiencing chronic homelessness and 81 experiencing episodic homelessness, for a total of 311
- ❖ Of those who were experiencing hidden homelessness, 272 were homeless for more than three episodes, or longer than six months

Additional information about homelessness may be available from statistics gathered through a number of important HPS funded sources. The Doorways Community Collaboration has information on the number of people being referred to and receiving HF supports, as well as assessments on the 'acuity' of homelessness that people are experiencing. The Homelessness Information Partnership of Winnipeg has information on emergency shelter use in Winnipeg, including the demographics of people using adult emergency shelters and eventually will also have real time data on the trends of shelter use over time. Additionally, HF providers have information on how long it takes to secure appropriate housing for people, the number of times participants are re-housed, and more. EHW is in the process of developing a consortium to bring data on homelessness from these various sources together for analysis and

¹ LGBT2SQIA+ is an acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer or questioning, two spirit, intersex, asexual or aromantic, and other identities.

reporting, which, in turn, will improve access to information for the purposes of planning and program development.

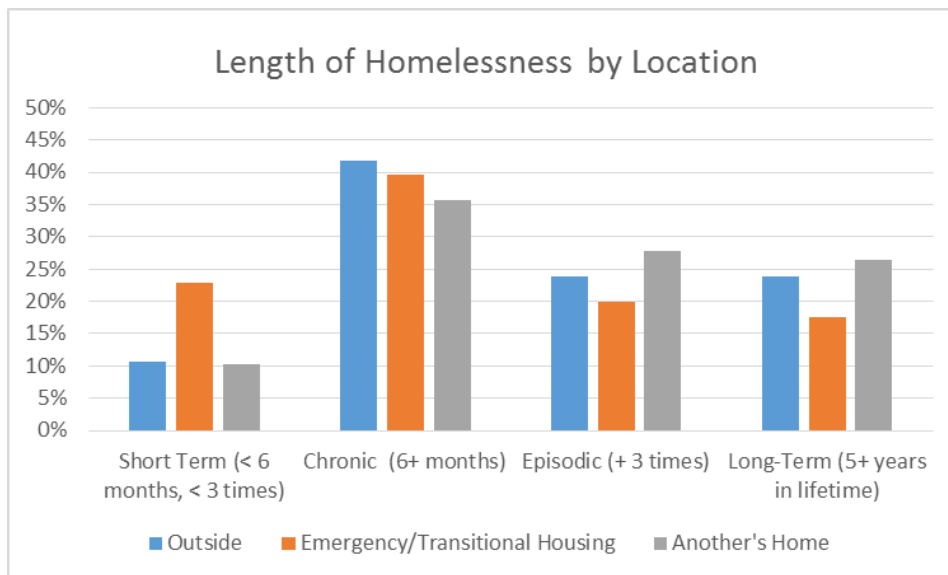


Figure 1: Length of Homelessness by Location, Winnipeg Street Census 2015

Community-Based Organizations

It is challenging to map out community-based organizations and the services they provide to people experiencing homelessness. Some organizations are population-based, that is, they provide a range of services to a specific population (e.g. women, youth, or Indigenous people). Others are service-based, that is, they are experts in a particular field of service (e.g. mental health, addictions treatment, employment). Most organizations adapt over time and change the services they provide according to changes in the community or population’s needs, the funding available to them, or other strategic or responsive factors. Below are the community-based organizations that are most likely to serve people experiencing homelessness, the general services they offer, and their primary target population. Understanding these organizations, who they serve (and who they don’t serve), the programs they have available, and what their strengths and challenges are is a critical first step for enhancing coordination across the homelessness sector.

The following service map was developed using best available information through web-based searches and information gleaned from discussion groups. These may change over time or be missing some information. Some larger agencies provide other targeted services for different populations (e.g. children in care, families). The map is meant to focus primarily on the programs available to people experiencing homelessness.

Homelessness Supports Service Map

Populations Served	Not primarily people who experience homelessness	At risk of homelessness	At imminent/ high risk of homelessness	Experiencing short-term or provisional homelessness, generally low acuity	Experiencing longer-term homelessness; service requirements generally include sobriety	Street involved generally long term homelessness, high acuity
Youth	Youth Employment Services E					
	New Directions E ED R					
	Pan Am Place C R T					
	Resource Assistance for Youth A BN C E ED HF M O R T					
	Rossbrook House C ED					
	Onashowewin (Indigenous-led, justice) C R					
	Ndiinawe (Indigenous-led) C ED BN M R O S T					
	Marymound C E ED M T					
	(BN) (C) (E) (ED) (HF) (M) (R) (S) Macdonald Youth Services					
	(BN) (C) (E) (ED) (M) (R)					
Women	Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre (BN) (C) (E) (M) (R)					
	North Point Douglas Women's Centre (BN) (C) (M) (R)					
	Willow Place (M) (R) (S)					
	North End Women's Centre (A) (BN) (C) (E) (M) (R) (T)					
	West Central Women's Resource Centre (BN) (C) (E) (ED) (HF) (M) (R)					
	Wabung (Indigenous-led) (C) (M) (R)					
	Ikwe Widdjittwin (Indigenous-led) (C) (M) (R) (S) (T)					
	Native Women's Transition Centre (Indigenous-led) (A) (C) (M) (R) (S) (T)					
	Urban Circle Training Centre (ED)					
	Centre for Aboriginal Human Resource Development (E) (ED)					
Indigenous Peoples	Ka Ni Kanichik (C) (E) (ED) (M) (R)					
	Thunderbird House (C)					
	Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre (A) (C) (ED) (HF) (M) (R)					
	Ma Maw Wi Chi I tata Centre (A) (BN) (C) (E) (ED) (HF) (M) (O) (R) (T)					
	Eagle Urban Transition Centre (C) (E) (ED) (HF) (M) (R)					
	Native Clan (C) (M) (T)					
	Pritchard House (A) (T)					

- (A)** Addictions treatment or counselling
- (BN)** Basic needs (food, shower, clothing etc.)
- (C)** Community integration, recreation, cultural or spiritual programming
- (E)** Employment services or programs
- (ED)** Education and training services or programs
- (HF)** Housing first (ICM or ACT)
- (M)** Mental health support and/or counselling
- (O)** Street outreach
- (R)** Referrals, advocacy, system navigation
- (S)** Emergency shelter
- (T)** Transitional housing

Figure 2: Homelessness Supports Service Map, part 1

Homelessness Supports Service Map

Populations Served	At risk of homelessness	At imminent/high risk of homelessness	Experiencing short-term or provisional homelessness, generally low acuity	Experiencing longer-term homelessness; requirements generally include sobriety	Street involved generally long term homelessness, high acuity
General Population	Wii Chiwaakanak Learning Centre C ED	House of Hesed T	Elizabeth Fry Society (Justice) BN C ED R T	Experiencing longer-term homelessness; requirements generally include sobriety	Street involved generally long term homelessness, high acuity
	United Church Halfway Homes (Justice) C R T	John Howard Society (Justice) BN C ED R T	Red Road Lodge C R T		
	Sara Piel C M R T	Spence Neighbourhood Association C E ED R S	Siloam Mission BN C E HF R S T		
	North End Community Renewal Corporation C E ED R	Central Neighbourhoods Association C	Salvation Army Booth Centre A BN C M R S T		
	West Broadway Community Organization C R	DMSMCA C R	Men's Resource Centre (men) C M R S		
	Andrews St. Family Centre BN C R	Wolesley Family Place BN C R	Canadian Mental Health Association C E HF M R		
	Klinic M R	Lighthouse Mission BN R	Agape Table BN		
	West Broadway Community Ministry BN C	Age and Opportunity (seniors) M R S	St. Boniface Street Links BN C HF O R T		
	Welcome Place (newcomers) C R S T	Union Gospel Mission (addictions) A C R T	Sunshine House BN C R		
	Behavioural Health Foundation (addictions) A C R T	Ten Ten Recovery (addictions) A C R T			
	Esther House (addictions, women) A C R T				

- (A)** Addictions treatment or counselling
- (BN)** Basic needs (food, shower, clothing etc.)
- (C)** Community integration, recreation, cultural or spiritual programming
- (E)** Employment services or programs
- (ED)** Education and training services or programs
- (HF)** Housing first (ICM or ACT)
- (M)** Mental health support and/or counselling
- (O)** Street outreach
- (R)** Referrals, advocacy, system navigation
- (S)** Emergency shelter
- (T)** Transitional housing

Figure 3: Homelessness Supports Service Map, part 2

Gaps in Service

The preliminary report for this project identified a number of gaps in services for people experiencing homelessness. Some of these gaps relate to populations that are underserved. Others relate to services that people need but are not provided. It should be noted that the homelessness system is generally understood as ‘homelessness response’ and currently does not include preventative programming, which is essential for ending homelessness. HPS funding cannot fill all the gaps in homelessness services, and existing gaps change over time with the shifting needs of people, funding priorities, and outside forces such as the housing market. HPS funding, since 2014, has been focused on “using a Housing First approach to prevent and end homelessness.” For this reason, many of gaps focused on in this report relate to a housing first system of care, recognizing that HF “programs” (i.e. intensive case management and assertive community treatment teams) are only one part of the overall system. The CAB and CE need an ongoing process to gather information about existing gaps in services and prioritize how, in partnership with other funders and with service providers, they can be filled. The information gathering processes need to be inclusive of all stakeholders (including people experiencing homelessness), transparent, and well communicated. Addressing gaps in services should be seen as an ongoing process of system development.

Across Canada, a Housing First system of care typically includes:

- ❖ Emergency response, including shelter and basic needs provision
- ❖ Street outreach
- ❖ Coordinated access (intake and assessment)
- ❖ A range of housing choices (including transitional, supportive, and permanent scattered site/social housing)
- ❖ Diversion combined with Rapid Rehousing programs (to quickly move people out of homelessness)
- ❖ Housing First programs, including Intensive Case Management and Assertive Community Treatment teams
- ❖ A HF community of practice, including common training and standards for staff
- ❖ Housing procurement and resources, including furniture provision, moving services, and repairs

These services are supported by wider system pieces, including:

- ❖ Rental supplements
- ❖ Supports from other systems, including EIA, health, mental health, and addictions, justice, and Child and Family Services (CFS)
- ❖ Supports for rehabilitation and community integration, including employment and training, healing, education, recreation, life skills, etc.

Clear gaps in services were identified throughout this project. Some exist because of perceptions service providers have regarding HPS funding eligibility. This is partly due to the limited information available about what non-HF programs are funded by HPS (including many aspects of a HF system including some transitional housing, youth emergency shelters, and other homelessness support programs with the 35% of Designated HPS funding/60% of Aboriginal HPS funding available for non-HF activities). Others exist because of actual eligibility constraints.

Underserved Populations

Community representatives expressed frustration with the narrow definitions of chronic and episodic homelessness established by HPS. These definitions mean that people who experience homelessness for fewer than 180 days per year or with less than 3 episodes per year are ineligible for HF services. The same is also true for people experiencing hidden homelessness (people staying with friends, family, strangers) and those in abusive relationships, regardless of the risks they face in those housing circumstances and how high their acuity is. Service providers had also experienced situations where people whose 'acuity' level was identified as 'low' by the VI-SPDAT assessment tool, which, again, left them ineligible for HF services. They identified a clear gap in services for this population, as some would still benefit greatly from HF supports, while others needed less intensive housing supports than a HF program offers, but more intensive than they could provide (i.e. more than a referral). This is exasperated by the lack of a rapid re-housing program in Winnipeg, which would handle many people with lower acuity or short-term homelessness. Siloam Mission was recently approved for HF funding to serve those who have lower acuity. Some other service providers were puzzled by this decision because they were under the impression that providing HF services to lower acuity participants was not permitted and therefore not an option for their own organizations.

The CE and Service Canada stated that the acuity level required for HF programming was 'set by the community', and the government does not have any set requirement for VI-SPDAT scores. However, Doorways has referred to OrgCode's² recommended criteria to ensure those with the highest needs receive the more intensive supports. Representatives from the CE and Service Canada stated that there is some flexibility in how HPS' definitions of chronic and episodic homelessness are interpreted but also noted that this must be discussed with the CE on a case by case basis (usually under extenuating circumstances). It is in this case by case discussion that the process/rationale is particularly unclear to service providers. One service provider stated that they have stopped referring people who would clearly benefit from HF supports to Doorways because they believe they will be ineligible and do not want to exacerbate trauma and frustration for the participant. For this reason this is also an area that

² The organizations partnering in Doorways use the VI-SPDAT and other decision-assistance tools in the screening and assessment of potential program participants. These tools are developed by and licensed through OrgCode Consulting, a company operating within the homelessness sector.

was identified as needing leadership. Service Canada noted that once 90% of those experiencing chronic and episodic homelessness have been housed, communities are permitted to choose the populations with the 'next highest needs' to prioritize for HF interventions. Many jurisdictions deal with this gap through HF funding from other sources such as the Province. In many communities, a planning group has set priorities for the population HF should serve first, which may include those experiencing chronic homelessness, but also populations such as youth, veterans, people leaving the justice system, families, etc. Some in the sector thought it would be useful to have community consensus and shared vision on priorities for HF services, and to work towards resolving the discord regarding who is eligible, based on the specific needs of individuals experiencing homelessness in Winnipeg. This process of consensus development on Housing First program eligibility would ensure that: (1) all HF providers are clear on the requirements (2) resources can be most effectively used.

Areas for Increased Communication and Clarification:

- ❖ There are concerns amongst some HF organizations that they will not be reimbursed costs associated with housing someone who is not eligible under HPS' narrow definition of chronic and episodic homelessness, and so do not house those people who are 'on the line'. The CE has confirmed that while they expect that coordinated intake will set criteria and work to house those most absolutely homeless and in highest need, there needs to be a common sense approach to working with the definitions, and service providers need to know they can contact the CE to discuss extenuating circumstances.
- ❖ Some community representatives also perceive that people leaving 'systems' (CFS, justice, health services) were not eligible for HF programs. Given that people leaving these systems are at high risk, they see this as a major gap. HPS directives state (and the CE and Service Canada confirmed) that people leaving the systems are eligible for HF services only if they have a history of chronic or episodic homelessness prior to entering the system, and cannot identify a fixed address upon their release. Macdonald Youth Services was recently approved for HF funding to specifically target youth aging out of care.

People with complex support needs or specialized support requirements were also identified as a population that is not served well by existing services. This is surprising given that HF is an intervention designed specifically for this population. To some extent, this gap relates to HF programs' inability to connect people with other clinical or specialized services (often due to access challenges within the mental health and addictions systems as a whole), which can result in refusal to accept into HF programs, for example, people with poly-substance use issues, people who are gang affiliated, or people with chronic illness or other physical challenges that require in-home supports.

A number of people raised concerns that, because the HF eligibility criteria is so narrow, individuals who stayed in hidden homeless situations are overwhelmingly excluded from intensive housing services. This population typically consists primarily of women, youth, those who are LGBTQ2SIA+, and Indigenous people who are newcomers to Winnipeg.

Types of Services Needed in Winnipeg

HF providers raised the issue of some specific supports being ineligible for HPS funding. These included: food purchased for a household start-up; water purchased for participants at community events; mileage or other costs associated with activities outside of Winnipeg, including culturally-based activities such as medicine picking or sweats; and costs associated with unanticipated but important activities such as sweat lodge ceremonies. Some of these gaps in support appear to be the results of miscommunication between the CE and service providers. For example, while bottled water is generally not eligible as per City of Winnipeg policy, there is some flexibility and it can be purchased if there is good rationale. Culturally-based programming, transportation outside of the city, or providing services that weren't originally budgeted for are permitted but must be cleared in advance. Some community-based organizations saw this as an unnecessary burden, and others suggested that this delay, or need to 'ask permission' makes it difficult to provide responsive, flexible, and client-centered supports (this is discussed further in the financial administration section). Other gaps result from policies established by bodies other than HPS. For example, EIA's decision those EIA recipients must claim any food purchased for them as a gift, which would then be clawed back. The CE has met with EIA regarding this decision and has been told that it is not negotiable.

Other services needed in Winnipeg as described in the preliminary report summary remain relevant.

Area for Increased Communication and Clarification

- ❖ A number of service providers indicated that only some of their clients have access to rent supplements. Additionally, some service providers reported that, out of concern for the long-term sustainability of their clients, they do not use the HPS emergency housing supplement. However, we learned from representatives of funding organizations that every HF client in an HPS funded program has access to that emergency housing supplement.

Most people who participated in the consultations undertaken for this project agreed that gaps in services could best be addressed through a coordinated approach, different from the current Call for Proposals process. This is discussed further in the Administrative Opportunities section.

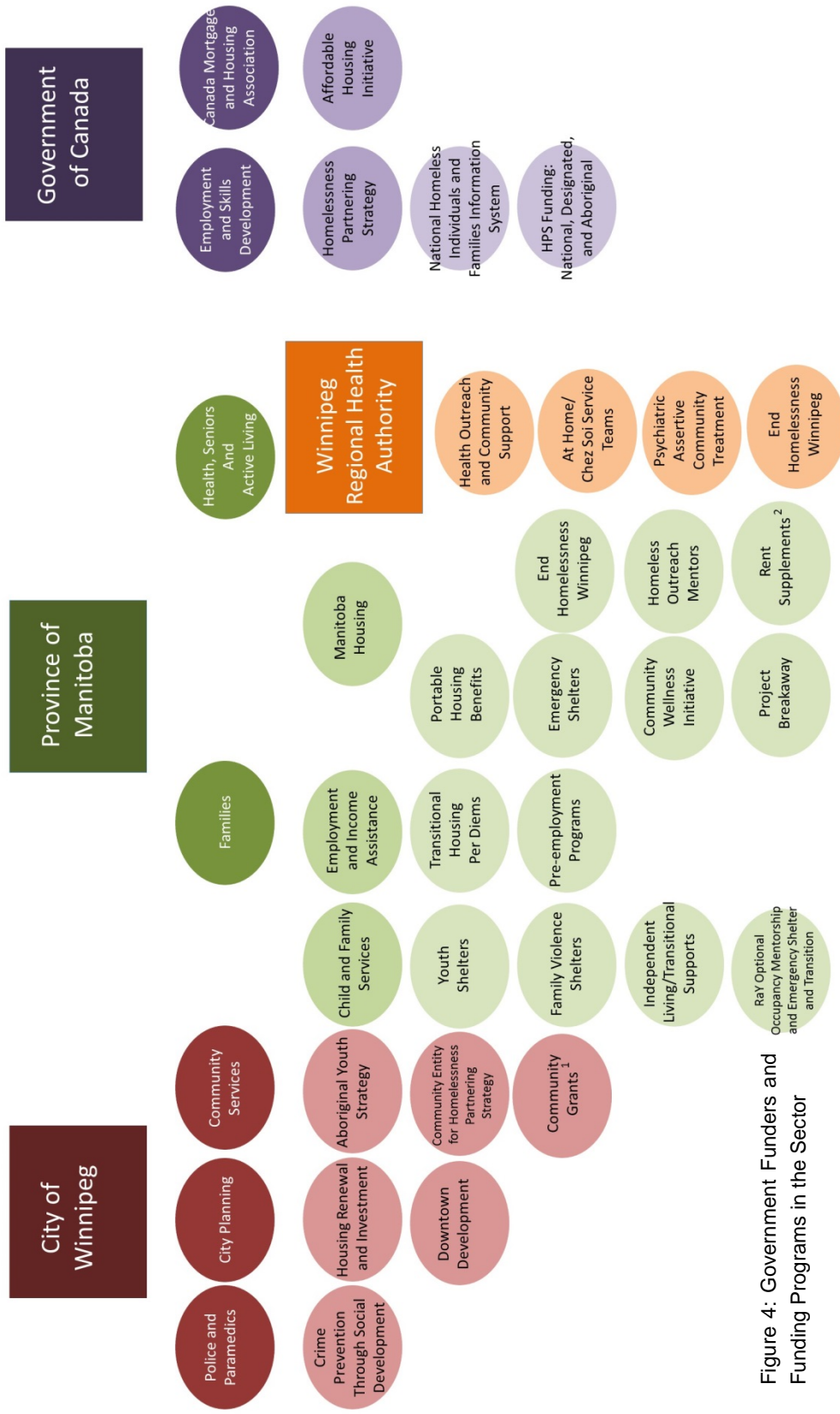


Figure 4: Government Funders and Funding Programs in the Sector

Notes:

- Health, Seniors and Active Living funds addictions treatment and detox programming, including residential care and second stage recovery. Many participants of these programs experience, or are at high risk of experiencing, homelessness
- MB Justice and Federal Corrections fund some second stage housing and transitional supports which also serve many participants who experience, or are at high risk of experiencing, homelessness
- Neighbourhoods Alive, through Indigenous and Municipal Relations, has funded a number of housing and employment related programs
- Community grants include: the Downtown BIZ Community Homelessness Assistance Team; Main Street Project Emergency Shelter; and End Homelessness Winnipeg
- Rent Supplements include rent subsidies and building services for At Home/Chez Soi participants

Policy and Funding Frameworks

Homelessness is often described as a fusion policy issue because there is no one department, agency, or body that is solely responsible for addressing it. The people who most frequently fall through the cracks or experience barriers to accessing supports from most mainstream social service systems (health and mental health, housing, education, income and employment supports, and child protection) are also the people who most frequently experience homelessness. This is why coordination related to preventing, reducing, and ending homelessness can be so complex. For the purposes of this project, only the policy and funding bodies that are most closely connected with homelessness responses are discussed.

Roles

With the creation of Winnipeg's Plan to End Homelessness and a shift towards a Housing First framework, the roles of different stakeholders in the homelessness sector have also shifted, with the lines of responsibility often blurring as service providers and system-level organizations work together differently. These are positive changes because it means more shared responsibilities towards addressing homelessness. But shifting and unclear roles come with their own challenges, often due to unstated expectations that arise around misunderstandings, communication, and accountability. As one participant commented,

"Everyone's trying to figure out roles and responsibilities. I think which is why you see that invitation to come and sit on our committee so that there's some effort to say that there's some understanding or that we can better align if you all know each other's doing."

Manitoba Housing

Manitoba Housing is the lead department within the Manitoba Government regarding homelessness. Within the newly amalgamated Department of Families, Housing has led coordination discussions with the EIA and CFS Divisions. Homelessness efforts of the province were previously coordinated under the Cross Departmental Coordination Initiative (CDCI), which, in 2009, linked Manitoba Health, Manitoba Housing and EIA in the development of a provincial homelessness strategy and led to the development of most of the homelessness funding streams and programs that exist today. It should be noted that this strategy was not a strategy to end homelessness but rather a reconfiguration of existing policies and services and minor increases in funding to address homelessness. Manitoba Housing currently provides funding of \$5,094,000 annually to a range of community organizations and initiatives that are working to address homelessness throughout the province. This funding includes support for the development of EHW as a community entity to lead in the coordination of community efforts to address homelessness. When the federal At Home / Chez Soi research project ended in 2014, the Province assumed responsibility for the program's participants to prevent them from declining back into homelessness. The Province mirrored At Home/Chez Soi by providing funds from Manitoba Health through the WRHA for three HF service teams, and Manitoba Housing providing funding for rent supplements and

HF Building Services. Part of its funding and participation in the development of EHW was for the purposes of formalizing ongoing inter-sectoral coordination. The Manitoba Government has engaged in a provincial consultation process to inform the development of a new Provincial Housing Strategy that will inform policies and programs to address homelessness and the housing needs of Manitobans.

The Winnipeg Regional Health Authority

The WRHA's responsibilities related to homelessness are led by its Housing, Supports, and Service Integration (HSSI) group. HSSI develops housing and supports partnerships, develops operational frameworks and recommendations, manages contracts with community-based service providers, and manages the Health Outreach and Community Support (HOCS) team. WRHA (through funding from Manitoba Health) coordinates and resources the service teams of the former At Home/Chez Soi (AH/CS) project, as well as the Canadian Mental Health Association's Community Housing with Supports program and a number of Main Street Project's programs. Decisions regarding this funding, both in terms of the amount and service priorities, were made at the Provincial level. WRHA has flexibility when it comes to administration and reporting requirements for the services it funds, and generally develops these in partnership with community-based service providers when possible.

The Homelessness Partnering Strategy

The Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) is a national funding program, first initiated in 1999 under the umbrella of the National Homelessness Initiative. While there have been various decision-making and funding structures and funding priorities over time, a transition to the current structure with a community delivery agent (Community Entity) began in Winnipeg in 2012 with a call for proposals. In 2014, the HPS was renewed for five years with a focus on Housing First. Service Canada's role in HPS is to monitor and support the CE, determine HPS priorities and eligibility, approve the Community Plan, and establish the Community Advisory Board (CAB) through a selection process. As a national partnership, these roles are well-defined and relatively rigid. From 2014-19, HPS provides \$5.7m each year from 2014-19 to Winnipeg; \$3.5m for Designated Communities and \$2.2m for Aboriginal Homelessness. A Community Plan guides broad priorities for this funding, with 65% of Designated and 40% of Aboriginal funding focused on HF, and the remaining dollars somewhat more flexible to fund support services, capital investments, coordination and leveraging, and data collection and use. The term Community Plan can be misleading as it is, in fact, a HPS Plan based on a federally developed template, but is developed with some input from community stakeholders. An additional \$6.2m of funding was allocated for 2016-18, \$2.2m/year for Aboriginal Homelessness and \$0.9m/year for Designated Communities.

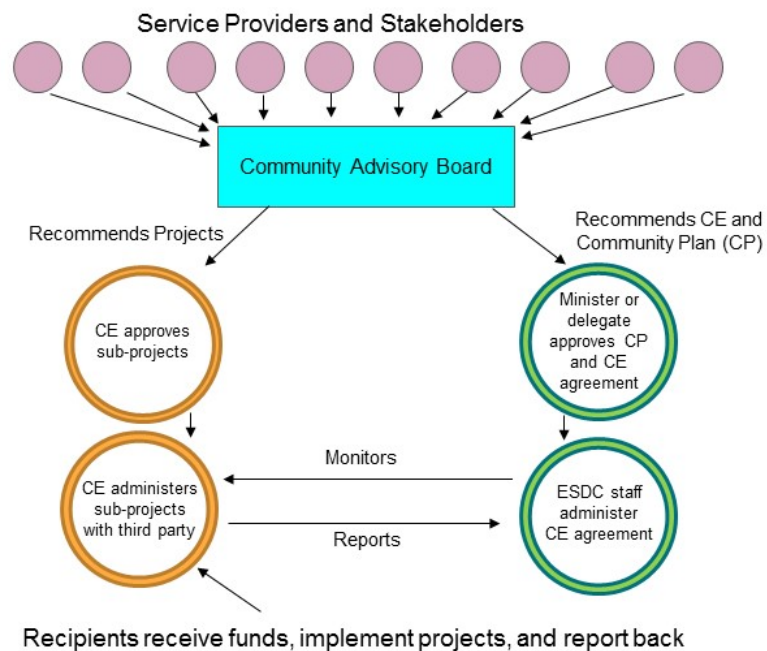


Figure 5: Homelessness Partnering Strategy Community Entity Delivery Model

The Community Entity

Community Entities vary across Canada but have common roles and responsibilities with respect to the administration of HPS funding. The City of Winnipeg is the CE for Aboriginal and Designated funding in Winnipeg. The role of the CE and how it should be performed was the subject of debate in both the discussion groups and the interviews with community, service providers and other key stakeholders. The varying and sometimes contradictory perspectives on the CE that emerged in these discussions and interviews are presented below. (See Appendix 2 for the CE’s role and responsibilities as detailed in their Contribution Agreement with Canada.)

The CE as an administrator: Some have argued that the CE should simply administer funds and nothing more. This role requires that the CE provide information on what is eligible, meet its minimum requirements related to the HPS Community Plan, and allow the community to develop and implement their own more specific plans, programs, and priorities to address homelessness. A number of stakeholders argued that, within this limited administrative role, the CE could progress. For example, the CE is reluctant to provide information and analysis regarding proponents or projects to the CAB, even though this would assist the CAB in making informed recommendations for funding. Information and analysis could include greater accountability frameworks to ensure HF projects are meeting fidelity standards, or supporting greater use of and sharing results from program evaluations. It was suggested

that CE staff see analysis as a violation of their ‘objective’ role. However, in the case study communities, organizations that act as the CE saw this analysis and information as a critical administrative role and central to their ability to also provide leadership. The CE’s role in this is defined in its agreement with HPS, “*The CE is responsible for providing support and guidance to the CAB regarding program delivery and administration and assisting to establish the terms of reference for the project selection and recommendation processes*” (see Appendix 2). Additionally, some discussion group participants suggested that the CE could use this administrative role to support them more effectively by, for example, finding ways to reduce their own or the Federal Government’s administrative burdens. This would allow community-based organizations to focus on, and be more successful at, providing services to people experiencing homelessness.

The CE as a leader: The agreement between the CE and HPS states that the CE should take the lead in HF implementation. There are varied perspectives on what leadership entails, including how the numerous players (the City of Winnipeg, the Province, EHW, and community-based organizations) might provide leadership. While the CE leads in HPS funding, it does not have authority over policy or other funding required to address homelessness holistically. Most people agreed that the CE is just one of many leaders in the sector.

The CE as a coordinating body: A number of stakeholders suggested that the leadership described above is related more to coordination than to a classic definition of centralized or top-down leadership. This includes many activities that the CE has undertaken, such as participating in discussions with the Province regarding rent supplements and EIA policies related to HF participants, participating in a number of EHW’s working groups, and participating in meetings with Doorways and all HF proponents. At the discussion groups, it seemed that many service providers were unaware of the CE’s work in lobbying and advocating to levels of government based on feedback it receives from agencies. It was recommended that the CE increase its roles in leadership and coordination by bringing all stakeholders in the sector together to discuss and address issues or challenges specifically related to HPS funding or HF implementation. There is, however, conflict in the dual roles of funder and coordinating body, in part because the CE’s primary accountability is to their agreement with HPS, and in part because of the power dynamics involved. Community-based agencies may be less inclined to express their challenges out of fear of losing funding.

The Community Advisory Board

According to its Terms of Reference, the CAB is an ad-hoc committee, selected by a committee struck by Service Canada to advise on the delivery of HPS, including making recommendations on the projects to fund, recommending the Community Plan and yearly Community Plan Updates, and recommending the host agency of the CE. It is also meant to assist in planning for homelessness strategies. Many

stakeholders argued that the CAB's roles extend beyond these Terms of Reference to include the following:

The CAB as persons with relevant expertise: The Terms of Reference and Service Canada's selection process is designed around CAB as a body consisting of subject matter experts. Participants are chosen based on their individual experience and knowledge, and the membership group as a whole is designed to include a range of perspectives and knowledge on particular fields of importance (e.g. health care, community services, housing and social housing, and lived experience of homelessness).

The CAB as a cross-sectoral table: CAB's membership includes 10 non-designated members, who are seen to be 'community representatives' and 8 designated members, who are non-voting but represent other key stakeholders in the homelessness sector including the WRHA, Manitoba Housing, the Government of Canada (Service Canada), the City of Winnipeg, and EHW. It was suggested that the makeup of this group provides an opportunity to coordinate and align HPS funding with the priorities of other funders and the community. It should be noted, however, that the impetus for this project was CAB's struggle to ensure this alignment. There is clearly a need for process or structural changes if CAB determines that it will, indeed, play a role in cross-sectoral alignment.

The CAB as representatives of community: Some stakeholders argued that the CAB's primary role should be to represent the community. They suggested CAB should understand the issues, concerns, and priorities of the community and advocate on community's behalf. Some were concerned that CAB members were involved out of self or organizational interest, and for that reason were not communicating information about HPS funding, calls for proposals, and structures back to the community. Others noted that CAB does not have processes or resources in place to share information to the extent required to be effective representatives. As demonstrated in the discussion groups, there are many misperceptions and a lack of information about CAB's roles, composition, and processes. If CAB members are to be representatives of a community, there are questions that need to be discussed regarding accountability mechanisms, community choice in the selection process, and the ability of CAB members to share information back to those they are meant to represent.

End Homelessness Winnipeg

End Homelessness Winnipeg was formed to provide backbone organizational support to the implementation of the Winnipeg Plan to End Homelessness. Its roles include:

- ❖ Convene stakeholders to create strategic plans
- ❖ Set priorities and guide implementation of the ten year plan
- ❖ Broker stakeholder relationships and coordinate their collaborative efforts
- ❖ Monitor progress and adjust accordingly

- ❖ Build public support for ending homelessness
- ❖ Secure new funding and raise new money to sustain emerging and priority needs
- ❖ Receive, approve, and allocate funding in areas that require alignment and integration
- ❖ Evaluate and report publicly on progress
- ❖ Facilitate community engagement in emerging issues and collective impact approaches

The role of EHW within the HPS funding program of Winnipeg has been evolving as EHW has developed, but from the mixed messages received from the diversity of stakeholders interviewed, it is clear that EHW's role has been neither well defined nor well communicated. Currently, EHW's only formal role is as an ex-officio member of CAB. In practice, however, the CAB and CE have agreed that they would like to align with the Plan to End Homelessness and are looking to EHW to provide guidance on how to do this. As EHW develops, it will need to balance competing expectations regarding its roles and responsibilities from funders, government, its Board, and community stakeholders. As described below, there are very high and occasionally incongruent expectations of EHW.

Some stakeholders have suggested that EHW should be a 'governing body' for the homelessness sector. Currently, it does not have the necessary components (e.g. the ability to hold agencies accountable) to become a 'governing body' for homelessness in Winnipeg. Others have suggested that EHW's role could be to establish and facilitate this body.

Since the initial discussions leading up to the formation of EHW, there have been competing assumptions regarding its involvement with the HPS program. A number of stakeholders, including representatives from the province and a number of leaders from community-based organizations believe that EHW should take on the role and responsibilities of the CE. Other stakeholders were not clear on whether this is the long-term goal. A number of people in the community questioned whether EHW is structured appropriately to play this role. Lack of clarity in the community, even among the CAB and CE regarding EHW's current and future role has caused misconceptions, occasional tensions, and a 'wait and see' approach to dealing with issues or making changes to the role and work of the CE. It has also led to:

- ❖ **Unclear lines of accountability;** for example, some organizations are under the impression that they are accountable to EHW rather than their funder.
- ❖ **General confusion in the sector;** for example, many stakeholders told us they are not always sure who is setting the agenda or responsible for the actions stemming from the various coordination meetings they attend.

EHW does not currently have the structure, staffing, budget, administrative capacity, or mandate to assume the CE role. Taking on this role would require (as it has with the City of Winnipeg) a significant development and learning curve for the organization. Regardless, there is clearly a need and desire

among CAB and CE for the HPS funding to align with the broader Plan to End Homelessness in Winnipeg. While this report offers some suggestions for how this can happen, it will require an ongoing process and agreement between bodies related to their roles, responsibilities, and priorities for action.

System Coordinators

Two of the major ‘system coordination’ functions; Doorways and Housing Plus are described below. They both play a significant role in supporting the homelessness system in Winnipeg. Concerns were raised throughout this project about these centralized resources’ abilities to support service agencies across the homelessness sector, regardless of their funding source. For example, Project Breakaway of Main Street Project or Community Housing and Supports through Canadian Mental Health Association provide HF services, but are not funded by HPS. Additionally, there are other Housing and Supports programs (such as Homeless Outreach Mentors funded by Manitoba Housing or WRHA’s Psychiatric Assertive Community Treatment teams (PACTs)) that could benefit from the services of Doorways or Housing Plus. However, the programs are limited due to funding, capacity, or scope.

Doorways

Doorways is a collaborative initiative led by a growing number of HF providers that provides centralized intake and referral to decentralized supports and services, including HF programs. Doorways is structured with a Steering Committee of representatives from HPS funded HF agencies plus the Canadian Mental Health Association’s Housing with Supports program, who provide oversight and make decisions regarding the collaborative project. Core components of the Doorways model are access, assessment, assignment and assistance.

- ❖ **Access:** Any person can access Doorways through “door” agencies (participating shelters and agencies) or the Doorways Hub (a walk-in centre located at the Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre of Winnipeg).
- ❖ **Assess:** A two-tiered screening and assessment process is in place to gather information about the person’s housing and other needs. After the intake survey (the VI-SPDAT), participants who meet the criteria for housing with supports programs, like HF, are invited to participate in a more in-depth assessment (the SPDAT).
- ❖ **Assign:** Those with lower acuity are referred to early intervention and support services that meet their level of need. Those with higher acuity who have completed the full assessment will be placed in a housing-with-supports program, like HF, or referred to other housing programs and services that better suit their needs. This process helps ensure that the right individuals are connected with the right resources.
- ❖ **Assist:** Any person can access the Doorways Hub for information or help navigating the system, for an intake survey, and for a referral to the right programs and services.

The discussion groups raised concerns and misunderstandings related to the Doorways' roles. At the time data was gathered for this project, Doorways had completed an external evaluation and was in the process of addressing some of these concerns and developing a proposal for ongoing operations. Some of these concerns will be easier to resolve than others, as some fall outside of the scope of Doorways.

Doorways as an access hub: Doorways' vision, developed by an Advisory Committee in the pilot project stage, included providing anyone experiencing homelessness access to any services they needed. However, their initial focus has been to provide HF eligible participants with access to HF services. This means that those who are not eligible for HF services either because of HPS definitions (i.e. they are not experiencing chronic or episodic homelessness) or because of the acuity of their homelessness (i.e. it is too high or too low) are referred to services that meet their level of need. This may be a referral back to the agency that had referred them to Doorways in the first place. As discussed in the Gaps in Service section, an effective diversion strategy is essential to a HF system, and Doorways will struggle with this role until such a strategy with additional services are in place.

Doorways as a coordinator of HF programs: Doorways' vision also included shared accountability mechanisms for HF agencies so that when participants are placed in a HF program, there is reasonable trust that the participant will receive the level of support indicated to them (fidelity to the HF model). In practice, Doorways has limited ability to hold HF agencies accountable and a limited governance framework for Doorways as a shared community program. The CE can play a supportive role when it comes to defining the standards expected of HF programs and assisting with shared accountability.

The Winnipeg Rental Network

The Winnipeg Rental Network (WRN) is a collaborative initiative of non-profit agencies that provide support to low-income people to find and maintain housing. It has a significant role in coordination in the homelessness sector because of its focus on eviction prevention and its HPS funded Housing Plus program. The primary function of the Housing Plus program is to locate landlords who are willing to work with HF participants and to provide further supports to landlords and HPS funded HF program staff to keep tenancies intact. In addition to centralized procurement, Housing Plus also coordinates repairs, relocations, cleaning, storage, key cutting and emergency utility payments. A contingency fund for these services has been put in place to either prevent an eviction or to help maintain the relationship with the landlord. Housing Plus is staffed by a full-time Program Lead and a part-time assistant.

The program holds regular meetings with frontline HF program staff, who provide feedback and input to improve its services. Additionally, WRN participates in the Doorways/HPS meeting to coordinate with HF program managers.

WRN is also coordinating the adaptation of a national rental preparedness program called Ready to Rent. WRN will be examining adaptation needs for special populations regarding rental preparedness. This program was suggested by a regular community of practice meeting the WRN facilitates with housing support staff from various agencies.

Areas for Communication and Clarification

- ❖ Some service providers have suggested that not all Housing First clients in HPS funded programs have access to the services provided by Housing Plus including housing procurement, and damage repairs. Others have stated that better options for housing are available online but finding housing this way excludes a client from the other services of Housing Plus. In fact, all HF clients in an HPS funded program have access to Housing Plus. If an organization finds an apartment outside of the Housing Plus procurement, they are simply asked to let Housing Plus know so they can put their procedures in place (such as taking pictures prior to the tenant moving to ensure documentation should damages occur).
- ❖ Additionally, it is important that units found outside of central procurement meet the standards of the province to ensure that they are eligible for rent supplements when the transition takes place. For instance, the province does not allow illegal rooming houses to be paid for with rent supplements, and has minimal quality requirements for other rooming houses.

5. Advancing Coordination

A Shared Understanding

There are significant differences between the processes and outcomes of alignment, coordination, collaboration, and centralization. These different terms must be understood the same way by all stakeholders if we are to have meaningful discussion on the benefits and drawbacks of each approach. For the purposes of this document, they are defined as:

Alignment means that certain aspects of services or funding are designed so there are greater opportunities for coordination or collaboration, but this coordination may or may not actually occur. Alignment is flexible, that is, services can have some features which are compatible (e.g. hours of operation, outcome measurements, principles of service provision), but still be completely independent.

Collaboration is a voluntary and cooperative agreement and sharing of resources, principles of operation, information, and/or responsibilities. Community-based organization stakeholders emphasized that collaboration must be based on equitable partnerships, trust and relationships, and participants generally preferred it over centralization.

Centralization was understood by community-based organizations to mean a centralization of decision-making and often a ‘top-down’ model without participant choice. Government stakeholders, however, understood centralization to be an efficient means of developing services that can be utilized by all stakeholders. These two different understandings have led to dissent when there are attempts to coordinate. Therefore, for the purposes of this document, we take the community perspective that centralization is defined by a concentration of decision-making and service provision in one agency or select group.

Coordination is a process of finding / creating alignment, collaboration, or centralization. It can be an ongoing process or a one-time agreement. All stakeholders in the discussion groups raised the need for more frequent, focused, well-facilitated, and outcome-oriented coordination opportunities.

Coordination between levels of government, government departments, funders, community based organizations, and programs will require negotiation of several challenges. First, there is no common agreement regarding what should be coordinated and how. Community-based organizations are strongly opposed to top-down, centralized coordination because they believe it will hamper their ability to provide good services to the people they see. There is also a belief that top-down coordination is ineffective and bureaucratic, and may represent colonizing approaches. Most government stakeholders do not believe in top-down coordination either but see benefits to a certain level of centralization. A lack of similar policy directions from EIA, Justice, Housing, Health, and HPS limit the ability of community

service providers to prevent or respond to homelessness. For example, the sudden loss of income for someone on EIA, sometimes due to incarceration, means people lose good housing and HF workers need to start over in their support plans.

There was agreement that the main challenge to coordination is the lack of organized and understood structure for it to take place. Miscommunications and misunderstandings are often the result. Coordination across the homeless sector has been evolving as EHW has established itself over time. The map on the following page represents the current structure, as of writing. The squares on the coordination map represent organizations or formal bodies; while the ovals represent committees or regular meeting groups (some may not meet regularly, but formally exist). Winnipeg has a culture of community-based organizing and there are other regular networks or groups meeting either for specific projects (e.g. research advisory groups and other sector networks such as the Gang Action Interagency Network) that are not included on this map.

Throughout this project, a number of challenges and gaps in coordination were raised:

- ❖ Misunderstandings related to coordination terminology and processes between stakeholders. There is not common understanding regarding the terms alignment, coordination, collaboration, and centralization
- ❖ Lack of a community driven ‘vision’ for the future and common understanding of how the sector should evolve
- ❖ Unclear roles and purposes related to coordination (who is doing what and what we are trying to achieve together)
- ❖ Lack of formal coordination and communication mechanisms between funders, government agencies, and community-based organizations. Where mechanisms exist they are exclusive (e.g. coordination based on funding source or HF designation)
- ❖ The CFP process of HPS limits coordination, creates a culture of competition, and is not well-suited to developing the holistic ‘system of care’ proposed in the Plan to End Homelessness
- ❖ Limited tools to assess coordination between agencies regarding funding criteria, proposals, and outcome evaluation, particularly when it comes to shared services. For instance, outcome reporting does not require demonstration of successful partnership activity; and evaluation of coordinated proposals does not consider whether the partnership is based on a solid foundation such as shared resources or demonstrated history of working together.

The above suggests that there are varying levels of coordination required to address homelessness in Winnipeg. These include a governance structure whereby there are clear decision-making processes and shared accountability, a planning body, a common funders’ table, and the creation of a community of practice among direct service workers (frontline staff).

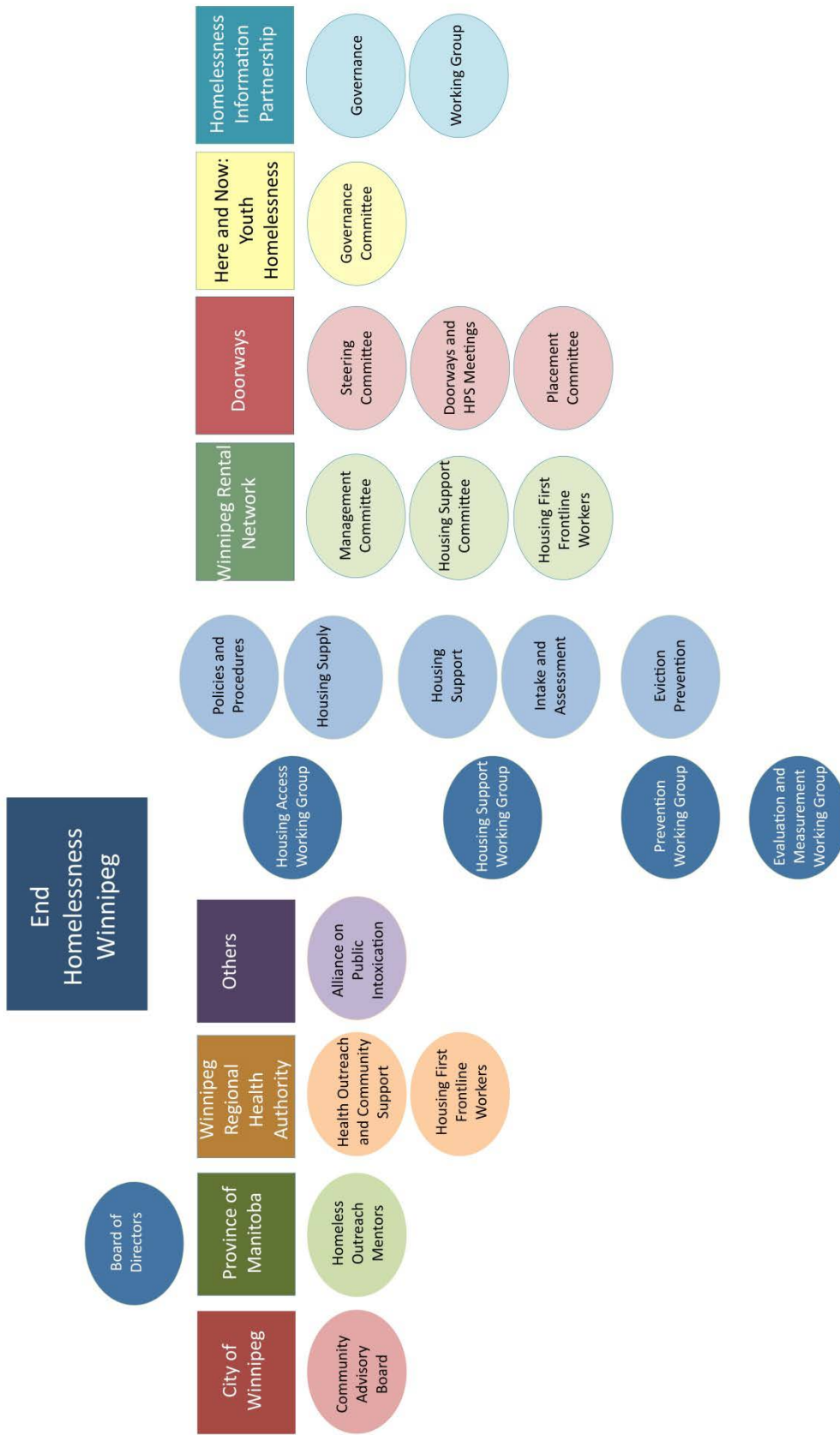


Figure 6: System Map of Homelessness Coordination Activities

“If we had a strong governance model that people believed in... and there’s common vision. And that’s part of the goal of this plan [to end homelessness], is to say ‘that’s what I’m buying into,’ [and] should lead to a governance structure that’s representative. It has to be a bit of an evolved kind of governance team that...can’t just be operational; it’s got to be strategic.”

Though the structure and roles will need to be defined and likely negotiated amongst all stakeholders, there was generally agreement with the idea of EHW creating and facilitating a governance structure that would support stakeholders to collaboratively identify and act on coordination opportunities. The CAB and CE will need to participate in this structure, but it is outside the scope of this report to further define what it might be. The highest impact coordination opportunities specifically and primarily in the mandate of the CAB and CE relate to administration.

Administration Challenges and Opportunities

There is a set of identified challenges that may be grouped together as Administration Challenges. These focus on three areas: lack of detailed and ongoing planning, problems with the Call-for-Proposal (CFP) process, and challenges with financial and outcome reporting.

Lack of Detailed and Ongoing Planning

The lack of planning as a sector was repeatedly remarked upon by many stakeholders. This included gaps in consistent, ongoing, and inclusive mechanisms:

- ❖ to identify and address apparent gaps in the current system
- ❖ to set priorities for funding and action for each year
- ❖ to align, leverage, and coordinate multiple funding sources
- ❖ to clarify roles and share leadership within the sector
- ❖ to reduce multiple overlapping and redundant meetings
- ❖ to address conflicting agendas by multiple players/stakeholders/organizations
- ❖ to share knowledge of the overall system and programs available
- ❖ to align the HPS Community Plan, the Winnipeg Plan to End Youth Homelessness, and Winnipeg’s 10-year Plan to End Homelessness

It is important to note that none of these planning gaps are the responsibility of a single body. While most agencies/organizations do their own internal coordination or work with a limited set of partners, the lack of comprehensive and ongoing coordination structures is apparent. This has resulted in “a bunch of random programs” as one stakeholder described it, instead of a complete system of care. Many spoke of preferring the previous organizational structures in Winnipeg’s homeless sector, such as the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI), At Home/Chez Soi, or the Cross-

Departmental Coordination Initiative. Many, however, had also been critical of those structures when they existed. While nearly everyone noted the lack of planning, we also clearly heard strong resistance to any suggestion of ‘centralization’ in a governance structure. A tension exists between leaders in the sector who say they want to collaborate but also want to be left alone to do their work as independent organizations. Collaboration will require some give and take. Centralization, though, is seen as mandated collaboration without any negotiation or assurance that agencies will continue to be able to work towards the best interests of the clients they serve.

The tension inherent between these two views—the broad recognition of the need for better coordination in the sector, and the resistance to any organizational/governance structure—forms the primary challenge to coordination of Winnipeg’s homeless sector. Sometimes, resistance to/critiques of governance and organizational structures come from frustration with previous (and current) negative experiences and may contain essential wisdom and opportunities to improve. However, resistance may also be preventing forward movement as a sector. Community-based organizations at the discussion groups strongly supported ongoing and inclusive communication and debate, recognizing that it can be difficult but that contention is part of the process.

Call-for-Proposal (CFP) Process

The CFP process in use for the Winnipeg HPS funding has been almost universally identified by stakeholders as problematic for advancing coordination. Many problems were identified. CFPs contribute to increased competition amongst service providers and exacerbate existing silos in the system. Many service organizations feel that CFPs are cost-based competition where the lowest bid wins. As a result, organizations often try to bring down proposed project costs by either:

- ❖ Maintaining lower staff wages (so the CFP process may be contributing to high staff turnover in the sector); or,
- ❖ Providing administrative resources ‘in-kind’ (stretching limited resources thin and making the organization less sustainable).

The perception of the CFP process as a cost-based competition (as well as burdensome reporting, discussed below) may also suppress the number of proposals submitted. Over the last two years, the Winnipeg CE has had to carry funding over due to lack of proposals and to significant slippage from those proposals that were funded. There has been enough money to fund the majority of HF applicants, and there are frequently additional CFPs for Indigenous-led organizations. Further, HPS and the CE feel that they have made it clear that they pay the wage-rates as asked for by the service agencies (as long as they fall within industry standards). There is no need for service agencies to maintain lower wages to underbid for perceived competitive contracts, an issue that needs to be addressed by the CE.

Area for Clarification and Communication:

- ❖ Not all service providers know what they can apply for. This includes both the types of programs that might receive funding as well as all the types of costs that are eligible costs within a proposal. When expenditures come up that organizations do not know might be covered by HPS funding organizations are forced to use funds from other areas or go into deficit. To be clear, the required Budget Detail Template is very detailed and lists all costs that are eligible including staff development, training, and travel. Further, the CE reviews the Budget template during CFP info session. However, it is also clear that some service providers are struggling to fully account for all expenses.
- ❖ Good organizational and program planning, combined with better information, could assist organizations in properly budgeting for their projects. Two problems were raised by service providers: 1) it is impossible for organizations to predict all future expenses; and 2) the financial reporting burden associated with including the 'real cost' of the program is so great that agencies are choosing to simplify applications in order to reduce administrative costs. Some service providers also do not seem aware that eligible expenses not identified in their current budgets, can be claimed providing that there are funds available.

The siloed nature of the Winnipeg homeless sector and how the CFP process used by the CE reinforces this problem were remarked upon repeatedly. Criteria for proposal review includes consideration of appropriate partnerships with other organizations, but the currently required 'letters of partnership' (and previous 'letters of support') are seen as ineffective evidence that the partnership they describe is actually occurring. In some instances, organizations do not truly collaborate or share resources or clients or the partnership is not later reported on or required once funding is confirmed. In this way, along with the competitive nature of the process, CFPs contribute to perpetuating silos within Winnipeg's homeless serving system.

The current CFP process also does not lend itself for clearly 'targeted (needed) programs' to be funded. Rather, the calls are for general proposals that fit within the HPS eligibility. Funding goes to those who apply and have a viable proposal, regardless of what is offered or where gaps exist in the system. The process is meant to enable innovations and expertise in program development to come from the community rather than a funder, but it can result in random and inconsistently operated programs rather than a coordinated and complete system of care. Recommendations offered below are meant to achieve a balance between targeting projects and services based on the population and solid sector analysis, and, at the same time, allow service providers to determine the best response based on their years of experience and knowledge.

The process by which CFPs are released and proposals judged is also problematic due to the CAB make-up, the capacity required to respond, and timing. Service organizations who have staff members sitting on CAB have significant advantages in the CFP process. They know in advance when a CFP will be released and, more importantly, are familiar with the process and the criteria by which proposals are judged. The CAB Selection Committee is mindful of the perceived and potential conflict of interests when selecting new CAB members and strives to reach a balance between members with the knowledge and experience of issues required, with members working for organizations with projects. The majority of organizations that often get funded do not have representatives sitting on CAB.

Several stakeholders observed that the process favours larger organizations that have the capacity and resources to undertake proposal writing, or those who have received funding previously. Small organizations without those advantages are easily excluded, in spite of the fact that many small organizations are successful and efficient when working with the homeless, sometimes more-so than larger organizations. Indigenous organizations in particular tend to have shorter organizational histories, lack a donor base, rarely have core funding, and yet may bear the challenge of supporting the larger portion of the homeless population (71.1% of the overall population and 84.0% of youth identified as Indigenous), many of whom have experienced direct and intergenerational abuse and trauma. While the CAB, CE, and HPS make significant efforts to fairly and transparently address conflicts of interest, additional process changes could make the overall process more equitable. The timing of the CFPs (which is driven, in part, by Federal budgetary processes, as is true of any national funding stream) has also been critiqued by service providers. Most stakeholders agreed that short timeframes for CFPs reduce the ability to coordinate as a sector or partner appropriately, which furthers the need for detailed and ongoing planning in advance of funding cycles.

Another problem with the CE's CFP process as currently managed is that the review process is binary — either accept or reject. The current process as led by the CE does not support the development of submissions that have potential to address homeless but require further development. In other jurisdictions, however, the CE and CAB approve submissions in principal and then work with proponents to develop proposals. In Winnipeg, there is currently no opportunity for the CAB or CE to recognize the potential of a proposal that may be promising in intent but otherwise weak, and have a fair process to go back to applicants and suggest changes to the proposal. Additionally, neither time nor resources are built into the process for the development of proposals or organizations, which, again, provides advantages to the larger and more well-established organizations. Lastly, information about how CFPs are judged is not available. Although selection criteria are published with the CFP, there is less transparency around the selection process, the CAB's role within it, and which projects/organizations end up receiving funding.

Opportunities for the CFP Process

All of these challenges with the CFP process were widely discussed but, beyond minor adjustments, no clear solutions to these challenges were put forward. There are good reasons for the current CFP process: openness, a sense of equal opportunity, and familiarity. However, the CFP process is not the only way to achieve these ends, and other processes exist. If CAB/CE were to consider changing its proposal selection process, it would have the opportunity to adopt a new process that would:

- ❖ Reduce competitiveness inherent in CFP processes
- ❖ Reduce silos in the sector
- ❖ Improve ‘targeting’ of funded services
- ❖ Improve the transparency of the selection process
- ❖ Provide opportunities for development of proposed programs/services and smaller organizations.

Stakeholders have put forward several recommendations about how might this be carried out. In the short term, the CE should:

- ❖ Hold **targeted outreach information sessions** for **all agencies** interested in providing services in Winnipeg’s homeless sector. This would be a way to communicate to current service providers, and should also be outreach to service providers currently not funded through HPS. These sessions should be **separate from information sessions** provided during current CFP process, and **separate from the monthly Doorways Steering Committee meeting**. The intent of these information sessions is to address larger issues of accessing HPS funding and policy knowledge. The information sessions should increase knowledge about HPS and CE processes, and efforts must be made to bring service providers to these sessions. Information sessions should clearly explain how HPS funding works, what activities are eligible for funding, HPS/CE funding policies, and what can and should be included in costing in proposals (e.g. adequate amounts for administration, and living wages for staff). Common challenges and misunderstandings should also be addressed in the information session, and information sessions should be sufficiently in advance of funding cycles to allow proponents to improve proposal and program planning.
- ❖ Work with CAB to increase the value placed on partnerships in their assessment of proposals. Instead of requiring just a ‘letter of partnership,’ require evidence of collaboration or sharing of resources when appropriate. When partnerships could improve the project, work with proponents to support partnership development. This may require additional resources, including staff time, evaluation tools, and facilitation of discussions/agreements. Despite the challenges, this is an opportunity for CAB/CE to strengthen partnerships among organizations and undertake community capacity development around partnerships.
- ❖ Publish the selection criteria for proposals online, as well as all policies regarding HPS funding. Common challenges and misunderstandings should also be addressed in the available materials, e.g. FAQs, or weekly or monthly “funding tips.” Most service providers are overwhelmed with

the workload and during proposal/funding agreement time, cannot absorb all the information provided to them.

- ❖ Undertake an analysis of the proposals and submit written recommendations to CAB as part of its role in funding administration. The analysis and recommendations may consider the history of the organization (fidelity, outcomes, and reporting), their capacity to deliver, ability to meet community need, capacity to execute and administer, and realistic sustainability if HPS funding should be reduced. This activity must be done in tandem with a process to develop and strengthen the capacity of smaller or less experienced organizations.
- ❖ Develop an open and transparent process by which weaker proposals can be developed. This could also be addressed through a small capacity development fund that provides organizations with supports to strengthen their proposals.
- ❖ Target gaps in the system through targeted calls for proposals (with the advice of a Planning and Coordination table, discussed later in the report).

Over the medium term, the CE, with the support and advice of CAB, should consider moving away from the CFP process due to its inherent problems and likely incompatibility with a coherent, coordinated, and complete system of care. One alternative suggested is *Qualification Based Selection*. In this process, applicants would submit their Qualifications rather than specifics about a proposed program or service. Qualifications might include the history of an organization, experience working in the homeless sector, experience with HF, history of successful outcomes, history of completed reporting, experience meeting the community's needs, etc. All organizations that complete/pass through the selection process would then be funded. Ideally, all qualified organizations would meet with the CE and collaboratively determine which organization would serve particular populations based on their existing target populations and skill sets. Emphasis might be given to experts in certain areas. Selection would also mean accepting terms and conditions of service delivery, which might include collaboration processes and partnerships with others. This would help ensure full participation – not just in operations, but in the system. Organizations may have to submit updated qualifications on a regular basis (e.g., every two years), but a *Qualification Based Selection* might allow for more stable and long-term funding for organizations. It might also be considered an intermediary step towards greater coordination and collaboration in the sector, without raising the specter of a centralized system. This type of process would require significant up-front planning and coordination to determine the service needs, target populations, and create some agreement on HF services: participant to staff ratio, costs, outcome criteria, etc. Processes similar to *Qualification Based Selection* are used by *Citizen and Immigration Canada*, and *Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada*. Additional alternate processes as used in Edmonton and Waterloo Region are included in Appendix 1.

Reporting Problems

Service providers offered strong criticism of the administrative burden attached to HPS funding. Differences between service providers' and the CE's perspectives on administrative responsibilities are an additional source of tension. The administrative burden comes from two separate reporting streams: reporting on outcomes (indicators), and financial reporting. Both reporting streams go to the CE where they are compiled and then forwarded to HPS. Service providers in the discussion groups argued that the reporting problems are not simply minor paperwork issues, but rather a sign of an unbalanced relationship between HPS/CE and service providers, and a significant barrier to trust and partnership. These reporting problems must be considered in the broad context of reconciliation and equity. Indigenous organizations expressed frustration with HPS funding and noted they may not be applying for this funding stream because it creates additional burdens on the capacity of their organization. It seems disingenuous to commit to reconciliation but continue to administer funding without committing to a partnership-based relationship. Administrative challenges disproportionately impact both Indigenous organizations and smaller, more community-based organizations (which includes most Indigenous organizations). Dealing with these challenges saps energy and reduces trust for the more critical work of creating a holistic system of care that can end homelessness in Winnipeg.

Program Reporting and Indicators:

Reporting on outcomes and the use of HPS defined indicators are seen by the community as somewhat burdensome. However, service organizations also seem to have some misunderstandings about the use of indicators (including how those indicators are used by HPS), which results in a lost opportunity to use these indicators to inform planning and coordination. This suggests there may be problems inherent in the indicators themselves.

Some service providers expressed resistance to the idea of using indicators at all and, more generally, to using HPS indicators to 'measure people, program outcomes, or value for money'. Some feel such measures are inherently offensive, do not match the ethics of organizations with a mandate of helping anyone who comes in the door, and represent an administrative, Western worldview. These represent legitimate critiques of the use of indicators in social programming. However, **service organizations need to be aware that all funders are moving towards indicator-based and results-based systems that demonstrate accountability for public funds.** At the same time, it seems service providers do not value the indicators outside of the context of required reporting to funders. Indicators can be valuable for internal program improvements; appropriate measurement and monitoring of programs can ensure that they are generating positive outcomes and achieving or making progress towards their intended objectives and purpose.

There seems to be a lack of broad awareness in Winnipeg's homeless sector on what the indicators are for, and how they are used by HPS. Service Canada has held training sessions called 'Orientation to

Results Reporting Online’, and additional sessions are planned. These are open to service providers, but have been poorly attended to date. These sessions are critical for increasing knowledge about the utility of reporting and efforts must be made to bring service providers to these sessions.

Our understanding is that reports on outcomes made to the CE are compiled and sent to HPS through Service Canada. HPS staff use these reports to demonstrate program effectiveness and advocate for ongoing funding. HPS has to show the Treasury Board of the Government of Canada this data in order to justify ongoing funding for these programs. It may be useful to communicate to the service providers that, without this reporting on indicators, HPS funding would be threatened.

Additionally, HPS/Treasury Board is reviewing rolled up data for the entire country, and is unable to utilize individual stories or successes. This is HPS relies on quantitative data, that is, the number of people successfully housed, successfully increasing income, successfully returning to school, or successfully volunteering, in its advocacy for continued funding from the Treasury Board. For individual stories, HPS has developed a “success story bank”, and requests success stories from the CE periodically. This ‘story bank’ has so-far focused on the success of projects, but is now also moving to a focus on individuals’ stories of success. These individual stories of other kinds of success are important. They are valuable, especially locally, to track success of more intangible/qualitative things such as ‘increased self-esteem’ or ‘increased connection to culture’, or ‘reduced chaos’ in a person’s life. If service organizations collect and report on these indicators, the CE has indicated it will accept them as evidence of program success. However, these must be collected in addition to the required HPS indicators, and they will be more challenging to measure or assess than HPS indicators. In the short term, the CE should continue to share information about these indicators, and how to select appropriate indicators at the proposed information session and within future calls for proposals.

There are longer-term options to improve this outcome reporting to both reduce the burden on organizations and collect meaningful, consistent data as a community. The commitment to outcome measurement is also associated with the Housing First Framework’s commitment to Evidence-Informed Decision-making, i.e., monitoring progress to identify what is working or not working. As a community, we are supposed to be using these monthly reports to inform our coordinated response but this has not been the case to date. This need not be complicated: the WRHA, for example, has brought the HF teams it funds together to collectively set a few standard outcome measurements based on what the agencies and the WHRA agree they want to know to measure their success and improve services.

There are also serious challenges with some of the indicators themselves. We heard clearly from organizations providing services, from people experiencing homelessness, and from knowledge gleaned from other jurisdictions, that the most realistic indicators of success for HF programs are ‘housing stability’ and ‘reduced chaos’ in a person’s life. Service providers also indicated they ‘increased

connections to resources' indicates success. The only overlap between HPS' view of indicators for success and that of service organizations is 'housing stability'. Yet, even the HPS tool for measuring housing circumstances at specific intervals of 6/12/24 months, designed to track housing maintenance over time, is not useful at measuring changes in stability (e.g. number of times people are re-housed). This means that significant data that could improve our understanding of service use and needs is not being collected or used. As well, service providers believed the benchmarks assumed by HPS to achieve success on particular indicators are likely unrealistic for this population. The goal of housing stability at 3-6-12-24 month intervals are less useful when it takes two years or more for many people just to stabilize and may take many years for significant community integration. For many of those with deep trauma, addictions, and mental health challenges, there will never be 'graduation' out of HF and into employment. However, regardless of whether they reach these benchmarks, their lives will improve and their need for services will reduce over time. This is a challenge that could be advocated with Service Canada and HPS.

Areas for Increased Communication and Clarification:

- ❖ There has been very little uptake in the use of a HPS-provided spreadsheet tool that tracks all the indicators for a service organization. Organizations have been using their own systems. This may be because organizations had developed their own tools before the HPS tool was developed, but there is potential for the spreadsheet tool to reduce reporting challenges.
- ❖ When submitting a proposal for HPS funding, service providers are asked to select the activities they will be performing. These activities, in turn, are linked to specific indicators on which the program's success will be measured. Some organizations are choosing many or all of the activities listed (likely because they perform many services for their clients), and are thus required to report on all of the related indicators (there are 84 indicators). This becomes burdensome or impossible for these organizations.

Both WRHA and Service Canada indicated that it would be helpful if Winnipeg could start to build 'system indicators' of outcomes such as cost benefits (e.g., reduced hospital admissions). For Winnipeg, this should be considered a long term goal. It should be noted, however, that these types of indicators have been instituted in other jurisdictions such as Regina, which has made significant progress in this regard. When a person who is homeless comes into contact with a service agency or Regina's *Centralized Housing Intake Process* (CHIP), they sign an information sharing waiver that allows the CE to collect data on health system use and justice system use. The collected data does not include any personal information but does include items such as number of hospital visits per year and length of visits. This allows estimation of health system usage or reduction over time, which can demonstrate program effectiveness. Cost-savings should not be seen as the primary indicator of success, and these

indicators should be considered with caution. However, they can provide valuable data to support the case to increase or expand preventative services, and are useful to HPS. Currently, Winnipeg does not have the necessary policies, methodology, or processes in place to do this and most service providers do not have the capacity to collect and provide them. Creating these processes will require the development of significantly expanded partnerships with relevant systems, and appropriate methods, policy, and organizational capacity. Nevertheless, this should be considered a goal for Winnipeg.

Financial Reporting

The burdens associated with financial reporting for the CE/HPS were widely discussed in the community meeting held by EHW and Ma Mawi in July 2016 and were also raised in the discussion groups for this project. For service organizations, the burden lies in the level of detail required in CE/HPS reporting. Many organizations (especially the smaller ones) do not have the internal capacity to effectively manage this burden, which is markedly higher than other funding bodies and higher than the reporting required under HPS agreements prior to 2014. Concerns were raised about the high level of knowledge necessary to complete the reports (relating, for example, to payroll deductions, taxation, EI rates, MERCs, etc.), the lack of budget flexibility once a program has been approved (meaning that every expense associated with a program must be predicted in advance) and the amount of time involved in tracking down small discrepancies, having to justify small expenses, and tracking and managing records and receipts.

It is important to note that the City of Winnipeg took on the role of CE at the time that the Federal government was changing its financial reporting processes across all departments. Budgets for projects became less flexible (i.e. moving dollars from one line or category to another required additional steps), more detailed (e.g. organizations could no longer claim a flat administrative rate as a percentage of the budget), and more stringent (e.g. fewer items were eligible for funding, particularly under HF programming). At the same time, funding to the HPS program as a whole was reduced. This meant a drastic change for organizations while the CE staff were creating a system, and learning Federal and City bureaucracies. Now that the City has four years of experience working with the service organizations, the requirements are easing. It is also possible that many organizations have sorted out internal processes to better deal with these requirements.

To better illustrate the extent of the burden, every single representative of an HPS-funded community-based organization (regardless of their size or capacity) felt that the financial reporting requirements were excessively time consuming and strict. On the other hand, the CE and Service Canada (representing HPS) see financial reporting as a necessary component of the system and one for which significant administration hours are funded. They also note that they have tried to simplify the reporting system.

Areas for increased communication and clarification:

- ❖ Some service providers reported that they have been re-allocating money without advance permission, while others expressed frustration that they must get permission to re-allocate money. The CE/HPS has clear policies on this issue. Small reallocations of less than 10% of a budget category can be done by an organization and the CE simply needs to be notified. Approval is required if 10% or more of the funds allocated to a category are being moved out of, or into a category. To date, the majority of these have been approved.
- ❖ Some agencies have been paying administration costs out of money allocated for service provision. This may be a byproduct of agencies' attempts to lower costs in their proposals by underestimating service costs, or providing unrealistic 'in-kind' costing that they will later need to make up for out of their organization's administration budget. It may be also because organizations do not have the time required to thoroughly cost, rationalize, and expense administrative budgets. The CE/HPS may fund up to 15% of a total project budget on administration costs. For some organizations, this can provide up to 20 hours of administrative support per week.
- ❖ Service providers expressed frustration with needing to budget every line item 1-2 years in advance, then being unable to adapt their services and activities as they learn and evolve. In this case, agencies can speak with their project officer to get permission and/or adjust their budget for the activity.

Currently, the level of detail in financial reporting required of a particular organization is assessed during a risk assessment conducted by the CE. The assessment takes into consideration criteria such as the amount of the funding; past experience doing the work, capacity of the organization, length of time the CE has known the organization, and other factors. 'Lower risk' projects may not be required to provide every single receipt (though they still need detailed rationales for every cost) and pay stubs for every staff (only first and last months). Most organizations report on a monthly basis, however quarterly reporting can be requested.

There appears to be some misperceptions amongst some service organizations about HPS funding. HPS is a national funding *program* and distinctly different from a grant, which requires less financial reporting and focuses primarily on achieving proposed outcomes. Specifically, HPS funding is provided through a *contribution agreement* for which organizations need to substantiate costs claimed with, for example, receipts, payroll documents, EIA documents, or rental documents. It is unclear, though, whether these requirements have been made more rigorous because of the CE's propensity for avoiding risk. Again, those most negatively impacted by this are the smaller organizations and, in particular, Indigenous organizations without finance departments or staff who are skilled in accounting and payroll.

Beyond the day-to-day challenges associated with this financial reporting burden, service providers have said that funding creates additional challenges for organizations that specifically relate to coordination; many understood that individual positions or programs had to report outcomes only by discrete funding stream. This may be due to CE administrative procedures. Agencies are less aware that funding streams can be combined for a single position or program and reporting done on a prorated basis. Service providers reported that the inability of agencies with a range of housing and supports programs to share staff, budgets and outcomes generates internal competition and challenges. These problems require further clarification from the CE and service providers will likely require support to establish reporting processes that are simple, without creating pro-rated outcome reporting that is challenging to use for planning purposes.

The inability to move monies from one fiscal year to the next creates additional coordination challenges including: difficulty developing and scaling up programs without leading to significant slippage; inability to accurately predict how much funding will be available to maintain existing successful program versus establishing new ones; and an annual rush for service providers to spend remaining dollars. This challenge is shared across most funding programs from all levels of government.

The remaining programs of the At Home/Chez Soi Projects are also creating reporting challenges. The Province is continuing to fund previous At Home participants, but only those participants; new HPS funding is only going to new persons who weren't in At Home/Chez Soi. The HF service agencies have had to create parallel programs that do essentially similar work. Each has to report separately, and the funding streams cannot be combined. This is something the CE, Manitoba Housing, Manitoba Health, and the WRHA have been working to address.

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6. Analysis of HPS Funding from an Indigenous Perspective

For the Indigenous-led organizations working with people experiencing or at risk of homelessness and that were represented in discussion groups undertaken for this report, Indigenous culture cannot be separated from service delivery. It “is and should be part of everything”. Culturally appropriate service delivery goes beyond specific activities or programming. As representatives of Indigenous organizations noted, Indigenous cultures involve ways of knowing, understanding, and being that are rooted in connections to and relationships between people, other living things, and the earth.

The extent to which service delivery is culturally appropriate cannot easily be measured, because whether or not it exists depends on the experience of individuals receiving services, that is, whether or not they feel culturally safe, welcome, or have a sense of belonging or connection to the people or organization from which they receive services. To support this, organizational staff members must know the population they are serving and understand the intergenerational impacts that historical (including but far from limited to residential school experiences, the Sixties Scoop or other involvement with the CFS system, and removal or displacement from their lands, home communities and/or families) and present-day experiences of personal and systemic racism, marginalization, exclusion and violence may have had on Indigenous people. For some, these impacts include (in addition to the condition of homelessness) trauma, addictions and other complex needs.

These experiences and impacts are understood to be at the root of the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the population experiencing or at risk of homelessness in Winnipeg. They were discussed at length in the consultations undertaken for this project, and have also been identified in a number of reports relating to homelessness in Winnipeg. They inform and/or appear in the recommendations from numerous reports including the *Winnipeg Street Census (2015)*, *Finding Her Home: A Gender-Based Analysis of the Homelessness Crisis in Winnipeg (2017)*, *Here and Now: Winnipeg Plan to End Youth Homelessness (2016)*, focus group discussions at the July 2016 *Community Meeting* in Winnipeg, and the final report from the Winnipeg site of the Mental Health Commission of Canada’s At Home/Chez Soi project (2014).

As might be expected, many Indigenous people actively seek out services from Indigenous organizations. A discussion group participant stated that:

“We deal with homelessness because we have no choice - they come to us. It’s like little Band-Aids. It’s like there’s a forest fire going on and we’re given cups to deal with it. We each get a little. The scale doesn’t meet the need... Funding needs to be allotted to the right places, the places where homeless people are walking through the door for whatever reason.”

Funding is a significant issue for many Indigenous organizations. Some organizations find it difficult to anticipate or plan for the number of people they will actually serve or the complexity or difficulty of the work they will do in any given fiscal year. Program participants might find access to Elders, ceremonies or cultural activities invaluable but agencies may not have the resources to provide them or, where funding might be available to support these activities, not know how to access it. They identified the need for more resources to build capacity and enhance the ability of their organizations to address critical needs in areas such as trauma-informed practice, complex addictions and other areas related to the root causes of homelessness. These services were also presented in several of the reports cited above as essential components in the delivery of services to Indigenous people experiencing homelessness. *“We know what our community needs”,* commented one discussion group participant, *“but still don’t get adequate resources to provide enough services to meet those needs.”* Similarly, Indigenous service providers have consistently identified the need to expand services to support people who do not fit HPS’ definition of chronic or episodic homelessness. As indicated in the most recent Street Census, which reports that Indigenous people are far more likely (86.4% of people who were provisionally accommodated) to be provisionally accommodated than non-Indigenous people, this is a significant need and critical service gap.

An additional consideration must be added to this discussion of culturally appropriate service delivery and culturally safe experiences for Indigenous people experiencing homelessness. In Winnipeg, people of European descent can reasonably assume that culturally appropriate resources are readily available to them and feel culturally safe as they go about their daily lives, whether they are at school, shopping, at a place of worship, on their way to work, walking through an unfamiliar neighbourhood, or seeking health or social services. Indigenous people in Winnipeg cannot routinely make the same assumption. Health and social services (along with most other resources) in the city are delivered within systems that were not designed to provide culturally appropriate services to or support the cultural safety of Indigenous people. As discussion group participants pointed out, when an Indigenous person experiencing homelessness seeks services at a non-Indigenous organization, there is a real possibility that the organization may not have the capacity to provide services that meet their needs. The provision of culturally appropriate services and culturally safe experiences to Indigenous people is the exception – rather than the rule – in Winnipeg’s service sector. The extent to which an organization might be able to provide culturally appropriate services and generate culturally safe experiences for Indigenous people can be reasonably predicted by asking two questions: 1) Who is part of the organization? (How many staff members, organizational leaders and board members are Indigenous); and 2) How do they work with clients? (To what extent do Indigenous people influence and contribute to program development and service delivery, and to what extent do the values and actions of individual staff members and the organization as a whole align with Indigenous ways of knowing, understanding, and being). Some discussion group participants suggested that rather than “culturally appropriate” service delivery, the greater need is for service delivery that is cultural in and of itself because it is being provided by

Indigenous people to Indigenous people and is based on and expressed through shared and culturally distinct values, philosophies and ways of being.

The same questions can be asked about the bodies that advise and oversee the allocation of HPS funding. While 60% of the current representatives on CAB are Indigenous, there was a perception that Indigenous people are underrepresented in the bodies that advise, administer, oversee, and resource the homelessness sector. This raised concern among discussion group members about whether these bodies have the capacity to understand the complex needs of the Indigenous community. They also wondered if these bodies have the capacity to assess a proposal from an organization whose service delivery model is based on Indigenous values, philosophies and ways of being, and whose programming is designed to address the culturally distinct needs of the population they serve.

In the process of assessing or evaluating proposals or projects put forward by Indigenous organizations, they pointed out, funders “need to measure success against outcomes that make sense for our participants and organizations”, including, in particular, value-based outcomes. They also reported that ongoing uncertainty as to whether funding will be renewed makes it difficult to retain staff (particularly those who have gained experience and skills that make them competitive in the job market) or build their organization’s capacity.

Alignment of Cultural Needs with HPS Principles, Objectives and Priorities

The HPS Housing First approach is based on six mandatory principles that refer to: rapid housing with supports; offering clients choice in housing; separating housing provision from other services; providing tenancy rights and responsibilities; integrating housing into the community; and strengths-based and promoting self-sufficiency.

While HPS’ discussion of these principles does not refer specifically to the culturally distinct needs of Indigenous people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, the focus of the principle relating to strength-based approaches that promote self-sufficiency (strengthening and building on the skills and abilities of the client, based on self-determined goals) leaves room to do so.

The 2014-2019 HPS Community Plan for Winnipeg was developed following the At Home/Chez Soi project’s first implementation of HF in Winnipeg. As described in the final report from the project, “Housing First was successfully implemented in Winnipeg in a manner faithful to the model, yet tailored to the local Aboriginal context. Involvement of the Aboriginal community and organizations occurred at all levels of the project’s implementation, delivery, and decision making. With knowledge of the legacy of colonialism and respect for Indigenous cultural practices, all service teams integrated an Aboriginal

holistic approach in delivering Housing First to participants and elders, and traditional teachers were integrated as part of the services and programming offered to participants” (p.5).

It should also be noted that, at the time the HPS Community Plan for Winnipeg was developed, six of the twelve CAB members were identified as part of and working closely with the Aboriginal community in Winnipeg. The plan was informed by consultations with representatives of more than forty organizations, including nine Indigenous organizations.

The HPS Community Plan for Winnipeg focuses on five priorities:

- ❖ To reduce homelessness through a Housing First approach, with activities that include the provision of culturally relevant responses to help Aboriginal clients. As noted in the rationale behind this priority, the value of this approach was demonstrated in the At Home/Chez Soi project, which drew on “the existing capacity in the Aboriginal community and built a body of knowledge about how to effectively implement Housing First in Winnipeg ... Organizations in Winnipeg who have experience delivering HF have found the model encourages organizations and their staff to meet people where they are at, utilize a trauma-informed approach, and focus their efforts on making ‘systems’ and services work for people rather than trying to fix people to fit into a system.”
- ❖ To improve the self-sufficiency of homeless individuals and families and those at imminent risk of homelessness through individualized services. Drawing again on the lessons learned from the At Home/Chez Soi project, the rationale for this priority acknowledges that “Housing First does not service all needs or everyone in need”. This includes, for Indigenous organizations, “cultural supports and connections [that] are fundamental to healing.”
- ❖ To preserve or increase the capacity of facilities used to address the needs of people who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness. The plan allocates nearly one-quarter of At Home funding in each year between 2015/16 and 2018/19 towards non-residential facilities. The rationale for this priority states that “supportive and transitional housing facilities that recognize and allow for extended family/communal living” would be particularly valuable to Indigenous people.
- ❖ To ensure coordination of resources and leveraging.
- ❖ To improve data collection and use. The rationale being the value of gathering data relating to the movement of Indigenous people to and from reserve and rural communities, which is understood to contribute to the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the population experiencing homelessness.

As detailed above, the priorities identified in the HPS Community Plan acknowledge some of the distinct needs of Indigenous people experiencing or at risk of homelessness and of the organizations that serve this population, and the value of providing cultural supports and culturally appropriate services. The

current configuration of the system addressing homelessness funded through HPS and the province is relatively new and still evolving. The Plan lays the groundwork for a complete and integrated service system that has the potential to generate equitable outcomes for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. The question for now is how to get there. In addition to the guidance provided by CAB and informed by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous stakeholders, the development of the homelessness system can also draw on the guidance provided by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Reconciliation and the Homelessness Sector

In *What We Have Learned: Principles of Truth and Reconciliation*, the second volume of its 2015 final report, The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada defines reconciliation as “an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships” that requires “following through with concrete actions that demonstrate real societal change” (p. 121). It offers ten principles to guide this process, including several that can be taken up by CAB and the CE and other bodies that advise and oversee the allocation of funding within the homelessness sector:

- ❖ **The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) is the framework for reconciliation at all levels and across all sectors of Canadian society.** As noted in *The Plan to End Homelessness in Winnipeg*, these rights include the right to self-determination and the right to participate in decision-making, the right to improvement of their economic and social conditions and the right to be actively involved in developing, determining and administering housing and other economic and social programs that affect them.
- ❖ **First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, as the original peoples of this country and as self-determining peoples, have Treaty, constitutional, and human rights that must be recognized and respected.** Again, as noted in *The Plan to End Homelessness in Winnipeg*, human rights include the right to housing.
- ❖ **Reconciliation requires constructive action on addressing the ongoing legacies of colonialism that have had destructive impacts on Aboriginal peoples’ education, cultures and languages, health, child welfare, the administration of justice, and economic opportunities and prosperity.** This principle points to the need to address the root causes of homelessness.
- ❖ **Reconciliation must create a more equitable and inclusive society by closing the gaps in social, health, and economic outcomes that exist between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.**
- ❖ **All Canadians, as Treaty peoples, share responsibility for establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships.**
- ❖ **Supporting Aboriginal peoples’ cultural revitalization and integrating Indigenous knowledge systems, oral histories, laws, protocols, and connections to the land into the reconciliation process are essential.**
- ❖ **Reconciliation requires political will, joint leadership, trust building, accountability, and transparency, as well as a substantial investment of resources.** This principle serves as a

reminder that CAB and the CE and other bodies that advise, administer and oversee the homelessness service system have the opportunity to show leadership and take action that will move that system forward on the goal of generating equitable outcomes for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

As detailed above, the principles developed and presented by the TRC are consistent with principles that were developed to guide the homelessness sector in Winnipeg. How could these principles inform the practice of the CE, CAB and other bodies that advise, administer and oversee the allocation of funding within the homelessness sector? In reviewing the findings and recommendations developed from this project, it is clear that the nature, scope and scale of work being done by Indigenous organizations and Indigenous-serving organizations are significantly different than those of most other organizations:

- ❖ Generally speaking, Indigenous organizations are attempting to generate equitable outcomes in the population they serve by providing culturally appropriate services and culturally safe service experiences that meet the culturally distinct needs of Indigenous clients in the context of a system that has not been designed to do so.
- ❖ Given that Indigenous people are grossly overrepresented in the population experiencing homelessness in the city, generating outcomes for Indigenous people that are equitable to those generated for non-Indigenous must be central to any plan to end homelessness in Winnipeg. To generate equitable outcomes, service organizations must take into consideration and address the root causes of the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the population experiencing homelessness (i.e., the multiple and complex impacts of historical and present-day experiences of individual, institutional, and systemic racism, marginalization, exclusion and violence).

The CE, CAB and other bodies that advise, administer, oversee, and resource the homelessness sector can use the guidance of the TRC's reconciliation principles to support equitable outcomes for Indigenous people experiencing or at risk of homelessness when considering the recommendations put forward in this report. This includes ongoing consideration of how the recommendations can be implemented in ways that affirm Indigenous peoples' right to participate in decision-making and the development, determination, and administration of the programs we support; the extent to which programs address the ongoing legacies and destructive impacts of colonialism (that is, the root causes of the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the population experiencing homelessness) on Indigenous people; progress made towards closing the gaps between outcomes for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people; the value of culturally appropriate service delivery, culture-based approaches, and the cultural safety of participants; and the extent to which activities support the development of trust, accountability, transparency and joint leadership in their relationships with Indigenous organizations and Indigenous people.

7. Conclusion

Throughout the course of this work, there has been clearly apparent frustration by many working in the sector at the ongoing lack of coordination, lost opportunities, and wasted resources of the present system. There is also a clear sense from all of those working in the sector that it is the community who wants better coordination. A few have argued that Winnipeg would be better managed through a more centralized system. Some spoke of the old WHHI model, which was a Tri-level government partnership. Others noted the structure of the At Home/Chez Soi project, which provided strong central administration and worked with the CDCI which helped align provincial departments and resources to the project. Others spoke of the centralized system of Homeward Trust in Edmonton. We have also heard strongly from the community of resistance to greater centralization. Many in the sector have concerns about a new centralized authority directing policy and funding, and are wary of additional administrative layers.

Yet we believe that neither of these positions are completely accurate or provide a good understanding of the development of a complete system of care. First, centralized systems such as Homeward Trust take years to develop, 10-15 years in most jurisdictions. Second, the only organization with a potential mandate for centralization, EHW, does not have the structure or intentions to create or control a central organization in Winnipeg. Yet significant opportunities exist to greatly improve the current system all are operating within.

It would be advantageous if all stakeholders recognized that the current homeless sector in Winnipeg as funded through HPS and the Province is a new and evolving system. When redesigned only a few years ago, there was a steep learning curve on the policies, reporting, and funding procedures. This steep curve was challenging for all involved: the CE, WRHA, CAB, Manitoba Housing, and all of the funded service organizations, but the system has improved as the people involved have chosen to inclusively share information, resources, decisions, and responsibility, and have been willing to continuously improve.

So rather than dwell on the challenges of the last four years, or defend existing structures that clearly need improvement, let us solve the immediate challenges before us. We will not create the perfect structure for coordination tomorrow. While we continue to discuss and take steps towards an inclusive governing structure, agreed upon amongst stakeholders and in the best interests of those who experience homelessness in Winnipeg, all stakeholders ought to focus on what we can do now, together, to improve the functioning of the system for everyone evolved.

All agree that more coordination is needed in Winnipeg, but many spoke of coordination as if it was a thing ‘to get’, a single management activity (that was the responsibility of someone else), a distant goal, or an almost idealized state, and therefore difficult to comprehend or act upon. But “coordination” is a process; it is the means, not the end goal. Coordination is a process people undertake because they have shared goals and can clearly see how their participation will move towards achieving those goals. It cannot be mandated; and goals should be collectively set. Bringing some measure of coordination to the sector will take time, likely years, and the process of coordination will need to continue indefinitely, as the sector evolves and needs and priorities change. The process of coordination is composed of many small steps, actions, and activities. These actions are understandable, practical, and recognizable, because they are familiar actions such as yearly planning, and working with partners. Yet each action will imperceptibly improve the coordination of the system as a whole, and ease burdens.

So let us begin by **building a process called coordination**. Towards that end, the following guiding principle and recommendations are intended to be concrete, achievable actions—none of which ‘coordinate’ anything, but all of them improving the functioning of the current system and contributing to a coordinated, comprehensive, and complete system of care.

Guiding Principle:

When implementing the recommendations below; intended to build a coordinated, comprehensive, and complete system of care, it must be kept in mind that Indigenous people constitute approximately three-quarters of the population experiencing homelessness in Winnipeg. Ending homelessness in Winnipeg will not happen unless the distinct needs of Indigenous people and Indigenous organizations are addressed. It bears restating, then, that the following considerations should be incorporated into the development of any plans to address the recommendations presented in this report and, more generally, into future funding-related decision-making:

- How does this affirm Indigenous peoples’ right to participate in decision-making and the development, determination and administration of the programs we support?
- To what extent do activities and programs address the root causes of the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the population experiencing homelessness, that is, the ongoing legacies and destructive impacts of colonialism?
- Will this help make progress towards closing the gaps between outcomes for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people?
- Does this support the provision of culturally appropriate services, culture-based approaches, and culturally safe service experiences for Indigenous people?
- To what extent will this support the development of trust, accountability, transparency and joint leadership in our relationships with Indigenous organizations and Indigenous people?

Recommendations

'Top 5 Recommendations to Move Forward'

1. Develop a Planning and Coordination Table
2. CE to reduce the competition inherent in the CFP process
 - a. Stage 1 is ongoing information sharing with proponents emphasizing a non-competitive nature, principles such as paying a standard living wage, and making sure there is adequate funding for all activities; while supporting greater partnerships and accountability
 - b. Stage 2 will be a shift to an alternate open and transparent funding model such as Qualification Based Selection, or other process
3. CAB / CE / Service Canada to prepare for 2019 funding cycle end. Confirm and stabilize a long-term CE
4. CE to continue and expand efforts to reduce and/or improve financial reporting requirements
5. Improve communication and information sharing through information sessions, feedback sessions, publication of policies and procedures, and the development of a website to host the information

Governance

Short term

- ❖ Due to the nature of federal funding, HPS and the CE are somewhat unpredictable and susceptible to change at the national level. However, given the likelihood that this model of funding delivery will remain in place, and the 11-year funding commitment allocated in the most recent federal budget, **there needs to be an inclusive, transparent and widely communicated decision made regarding the CE for 2019 and beyond.** An MOU or other formal document could be developed between the City of Winnipeg and EHW to guide future work, whether it is in transitioning the role of CE to another organization, or in solidifying the partnership. This recommendation is time sensitive.
- ❖ **CAB should provide community insight and experience to the CE.** With its limited size it cannot effectively represent the “community,” and it needs to communicate its role as an ad hoc body according to its Terms of Reference (ToR), not as a representative of the community (the community meaning people experiencing homelessness and community-based service

providers). **This should be clearly articulated to all stakeholders, and communicated regularly.** The CE and other stakeholders should be cautious regarding language when describing CAB, and actively create additional opportunities for community input into funding priorities, processes, and other CE activities (recommendations in this area are described below).

- ❖ **CAB should communicate and act on a commitment for meaningful Indigenous representation on its Board.**

Long term

- ❖ There is a need for a governance structure that enables partners to collaboratively identify and take action on coordination opportunities. Based on the input we heard from all stakeholders throughout this project, we recommend that **the community as a whole develop a governance structure where all stakeholders have input, support the goals and mandate, and participate in informed decision-making. There must be clear decision-making processes, shared accountability, and multiple lines of open communication.** Developing this governance structure is not within the scope of this report. However, the CAB and CE will clearly need leadership roles within it and should find opportunities to combine decision-making processes with planning. Some of the planning and priority setting recommended below could be a part of this collaborative structure.

Planning & Priorities

- ❖ Immediately upon receiving this report, **all the ‘system level’ stakeholders involved in HPS,** including representatives from CAB, the CE, the WRHA, Manitoba Housing, EHW, and Service Canada, **should have a meeting to develop a strategy for planning and coordination.**
- ❖ As a first step, we recommend the **establishment of a single ‘Planning and Coordination Table,’** with the role of planning and strategy development with the CAB and CE in relation to their administration of HPS. This would ensure that planning, coordination, and priorities are emerging from the community as a whole, not developed in a top-down manner. The table should be attended by all the major stakeholders, including leadership of sector organizations, community organizations (including all HPS funded service providers and other key sector organizations), CAB, CE, Service Canada, Manitoba Housing, and WRHA. EHW should lead this, as doing otherwise could undermine the function of EHW and perpetuate divisions and confusion amongst homelessness stakeholders in Winnipeg.

The Planning and Coordination Table:

- Should specifically focus on planning and priorities related to HPS funding or, more broadly, include the entire sector, but must specifically address HPS funding as part of its agenda;

- Should have as a primary goal the simplification of the system for organizations through concrete actions, such as reducing many overlapping and redundant meetings;
- Could have a well-facilitated, more in depth annual planning meeting to develop agreement on broad principles and priorities, then meet quarterly to give feedback as needed (for example, on the work of CAB subcommittees on accountability and communications, proposal review process changes, and alignment);
- Needs strong administrative support to ensure that it is functional, well-organized, supports good communication, and leads to transparent and well informed decision-making; and
- Should use data and information to guide decisions, as well as the experience of service providers and people with lived experience.

The mandate of the Planning and Coordination Table should include:

- Setting broad priorities or principles for funding that are more specific than the HPS community plan. Two clear recommendations that we heard were to increase the number of Indigenous-led agencies who are funded to provide services for people experiencing homelessness, and to maintain and strengthen existing programs rather than creating new ones;
- Identifying opportunities to create some standards around HF that set consistent wages, consistent staffing structures, and consistent caseload ratios;
- Identifying apparent gaps in the current system to ensure the CE targets proposals and priorities for funding. Some recommendations that we heard include prioritizing rapid re-housing, developing a culturally appropriate low intensity housing program, and supporting HF agencies to develop a range of complimentary services in their organizations to meet housing needs of non-HF populations;
- Informing overall sector operations; for example, system mapping and descriptions;
- Continuously aligning the HPS Community Plan and Winnipeg's Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness;
- Assisting the CE in developing an annual plan and providing feedback on plans for funds that may become available (timing and process of CFPs, plans for dealing with slippage, etc.);
- Work with Manitoba Housing to expand the *Sponsor Managed Social Housing Program* to give access to Housing First programs. Under the *Sponsor Managed Program*, Manitoba Housing maintains ownership while a non-profit organization manages the building or units within a building. HF organizations would provide the extended services to clients in those buildings;
- Aligning, leveraging, and coordinating multiple funding sources; and,
- Improving the use of system-wide resources by service providers.

- ❖ Resource agencies to participate in coordination activities.
- ❖ Service providers gather a lot of data and information that can be better used by CE and CAB to inform program development, policy, and planning (for example, how many people are not eligible for HF and why; how many times are people in HF programs re-housed; etc.). **The CE and EHW should work together to support HPS-funded programs to provide needed data in a way that can be used by the community.**
- ❖ **EHW's recently initiated 'Fundlers' Table' should move forward.** This was generally seen as a positive step.
- ❖ **Create a community of practice among direct service workers.** This includes training, peer-support, and regular meetings to discuss successes and share knowledge (this is discussed more below).
- ❖ **Hire an Indigenous liaison within the Community Entity that works on developing and expanding that portfolio.**

The System: Policy, Administration and Funding

Short term

Increase Communication and Accountability of the CAB and CE

- ❖ **The CE should hold information sessions for all service providers** (see page 34). This would be a way to reach out to agencies currently not funded by HPS but working in the sector, and to strengthen knowledge of those already funded by HPS. Sessions should clearly explain how HPS funding works, what activities are eligible for funding, HPS/CE funding policies, and what can and should be included in costing in proposals (e.g. adequate amounts for administration, and living wages for staff). This information could also be sharing through monthly “funding tips,” which would also be an interesting way to maintain ongoing communication with service providers. Most service providers are overwhelmed with their typical workload, and during proposal/funding agreement periods, cannot absorb all the information shared with them.
- ❖ **Information about CAB and its make-up, current membership, and meeting agendas and minutes should be publically available, preferably on a website.** Other documents could be posted on a website, like the Community Plan and research reports.
- ❖ **CE should finish its policy and procedure guide for HPS funded organizations.** This could also be included on the website.
- ❖ **CE should publish annual results reporting and list of funded projects** to demonstrate the impact it has had on homelessness. This could also be included on the website.

Funding

- ❖ Funding allocations to Indigenous organizations should reflect the scope and the scale of the work being done by these organizations. Current allocations to Indigenous organizations should be increased to ensure that they are: 1) sufficient to enable Indigenous organizations to achieve outcomes that are equitable to those achieved by larger ‘mainstream’ organizations; and 2) at minimum, proportional to Indigenous people’s representation in the population experiencing homelessness in Winnipeg.

Improve Outcome Reporting

- ❖ **CE and Service Canada should be clear in its communication on how outcome reporting is used nationally and why it is important. Efforts should be made to draw service providers to the ‘Orientation to Results Reporting’ information sessions.**
- ❖ **CE should continue to inform proponents of their options on reporting as they are developing agreements;** for example, clarifying those organizations only need to report on some indicators and activities, not all of them).
- ❖ **CE should support agencies struggling with outcome reporting by providing them with the administrative expertise and supports they need,** including data collection tools that meet the needs of the organization, trouble-shooting, program evaluation workshops, etc.
- ❖ **CE, WRHA, Manitoba Housing should continue to work on transitioning the At Home project to allow for new intake,** with the goal of eliminating the duplicated programs and reporting problems.

Long-term

- ❖ **The Planning and Coordination Table with the Funders’ Table should decide on the outcome priorities and benchmarks that are most important to all stakeholders** (funders, service providers, and people experiencing homelessness). Service providers should thereafter track these outcomes consistently. This should reduce the competitive nature of outcome reporting, increase the quality and availability of information available for planning and decision-making, and reduce administrative burdens.
- ❖ As part of the above activity, **stakeholders should work on developing shared system indicators.**
- ❖ As part of the above activity, **stakeholders should work towards the development of data sharing agreements to collect data** around hospital stays, justice system involvement, and other involvement with systems. This data will be used to improve planning, coordination, and evaluations.

Improve Financial Reporting Requirements

- ❖ **CE should provide better information about financial reporting requirements** during CFPs so organizations can budget appropriately, while signing agreements with funded agencies, and on a website or other available format.
- ❖ **Stakeholders should work with other CABs, CEs, and HPS at a national level to address administrative challenges to coordination.**
- ❖ **CE should meet with CEs across the country** to learn how others have reduced financial and outcome reporting burdens for proponents. CE should advocate to HPS for changes if they are not within the CE's purview.

Support a Community of Practice and Training of Staff

- ❖ **WRHA should include others in their monthly meeting with the HOCS team for challenging cases.** The Winnipeg Rental Network also has a frontline staff meeting; there may be an opportunity to combine these.
- ❖ **Planning and Coordination Table should discuss and address common priorities for training and capacity building among service providers.** There is an opportunity for this training to include other system stakeholders (EIA workers, for example) so they are better informed about the homelessness sector.

CFP Process

Short term

- ❖ **The CE should increase the value placed on partnerships in their calls for proposals, and CABs assessments of those proposals.** Instead of requiring just a 'letter of partnership,' require evidence of collaboration or sharing of resources when appropriate. When partnerships could improve the project, work with proponents to support partnership development.
- ❖ **CE should publish the selection criteria for proposals online,** as well as all policies regarding HPS funding. Common challenges and misunderstandings should also be addressed in the available materials, e.g. FAQs.
- ❖ **CE should undertake an analysis of the proposals and submit written recommendations to CAB,** as part of its role in funding administration. The analysis and recommendations may consider the history of the organization (fidelity, outcomes, and reporting), their capacity to deliver, ability to meet community need, capacity to execute and administer, and realistic sustainability if HPS funding should be reduced. This activity must be done in tandem with a process to develop and strengthen the capacity of smaller or less experienced organizations.
- ❖ **The CE should develop an open and transparent process by which weaker proposals can be developed, with the support and advice of CAB.** This could also be addressed through a small

capacity development fund that provides organizations with supports to strengthen their proposals.

- ❖ **Consider inequities when expecting matched or confirmed funding for proposals.** Community-based organizations with shorter histories or that serve more stigmatized populations (e.g. people with addictions) will not have the same capacity in funding as mainstream organizations, but may have more capacity to build relationships and understand the experiences of the people they serve.
- ❖ **The CE should target gaps in the system through targeted calls for proposals.**

Medium term

- ❖ **The CE should develop a new process to fund programs, with the support and input of CAB and the Planning and Coordination Table.** One alternative has been suggested - Qualification Based Selection. Other standard approaches exist and should be explored. Two case-studies of alternate approaches for Homeward Trust, Edmonton; and Region of Waterloo Social Services are provided in Appendix 1.

Programs and System Development

Short term

- ❖ **Develop a Rapid Rehousing program.** The Homeless Outreach Mentors program (funded by Manitoba Housing) provides some Rapid Rehousing supports. These supports could be built upon to create a full Rapid Rehousing and diversion program, with the goal of immediate access to housing for a broader group of people, not just those with the highest need. This would ideally include some type of housing facilitation fund for short-term or emergency housing set-up costs. Such a program should be discussed at the Planning and Coordination Table, as it will require partnerships between funders and service providers.
- ❖ **Ensure procurement of apartments, moving and setup services are available to entire sector, not just HPS funded spots or HF spots.** The WRN should provide a cost estimate to the CE for this to occur, so Housing Plus can be effectively resourced.
- ❖ **The CE should continue to work with Manitoba Housing in the development of the rent supplement program for HF,** and ensure alignment exists between HPS Emergency Rent funding and the rent supplement to allow for smooth transitions.

Long-term

- ❖ **Develop information sharing protocols with EIA and Manitoba Housing.** Currently, EIA receives information about tenancies faster than Manitoba Housing but this information is not shared. This may be an appropriate role for Housing Plus program staff to communicate information back to HF service teams.

- ❖ **Develop information sharing protocols with the Health and Justice systems** to also allow the development of system indicators (discussed above).

Fidelity, Evaluation, Accountability, & Cost Benefits

- ❖ **The CE should require a feedback mechanism for all system-wide or shared services funded by HPS to assist in evaluation**, including Doorways, Housing Plus, Centre Flavie-Laurent, and the Homelessness Information Partnership.
- ❖ **Improve fidelity and increase accountability among service organizations.** This can be best approached through the Planning and Coordination Table to develop consistent approaches, discuss challenges, etc. The CE may also look to Homeward Trust (Edmonton) for examples on the use of performance indicators.
- ❖ **Increase up-front planning that includes a cost-benefit and long-term cost analysis.** This should be approached with caution, as the purpose of housing people should not be to save money. Rather, this analysis would help to understand what the long-term resource needs will be in order to end homelessness in Winnipeg (e.g. how many Housing First teams, how many rent supplements, and how many transitional housing units are needed). It would also help to make the case to government that using resources to prevent and end homelessness is more effective and ethical than continuous and costly emergency responses.

Outside the Scope of this Report

- ❖ **Increase support for communities outside of Winnipeg.** This preventative step may reduce transient homelessness to Winnipeg.
- ❖ **Province should create a plan for homelessness to help align the provincial resources and policies towards ending homelessness.** This has been a highly successful step in other provinces.

References and Resources:

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APPENDIX 1: Case Studies

Homeward Trust, Edmonton

There are some similarities between the cities of Winnipeg and Edmonton, but the structure and organization of the homeless serving sector is remarkably different. Edmonton's population is 932,500 (2016), and Winnipeg's is 711,925 (2016). Homeward Trust funds approximately twenty-five service providers in the homeless sector, a number similar to those funded by the CE in Winnipeg. Both cities have a homeless population grossly over-represented by Indigenous people.

Structure/Model

Generally, Homeward Trust employs a more centralized model than the Winnipeg Sector. Homeward Trust is responsible for multiple funding streams, and many of the roles required by HPS are subsumed into the organization. Homeward Trust emerged in 2007 from the merger of the existing CAB and CE organizations, the Edmonton Joint Planning Committee on Housing, and the Edmonton Housing Trust Fund. Because of this, Homeward Trust still undertakes the roles of both CAB and CE, under both the Designated Communities and the Aboriginal Homelessness streams of HPS funding. Additionally, Homeward Trust functions as the Community Based Organization (CBO) for administration of funds under Alberta's Provincial ten-year plan to end homelessness; and it is the implementation body for the City's ten-year plan to end homelessness. Essentially, all government funding streams (though not private funding) and organizational structures are centrally administered by Homeward Trust.

Roles

Within the organization of Homeward Trust, the CE has become the administration body (which includes the staffing at Homeward Trust), and is directed by a Board. The CAB comprises three committees, a Community Plan Committee which is responsible for setting priorities, a Project Review Committee which is responsible for reviewing and recommending funding proposals, and an Indigenous Advisory Council that undertakes priority setting and proposal review functions for the Aboriginal Homelessness stream of funding, and also contributes to decisions for funding under Designated Communities.

The Community Plan Committee has approximately twenty members, with representation from government, indigenous communities, service providers, and housing providers. There are two members of the committee who represent agencies that receive funding from Homeward Trust, but this is a situation the Committee tries to avoid. The Project Review Committee is mostly government representatives, with some representation from the community. The Indigenous Advisory Council is composed of community members only. The committees are advisory to Homeward Trust administration (the CE), and do not report to the Board. The Board's primary role is to oversee the CE, to authorize the budget and to provide direction to the administration. The Board also reviews and confirms decisions made by CAB. There is no crossover between Board members and CAB committee

membership. Four of the nine board members are appointed by an Indigenous nominating committee. Homeward Trust has long worked with Edmonton's Indigenous community and tries to embody an integration of Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives into all policies and services. One of the roles of the Indigenous Advisory Council and the Indigenous board members is to help build bridges and foster this integration.

The Community Plan Committee role has evolved over the last decade. Initially, its focus was on the implementation and monitoring of the Provincial 10-Year Plan and the City's 10-Year Plan. This focus was due to the funding from the Provincial Plan being significantly larger than federal funding. Now, this Committee also reviews HPS allocations and priority setting, manages the annual HPS Community Plan Update, works on updating the City's Plan, and continues to guide implementation of the Provincial Plan and funding.

Funding

As mentioned, all levels of government funding flows through Homeward Trust. It is important to note that Provincial funding is vastly larger (reportedly 4 to 5 times larger) than federal (HPS) funding, and this significantly expands the options and flexibility available to Homeward Trust. The organization has minimal amounts of funding from non-governmental sources because they have not received charitable status. This is because they have numerous subsidiary organizations, including a social enterprise furniture store, that make it challenging to receive such status.

Homeward Trust has organized the disbursement of government funds to maximize flexibility. HPS has the most restrictive criteria. Provincial funding, called Outreach Support Services Initiative (OSSI), is far less restrictive as long as it is used to follow the Provincial 10-Year Plan and its emphasis on addressing chronic homelessness. This funding is also used to address emergent issues and Provincial priorities. For example, the Province identified a priority around homeless families, and asked Homeward Trust to direct efforts to that priority. To be clear though, this is seen as a partnership and collaborative relationship in identifying issues and responding to them; Homeward Trust sees provincial funding as flexible.

Homeward Trust also receives a smaller amount of funding from the City of Edmonton. This funding is very flexible, and it is used for portions of administration or for opportunities where other funding would be more difficult to use. For example, it has been used for the purchase of property.

Strategically, Homeward Trust uses a blended approach to funding, so every one of the Housing First teams receives both HPS and provincial funds. But in the interest of reducing administrative burdens on the agencies, provincial dollars are used for administration, and federal dollars for staffing.

Service providers are contracted to deliver consistent services that typically do not change year to year; this means that there is little negotiation on funding for those providers. Because Homeward Trust collects and uses such good data, it knows the level of resources required to deliver each service type. For instance, a Housing First team is defined as two housing workers and ten follow-up support workers, client start-up costs, and access to Rental Assistance. Funding for service providers are based on these defined costs. The only negotiation that happens is due to slippage, and Homeward Trust indicates that this is rare. Many additional services (i.e. outside of the defined HF services) are centralized wherever possible. For example, coordinated access is delivered directly from Homeward Trust. In cases where a service provider has identified a new need, then Homeward Trust addresses that at the system level—for instance, piloting a new program, expanding an existing program, or facilitating partnerships to provide for the need.

Coordination and Operations

Homeward Trust sees itself as a ‘hands-on’ funder and directly organizes, manages, and coordinates funding and activities in the sector. Under the Provincial 10-Year Plan and the funding agreement with the province, Homeward Trust becomes a contractor of the province supplying homelessness services. They describe themselves as a ‘delivery agent’ working with the province to fulfill the Province's plan to end homelessness.

Under this model, funded service provider organizations become subcontractors. Service providers are expected to meet the targets set out by the community, and achieve performance measures. A single web-based data system is used, where all service providers can enter client and program information resulting in the performance measures. This allows Homeward Trust to monitor the service providers in (nearly) real time. Reports are sent back to the service providers on a monthly basis, showing how they are meeting the twenty-odd performance measures. The monthly reports to the service providers are reinforced with regular quarterly meetings between Homeward Trust and each service provider.

There are two additional structures helping to coordinate the sector. The first is the *Housing First Advisory Council*, which includes the leadership from all of the funded Housing First service providers. They meet on a bi-monthly basis to problem solve and to communicate challenges or policy needs back to Homeward Trust. The second is the *Team Lead Meeting*, where the team leads from all of the Housing First projects get together as a community of practice to problem solve, share experiences, and share knowledge.

Because Homeward Trust is ultimately responsible for stewarding the funding and ensuring progress towards the goal of ending homelessness, the organization sees itself as needing to be more involved in operations, coordination, and management. They see themselves more as a program manager than a grant administrator.

Data, Indicators, & Reporting

Homeward Trust is data and analysis reliant. They consider data essential to showing evidence of providing good services, and for planning—mapping out where/how/when interactions happen between service providers and client, and tracking how homelessness changes over time (e.g. changing demographics, or shifts in reported type of drug-use).

Homeward Trust also recognizes that data-collection on a largely Indigenous homeless population does get some push-back from the community. Homeward Trust sees data as simply an efficient way of recording people's information in order to provide high quality services. Data is only used for secondary analysis of service providers, not analysis of individuals. Homeward Trust has also been working with Blue Quills First Nations College on building a set of Indigenous cultural service indicators.

The data system Homeward Trust uses is called *Efforts to Outcomes* (ETO), in place for all service providers since 2010. Homeward Trust hired a developer to build an app so that the service providers could record their service interactions in real time using their phones. Homeward Trust has significant analysis capacity in-house and many of the service providers have also hired analysts as part of their internal management.

The data collected informs program development, service delivery, and funding decisions. On a quarterly basis, Homeward Trust produces performance-measurement reports for all service providers which are posted publically on their website. Anyone, including the public, can see how service providers are meeting the twenty-odd performances measures, and make comparisons. The Province also has access to the data for their use, and so Homeward Trust does not submit any reporting to the Province. Examples of the measures include:

- time between intake and housing;
- number of visits with client;
- average number of home visits per client;
- number of housings per month;
- percentage of housings where people identified as Indigenous; and
- the percentage of clients who were chronically homeless.

Additionally, service providers have to submit a qualitative monthly report. This is a one-pager, regarding challenges and activities. But for the majority of the reporting on traditional activities the burden falls on Homeward Trust—not the service providers. Homeward Trust pulls the data, undertakes analysis, produces the reports and then meets with service providers and reports back to them. It is our understanding that service providers do minimal reporting on finances.

Homeward Trust is considering transitioning to the current HIFIS 4.0 data system, now that it is web-based. Before doing so, Homeward Trust is working out how to make data-collection a much more streamlined process, and how to reduce the burden on the frontline worker. For example, one of the performance measures that the Province uses is reduction in usage of emergency services, court services, and police. Currently, it is a huge burden on the client and the worker because the worker basically collects self-reported information from the client directly. Homeward Trust has been working with the Province to get administrative data directly from the systems.

Currently, when Homeward Trust collects data under provincial agreements, or the Housing First program, service providers are only required to provide ‘notification’ of data collection. They notify the client that their data will be used and will be shared in the context of Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP Act). Consent is not required for service providers to collect client’s data and share it with Homeward Trust. For health information, on the other hand, there is a required consent process. To ease this burden, Homeward Trust is in discussion with Alberta Health Services on entering into an information manager agreement, with the ultimate goal of becoming an affiliate under the Health Information Act. This would allow Homeward Trust to access and share health information for the purposes of program improvement and strategic planning without having to ask for individual consent.

Call for Proposals (or Not)

Because of its unique organizational structure, Homeward Trust does not use a yearly CFP process. Homeward Trust itself is the only contractor to HPS—the service providers are subcontractors to Homeward Trust. The organizations that started worked with Homeward Trust at the initiation of the provincial 10-Year Plan in 2008 are the same organizations that are funded to provide services today. Homeward Trust stated that they do not do CFPs because that process can lead to a long funded organization losing funding to a new organization, creating increased and unnecessary competition amongst organizations. Homeward Trust was explicit about the value they place on experienced Housing First service providers, and the inherent problems that would entail switching to a new provider with less experience. These problems include start-up time for a new Housing First organization of at least a year-and-a-half or more for training and necessary experience.

On an annual basis, Homeward Trust reviews performance measurements to justify whether a service provider should still be funded; and yearly, service providers enter into agreements with Homeward Trust. These ‘agreements’ are actually labeled ‘proposals’, but they are not open, distributed or made public; they are used to confirm partnership and detail funding agreement.

When starting a new program or service Homeward Trust has two options. If it is an urgent need that needs to be addressed immediately then they prefer to expand the role of an existing subcontractor,

and provide them with funding for those new services. If it is not an urgent need then Homeward Trust will use a traditional CFP process and the proposals will be reviewed by CAB's *Project Review Committee*.

Caveats

Homeward Trust was clear that the above centralized system is not perfect, and even generates its own challenges. For instance, HPS is not fond of the lack of CFP process and every year Homeward Trust has to justify it to the federal government.

Over the last decade, there has been an increase in territorialism, siloing, and competition amongst service providers. This may be a reaction to the centralized control of funding and administration. Some service providers are also resistant to using the central assessment and data system.

Shelters continue to get direct funding from the province, and so maintain and value their independence from the central system. Shelters have shied away from Homeward Trust administration and have been resistant to sharing even basic data. This impacts Homeward Trust because it limits its ability to reframe programming based on needs (identified in the data) and to be flexible and responsive to needs.

Region of Waterloo Social Services

As with Edmonton, there are stark similarities and differences between Winnipeg and the Region of Waterloo. The Region of Waterloo is a regional municipality located in Southern Ontario. It consists of the cities of Kitchener, Waterloo, and Cambridge, with four rural townships, and a total population of 535,154 (2016). The homeless population served by Waterloo is different from Edmonton and Winnipeg with a far lower percentage of Indigenous people, but with transient agricultural workers (many from Latin American countries), as well as more working poor—especially after the 2008 financial crisis that devastated manufacturing jobs in Ontario.

Services for the homeless population are provided by a community of organizations operating under the coordination of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo Social Services (hereafter the Region). Currently, fifty annual program agreements are managed by the Region with sixteen service provider agencies.

The Region is in the midst of a multi-year reorganization and coordination process, which may be informative for Winnipeg. This case study focuses on the organizational structure and coordination emerging in Waterloo.

History and Background

Like Edmonton, Waterloo also employs a more centralized structure than Winnipeg. But this structure formed differently than in Edmonton and is currently evolving. Previous to 2007, the Waterloo homeless sector “did not have a comprehensive shared approach to ending homelessness”³. The First Strategy was developed following two years of research and consultation by several committees representing homeless sector organizations in the region. Community consultation was extensive. Although the process was facilitated by Waterloo Social Services (the Region), the resultant strategy is seen as a ‘shared approach’ and has been endorsed by twenty-nine organizations as *their* strategy ‘for supporting a shared approach to social change’. The organizations are *community partners* and the strategy is a community planning exercise and collective-impact effort. The Province gave the Region the role of Service Manager for the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI) in 1999, but with the coming of federal HPS money, the community asked the Region to become the Community Entity. The critical piece to understand for Waterloo is that it was the community together that developed the strategy and who asked the Regional Social Services to enact and coordinate the strategy and administers the funding. The strategy was updated in 2011-2012 and now includes both a Policy Framework and an Action Framework.

The Ontario government is working on reducing silos across all Ministries, which the Region sees taking place. More immediate for them is the Provincial long term affordable housing strategy, updated in

³ Regional Municipality of Waterloo Social Services (2012) The Policy Framework for the Homelessness to Housing Stability Strategy of Waterloo Region, p5).

2016, and changes to their funding model in 2013 which amalgamated a number of individual programs into one program envelope, the CHPI.

Organization, Structure, and Model

The following organizational chart outlines the Region’s programs and policy-related groups. The centre of the chart shows administrative groups, while the left and right hand sides show service programs for lower and higher acuity individuals. As Waterloo is currently undergoing re-organization, some of the groups on this chart are aspirational, and some may be disbanded in the future.

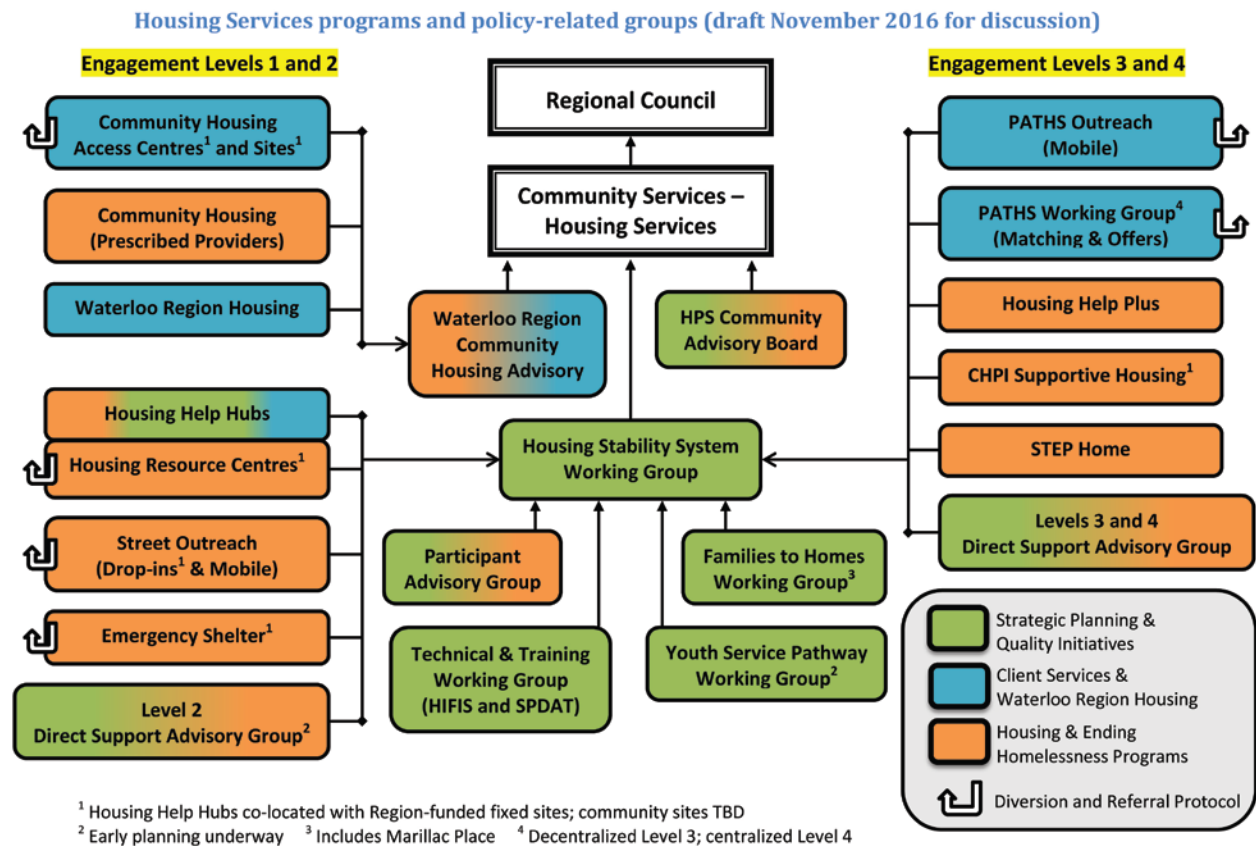


Figure 7: Region of Waterloo Housing Services & Groups – Organizational Chart

The center of the chart shows the *Department of Community Services - Division of Housing Services*. This is the department that houses *Regional Municipality of Waterloo Social Services* and it reports to the *Regional Council*. The Region also reports to HPS and through their program officer with the Province. Reports and annual plans are required for all of them.

The Region is advised by several committees, including the *Waterloo Region Community Housing Advisory Board* and the *HPS Community Advisory Board*. The Region is required to have a CAB but it

plays a very limited role on HPS funded programs. CAB only meets yearly to review and endorse targeted calls for proposals. CABs role in Waterloo is considered minor.

The most important committee is the *Housing Stability System Working Group*. This table has representatives of all funded agencies and meets monthly. The group's mandate is to inform and enact system change and respond to high level challenges. Almost all issues the group addresses comes up through the agencies themselves. The *Housing Stability System Working Group* is advised by several other groups including the *Participant Advisory Group*, and the *Technical and Training Working Group* that works to implement HIFIS 4.0 and SPDAT. As Waterloo implements these, the expectation will be that all funded agencies use the common database and common assessment tool. All the groups that are working with families sit on the *Family to Homes Working Group*. It covers everything from diversion through to Housing First programs for families, and meets every second month. *The Youth Service Pathway Working Group* is at early planning stages.

The left of the organizational chart shows service programs Level 1 and 2 which are lower levels of engagement. It includes *Regional Housing and Community Housing*, who typically staff the *Community Housing Advisory Committee* described above. The *Direct Support Advisory Group* is in the planning stage. This new group is considered necessary as these programs provide a similar level of housing support and they need to be working together and networking.

Level 3 and 4 on the right side of the chart shows more intensive programs, including Rapid Rehousing and the Housing First program (called STEP Homes). These programs use a coordinated access program called PATHS (Prioritized Access to Housing Stability). PATHS has a group that works on "matching and offers" (clients to programs) into the Level 4 programs. *Housing Help Plus* is a pilot advisory group for supportive housing. CHPI Supportive Housing is a redesigned program. Step Home, also newly redesigned is a Housing First program. Level 3 and 4 *Direct Support Advisory Group* meet quarterly and includes all direct support workers doing the more intensive housing support coordination.

The Region has recently disbanded a broader system working group that interacted with university partners, city partners, police, health system, etc. It was disbanded because of the large number of groups and meetings were becoming fatiguing to the sector and, sometimes, ad-hoc meetings are sufficient. Fatigue was found to be particularly problematic for organizations that had multiple programs and sat on multiple committees.

As mentioned, the Region is revisiting this mix and how they organize. An issue they are addressing is determining which groups need to be system wide, as they have found that many groups were meeting on a program level, resulting in the same people sitting at the table talking about programs and not about systems. The Region is emphasizing moving to system-level thinking and solutions, which is

driving the current agenda of the *Housing Stability System Working Group*. Another issue driving the Region’s reorganization is that there was a feeling that there were many meetings, but they did not necessarily feel connected or coordinated. The current system, as embodied by the organizational chart, attempts to bring this coordination to the sector.

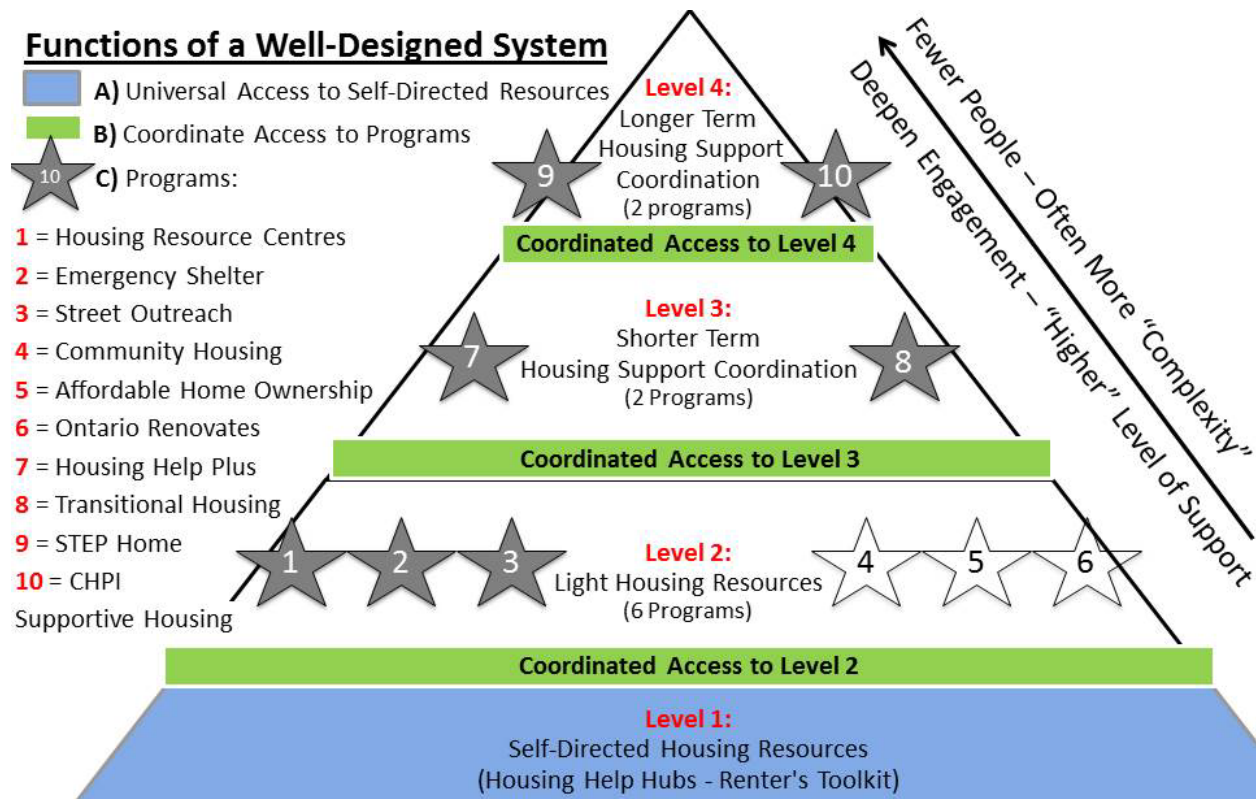


Figure 8: Progressive Engagement Chart, with Service Resources

The system is organized to bring client progressive levels of engagement, through levels 1 through 4. Levels 1 and 2 are self-directed resources and coordinated access into light housing resource supports. Levels 3 and 4 are more intensive programs and are coordinated through PATHS.

Funding

For Waterloo, provincial, federal and HHSS money flows through Regional Social Services. HPS funding started in 2002 but has only been four to seven percent of funding (for 2017 HPS provides \$670,000 to the Region, while the Province and HHSS provides \$11.7 million). The result is that federal funding and the CAB do not drive activities or agendas in Waterloo, and the Region has more flexibility in how money is spent. This is similar to the situation in Edmonton. The Region emphasized that the central role they play in managing the funding was essential to their success in coordinating the sector as it allows them to “seamlessly make it all work together in the background for the community.” By managing the

funding, and piecing the funding streams together, the Region is able to provide ‘backbone support’ — leadership, administration, research, pursuit of additional funders, and supporting for the sector.

All of the major agencies that the Region works with are large multi-service agencies that operate other services as well (such as childcare centres or community centres). Most also receive additional funding streams through the United Way or private funders. None of the service providers rely on the Region, or HPS, as their sole funder.

All HPS funding goes to Housing First programs and then those are topped up by Regional funding. Provincial funding tends to fund emergency shelters, supportive housing programs, rent fund, resource centres, and additional services. Ideally, the region avoids funding a position or program from all three sources for ease of administration. It is just too complicated. They try to keep funding simple for reporting purposes and they have aligned the reporting data so that no matter who funds a program, the Region asks for the same data. As with Homeward Trust, funding is organized to maximize flexibility and minimize burdens for organizations. *“So for us it’s, in a way it’s a pot of funding. We move it around as we need to in order to administer the programmes and try to keep it as simple as possible.”*

Administration Size

In order to provide this backbone governance structure to the sector, the Region emphasized its administrative capacity. In order to undertake continual planning, coordinate the sector, develop policy documents, and do continual research that can support the sector, a robust administration is necessary. Community Services/Housing Services is a division of fifty and the team that works with the homelessness programs is a group of six who operate the supportive housing programs, social housing waitlist, and some social housing that is directly operated.

The Region uses all of the funding available for administration (10 to 15% depending on the funder) because, *“admin really isn’t admin, it’s backbone capacity support to deliver these programs and drive that change in the community.”*

Mechanisms of Coordination

Coordination with other System Players

As with everywhere else, the Region finds coordination with other systems to be a *“complete and constant struggle,”* and *“a full time job just to connect.”* Coordination at this level currently occurs at the broader engagement meetings. Hospitals, health authorities, and justice system representatives get invited to those meetings. The Region’s current aspiration is to have more memorandums of understanding with these systems, and they are starting that work with some of the supportive housing programs. Memorandums are to include clear delineations of roles and responsibilities, as well as

policies and practices for working together. Currently, the Region is being asked by the Provincial government to address institutional discharges, an area of provincial priority.

Internal Coordination

Regional Social Services believes having a central role in funding administration allows for coordination and alignment of the sector. They base their ability to undertake those roles on the long-standing, trusting relationships the Region has with the service providers developed over more than a decade. They are community partners. That said, ultimately, the Region is the funder with relational power, and the Region decides on the direction the sector takes. For example, the Region reviewed existing local programs compared to the At Home/Chez Soi project, and determined that Housing First was the best practice; and moved in that direction as a sector. The Region had been funding four Housing First programs in Cambridge, where each agency got one HF worker, working as a very loose collaboration. This was not working, and the Region wanted to reform these workers into a formal Housing First team model. The Region asked the four agencies who were already involved to come together and put in a joint proposal. This was done, and they are currently piloting this new HF team. But this was done with the involvement of the community, and nobody lost funding. As well, this kind of coordination is informed through the advisory groups (with representation of all the service providers) and they all had a role in helping to guide the pilot project. The Region notes that there are many ways that service providers are engaged in both the development and implementation of the process. But the ultimate direction is set by the funder determining best practice and direction. The Region also emphasized that the tools that are strongest at shifting and coordinating the system are HIFIS 4.0 and having a coordinated access process.

System Gaps

Previous to the emerging system in Waterloo, gap identification and filling was *“a little bit of a shot in the dark.”* They recognized services that may be needed, but had little way to target or tailor new services to the gaps. With the reorganization, the Region feels it will be much clearer where and what are those gaps. The process is driven by data.

Beyond the Working Group and Advisory Group meetings, the Region holds an annual community forum as well as meeting regularly with providers, and gaps and challenges are identified at all of these meetings. The Region maintains an on-going list of gaps and pressures agencies are identifying and then, as funding becomes available, they hold consultations around prioritizing gaps to fund.

Data, Reporting, Fidelity

The Region tries to keep funding simple for reporting purposes and they have aligned the reporting requirements so the service provider organizations always report the same data regardless of funding source. The only differences in reporting between the Province and HPS is that Provincial/Regional-

funded programs are treated as a grant and paid at the beginning of each month, while an HPS-funded agency would receive payments and submit reporting at the end of the month.

Reporting requirements used to be quarterly and simplified aggregate data where possible, but the Region has moved to monthly reporting for all agencies, for two reasons. HPS funding for Housing First programs require monthly reports, but more importantly the Region's data needs for system management are now such that they require detailed monthly reporting. The Region has found that aggregate data is not helpful in managing the programs or for tracking outcomes and individuals. The Region is moving towards adopting HIFIS-4.0, and expects it will make reporting easier, but collects monthly reports in the meantime.

Beyond the outcome reporting and financial reporting, the Region also has program standards. For example, for CHPI supportive housing, there is a framework describing the program and standards with expectations for the program. There is a housing support coordination guide—which is a case-management guide—and these standards are tied into the monthly reporting.

The Region is also initiating fast feedback through the use of a 'dashboard' report—a one-page snapshot of key indicators showing results on a monthly or quarterly basis. The Region's dashboard report is based on Hamilton's Housing First example (sample is provided in the Additional Materials Package of this report). The Region reports that this type of fast feedback to the sector (and public) is useful for many reasons, including:

- Helping everyone to see what progress is being made;
- Providing clear expectations and minimizing miscommunications;
- Quickly revealing weak numbers and allowing for fast follow-up by the Region;
- Showing service providers that the Region is using the data being provided; and
- Helping keep morale high and motivating people by showing progress.

Call for Proposals (or Not)

The Region uses a mix of yearly direct service delivery agreements, and targeted calls for proposals, to source service providers. The direct service delivery agreements are made annually with third party operators in the community (the Region is not a service provider itself). The Region reviews program descriptions and operations each year and negotiates budgets for ongoing service provision.

Shelters, supportive housing, and most other programs are considered 'ongoing programs,' so their program funding is continuous (though reviewed) each year. New programs and pilot projects tend to be sourced through targeted calls for proposals, though they use open calls when appropriate. For example, when redesigning their CHPI supportive housing program, the Region wanted a brand new program with a new framework and standards, so they put out an open call for proposals to the existing

providers in order to reinforce the new aspects of the program. As mentioned, CAB only meets once a year to review these proposals.

When a gap in existing services is identified, the Region prefers to direct funding to an existing agency for a pilot program, rather than put out a formal call for proposals. This is because they find it very hard to design and describe exactly what kind of program/service is required until they see it in operation—because new programs tend to change the operation of the system as a whole. These pilot programs allow the Region to test and modify new programs until they get exactly what they need and then transition the pilot project into a permanent ongoing program.

Challenges

Success with diversion in the community has left individuals with very high acuity behind. These people require much more significant resources and planning. This contradiction as a result of successfully housing some has also been reported by Vancouver.

Communication is a constant challenge, particularly in an environment of constant change. It is difficult to keep all the service providers on board as the Regions moves into new areas or pilots new programs. Waterloo Regional Social Services recommends keeping some funding aside to respond to emergent issues resulting from constant change.

The rapid rate of change in Waterloo's system has also generated conflict. Change in and of itself creates levels of anxiety and issues in the community. The Region is responding by using training in change management and conflict resolution. This helps organizations to understanding change, to manage the change, identify conflicts, and build capacity to undertake change. The training provides a shared language of change processes, so organizations can talk about the anxiety it induces.

The Region identified a desperate need for training (skills and service philosophy) for direct service staff and program managers. The Region identified the advantages experienced by Hamilton, Ottawa and Toronto who have regular ongoing training for their service providers.

APPENDIX 2: Winnipeg's Community Entity

CE Role and Responsibilities (as noted in the Project Description (Activities) of the Contribution Agreement between the City of Winnipeg and Canada)

The City of Winnipeg will administer the HPS–Designated Communities and Aboriginal Homelessness funding as the CE for Winnipeg. This will include the following activities which will be monitored against milestones in the Work Plan:

- The CE is responsible for implementing strategies to address Community Plan priorities as well as providing a leadership role in the local implementation of Housing First. The CE will engage the community stakeholders and funding partners to actively work together to prevent and reduce homelessness. The CE will identify funding other than the HPS from partners to meet the community contribution matching requirement.
- The CE is responsible for providing support and guidance to the CAB regarding program delivery and administration and assisting to establish the terms of reference for the project selection and recommendation processes.
- The CE will implement selection processes and solicit and confirm eligibility criteria of sub-project proposals in an open, impartial and fair manner. The CE will assess, approve and enter into funding agreements with sub-agreement holders recommended by the CAB that meet the Community Plan priorities and terms and conditions of the HPS and related policies and directives including eligible activities under the following activity areas: Housing First; Support Services; Capital Investments; Coordination of Resources and Leveraging; and Data Collection and Use.
- The CE is responsible for the management of sub-project funding agreements, including financial and activity monitoring of sub-projects to ensure compliance with sub agreements, and monitoring sub-projects for achievement of expected results. The CE will inform the CAB about the status of sub-projects (including results) and other activities related to the prevention and reduction of homelessness in the community.
- The CE will report on its activities, including the management of sub-agreements and investment targets, to Canada in accordance with the reporting requirements described in the HPS funding agreement, as well as any additional reporting as required by the HPS.
- The CE will ensure the participation and representation of Aboriginal organizations in the planning and implementation of the community plan priorities to address identified needs as appropriate.
- The CE will conduct point-in-time counts as required by the HPS.

APPENDIX 3: Winnipeg's Community Advisory Board

WINNIPEG COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD (CAB) ON HOMELESSNESS TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. MANDATE

1.1 The Winnipeg Community Advisory Board on Homelessness, hereafter referred to as CAB, is an ad-hoc committee mandated to:

- Provide advisory services relevant to the delivery of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) funding provided in Winnipeg;
- Provide advice and guidance in the assessment of proposals and recommend projects to the CE for HPS funding;
- Develop CAB terms of reference and other CAB related policies and procedures including membership application, roles and responsibilities of the chair, chair selection procedures, mandate or mission statements, and conflict of interest guidelines;
- Recommend a Community Plan and Community Plan Updates which identify local needs and investment priorities, and, as much as possible ensure a coordinated and aligned community systems level response to homelessness;
- Assist in planning for homelessness reduction and prevention strategies in Winnipeg;
- Recommend a Community Entity (CE) where the CE model is proposed or continuing.

1.2 This mandate is for the duration of the HPS.

1.3 The CAB Terms of Reference will be reviewed on an annual basis.

2. MEMBERSHIP

2.1 The Winnipeg CAB is composed of 18 members. Membership on the board will include a broad range of community perspectives and knowledge, and as such, will include membership from the community, as well as government bodies.

2.2 Government and key planning/policy agency representatives serve as Ex-officio with no voting privileges. Ex-officio members contribute value as links to alternate funding streams, programs, plans and broad community contacts within and outside housing and homelessness. Ex-officio members also serve as communication conduits to others in their organization or

level of government, both providing information to them and seeking input. This is especially important in providing new intelligence to CAB about any emerging programs or alternative funding streams that may be available to supplement HPS funds, or to refer a proposal to a more appropriate funding stream.

2.3 CAB alumnae are community members appointed by ESDC-SC in full.

2.4 The designated positions will include membership from the following areas:

- Government of Canada (2 Ex-officio);
- Government Manitoba (2 Ex-officio);
- City of Winnipeg (1 Ex-officio);
- End Homelessness Winnipeg (1 Ex-officio); and
- CAB Alumnae (2 Voting)

Additional designated positions may be added by ESDC-SC with CAB concurrence.

2.5 The 10 non-designated positions will include membership from the following areas:

- Housing and social housing programs;
- Low-Income housing providers and developers (including landlords and Landlord Associations);
- Health Care including mental health and addictions treatment;
- Community service organizations;
- People with lived experience of homelessness (2);
- Aboriginal community (6);
- Francophone community;
- Child welfare;
- Immigrant/Refugee community.

2.6 The non-designated positions will be determined through an open call for participation. A Selection Committee made up of community individuals from various sectors will be struck by ESDC-SC. The committee reviews all applications and select members to fill sectors specified in the Terms of Reference. In the event of the need to fill a vacant seat on CAB, the Selection Committee may use previous applications, or the Selection Committee may recommend to the CE to re-advertise the vacancy to the community.

2.7 The CAB will strive to recruit and retain people with lived experience of homelessness and make necessary accommodations for this to occur.

2.8 CAB will be led by a Chair and Vice Chair, who are elected by the CAB. Elections for Chair and Vice Chair will be held at least one year apart, and should be held at least 6 months prior to the expiry of the current Chair and Vice Chair terms to allow adequate time to transition. Both Chair and Vice Chair stand for a three-year term and should normally have sat on the CAB for one year prior to election.

3. TERMS OF OFFICE

3.1 Designated representatives do not have a term limit.

3.2 The non-designated representatives will be selected for a three-year term on the basis of the perspective and expertise they bring. This term may be extended should the need arise based on a recommendation from ESDC-SC with the concurrence of CAB.

3.3 A member may terminate his/her appointment on written notice to the CAB Chair.

Any member who is absent from three consecutive regular meetings, or as determined by the CAB, without appropriate and satisfactory notice to the CAB will cease to be a member of the CAB.

The termination of a member's appointment shall become effective on the date set out in the written notice signed by ESDC-SC

4. MEMBER KNOWLEDGE/EXPERTISE

4.1 Members of CAB should have knowledge of Winnipeg and the issues of housing and/or homelessness. The CAB should be comprised of representatives able to speak to the issues/needs/priorities of people who are homeless or at imminent of homelessness.

4.2 People working with organizations that have historically and will likely continue to be proponents of HPS projects bring with them experience and knowledge of homelessness, service provision, and funding agreements. They are also more likely to find themselves in conflict of interest situations when it comes to proposal review. The Selection Committee shall strive to reach balance between this expertise and conflict of interest concerns in their member selection. Ideally, 2/3 of voting CAB members will not be proponents.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 CAB Members have the responsibility to:

- Attend and actively participate in each meeting;
- Be prepared for discussion and decisions to be taken at each meeting;
- Actively participate in activities related to the development of the community plan on homelessness.
- Be familiar with and respect the Conflict of Interest policy and procedures;
- Be familiar with and respect the Code of Conduct;
- Become knowledgeable about the HPS and other homelessness related groups, processes and strategies that affect homeless reduction and prevention in Winnipeg;

- Act as conduits of information to and from the various agencies, coalitions and committees they participate in; and
- To strike subcommittees/working groups as needed.

5.2 The Chair of the CAB has the responsibility to:

- Set the agenda for meetings in collaboration with the CE
- Chair meetings, assuring proper decision making procedures are followed and CAB members have a reasonable opportunity to express their opinions
- Serve as a non-voting member of the CAB except in instances of a tie decision
- If the Chair has strong opinions about a particular discussion and feels he/she cannot facilitate objectively, he/she can pass the chairing duties to the Vice Chair.

5.3 The Vice Chair of the CAB has the responsibility to:

- Act on behalf of the Chair in his/her absence
- In prolonged absences of the Chair (more than one month), assume all accountabilities of the Chair

5.4 In the absence of the Chair and the Vice-Chair, the members present at any meeting shall choose one of the external members to be the Chair of the meeting

6. MEMBER VOTING

6.1 Quorum for meetings is a majority of voting members. Quorum must be reached prior to decisions being made at a meeting.

6.2 Decisions will be made by a formal vote with a majority of voting members present carrying the motion.

6.3 Though meetings are the preferred place for decisions, electronic votes (e-mail, polling) may be conducted when a meeting or quorum at a meeting is not possible. The rules of quorum will apply electronic voting methods. Electronic voting decisions will be ratified at the next meeting.

6.4 Members may not vote on any matter in which they have a real or perceived conflict of interest, as outlined in the Conflict of Interest Policy.

7. MEETINGS

7.1 Whenever possible, the CE will inform the CAB of decisions to be made in advance, including providing adequate background information to support thoughtful decision-making.

7.2 Meetings are held at the call of the CE, on a monthly basis unless otherwise agreed. Meetings may also be scheduled on an as needed basis.

7.3 Members wishing to invite a guest to the meeting must do so prior to the meeting date through and with the consent of the Chair and/or Vice-Chair.

7.4 Meeting minutes will follow standard anecdotal format with decisions made by a combination of consensus and motions.

8. RESOURCES

8.1 The work of the CAB is supported by the CE. The CE will provide staff to support the work of the CAB in undertaking administration, strategic planning, community development and evaluation.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY

9.1 CAB aims to be as transparent of its proceedings as possible, without disclosing proprietary information. Collective discussions and decisions are part of the public record.

9.2 Members will respect the confidence of fellow members' opinions and recommendations made during meetings. Members shall not discuss specific proposals, outside of the committee structure. Members will not release any information gathered through their membership that may cause unfair advantage to one group over another in the competition for funds, due to inequitable access to information.

10. COMMUNICATIONS

10.1 Only the Community Entity (The City of Winnipeg) may make public statements on behalf of the CAB on HPS funding matters or other issues (Example-project specifics). If there is a reason to include or consult with federal partners at Service Canada, that will be a consideration before involving or answering media queries (Example-project is controversial).

11. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

11.1 CAB will abide by the guidelines as set out in the Conflict of Interest Guidelines document established specifically for CAB (Annex A).

Next Review Date: May, 2017

WINNIPEG COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD (CAB) ON HOMELESSNESS CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

The Winnipeg Community Advisory Board (CAB) will be fair, equitable, transparent. The CAB will use this policy for conflicts of interest, including actual, potential and perceived, in fulfilling their mandate. The policy applies to all members of CAB, including Ex-officio, government officials, staff and contract personnel.

I. Conflicts of interest may result from situations where a CAB member:

Currently or within the past two years:

1. Sits on a proponent's Board of Directors or related governance committee
2. Is an employee of the proponent
3. Is a contractor of the proponent
4. Is receiving service, money, other support or 'benefit' from the proponent

And/or Currently:

5. Is involved in joint programming or a partnership with the proponent where the CAB member or CAB member's organization may benefit financially
6. Has an immediate family member (spouse, children, parents, siblings and/or someone who permanently resides with the member) who receives services from the proponent's HPS funded services
7. Has an immediate family member (spouse, children, parents, siblings and/or someone who permanently resides with the member) who is: employed by or a senior manager of an HPS funded program, or sits on the Board of Directors of the proponent
8. Has personally provided a letter of support for the applicant's proposal submission

And/Or:

9. Other potential conflict situations that may arise and be declared by the CAB member or noted by the CAB

2. Disclosure

Prior to proposal review, the CE will send all CAB members a list of proponents, their partners and organizations who have supported the proposal. CAB members are expected to declare conflicts of interest and share with their fellow members to assure transparency.

Any member of CAB will not be a part of any decision that leads to a recommendation on a proposed project for which they have a conflict of interest.

In CAB business where there will not be a decision leading to a recommendation on a project, if a CAB member believes they may have a Conflict of Interest, they will declare it immediately and CAB will make a decision regarding that members' presence based on the principles outlined above. The decision on how CAB addresses the conflict will be minuted.

3. Breaches and Accountability

All CAB members are responsible for adhering to this policy as outlined. As such, each member is expected to, and has the right to, raise a question or concern regarding application of the policy.

During the proposal review process, should a CAB member fail to declare what another CAB member or CE staff believe may be, or perceived to be, a conflict of interest, they should raise it with the CE and CAB Chair (or Vice-Chair if the person seen to be in conflict is the Chair) prior to the beginning of the proposal review process. The CAB Chair (or Vice-Chair) and CE will determine next steps on a case-by-case basis, sharing their response with the affected CAB member(s).

Other breaches of this Conflict of Interest policy will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis by CAB. Perceived breaches or concerns should be raised with the CAB Chair (or Vice-Chair) and CE. The CAB Chair (or Vice-Chair) and CE will determine next steps on a case-by-case basis, sharing their response with the affected CAB member(s).

CAB members shall abide by this conflict of interest policy, as well as other policies that may be adopted.

CAB Member Signature

Print Name

Date

Conflict of Interest Policy to be reviewed annually with the ToR

WINNIPEG COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD (CAB) ON HOMELESSNESS PARTICIPANT CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Although a member may be employed by, or affiliated with, a particular organization or interest group, it is the responsibility of all members to represent the best interests of the entire community.
2. Members shall ensure that the details and dynamics of CAB discussions are kept confidential, including the proposal review and assessment discussions, and respect confidential information shared in the course of CAB activities.
3. Regardless of personal viewpoints, members shall not speak against, or in other ways undermine, CAB solidarity outside of CAB meetings once a group decision has been made.
4. Members shall avoid – in fact and in perception – conflicts of interest. Members shall disclose to the Chair and/or Vice-Chair any possible conflicts in a timely manner. Members shall familiarize themselves with the CAB’s conflict of interest policy for guidance in this area.
5. Members shall familiarize themselves with the CAB Terms of Reference for guidance on member responsibilities, meeting processes, decision making protocols, and so on.
6. Members shall be prepared for meetings, having read pre-circulated material(s) in advance.
7. Members’ contributions to discussion and decision-making shall be informed and constructive.
8. Members’ interactions in meetings shall be courteous and respectful.
9. Members shall adhere to all CAB policies and practices.
10. Members shall participate in, and support, the CAB in additional ways beyond attending CAB meetings. This could include joining sub-committees, assisting in project evaluations, and communicating about homelessness and CAB activities as approved by CAB.
11. Members shall not attempt to exercise individual authority, collusion or undue influence over the CAB.

12. Members shall not influence, directly or indirectly, committee decisions on an applicant's proposal where the member has a conflict of interest.
13. Members shall apply the same proposal review, assessment criteria and guidelines to all proposals in a consistent manner.
14. Members shall not make arrangements to support and/or not support proposals in exchange for support and/or non-support on other proposals.
15. Members shall preserve the credibility, integrity and impartiality of CAB.
16. In the event of conflict between members, or concern about the behaviour of a member, the three step process described below shall be used. Steps 1 and 2 are to be completed within 30 days. If the conflict is not resolved in this time frame, the members shall move to step 3.
 - Step 1: The individual(s) with the conflict/concern will speak to the member to try to resolve the issue.
 - Step 2: If resolution is not achieved through step 1, the parties shall utilize one or both of the CAB Chair and Vice-Chair as a neutral third party mediator. If a Chair and/or Vice-Chair is one of the parties involved in the dispute, the parties shall seek an independent third party mediator from within the CAB.
 - Step 3: If resolution is not achieved through steps 1 and 2, the issue shall be brought by the parties to the CAB for resolution by the CAB as a whole.

I hereby acknowledge by my signature that I agree on my own behalf to abide by this Code of Conduct.

Name (print)

Signature

Date

Appendix 4: Invitees to the Focus Groups

Focus Group	Organization	Confirmed?	Attended?
Frontline Service	Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre	Y	Y
	Addictions Foundation of Manitoba: Youth Services	Y	Y
	Canadian Mental Health Association	Y	N
	Centre Flavie-Laurent Inc.	N	N
	Doorways	Y	Y
	Eagle Urban Transition Centre	N	N
	Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre	Y	Y
	Macdonald Youth Services	N	N
	Main Street Project	Y	Y
	Mount Carmel Clinic	Y	N
	Ndinawemaaganag Endaawaad	N	N
	North End Women's Centre	Y	N
	Pan Am Place	N	N
	Resource Assistance for Youth	Y	Y
	Siloam Mission	Y	Y
	Sunshine House	Y	Y
	West Central Women's Resource Centre	Y	Y
Wii Chiiwaakank Learning Centre, U of W	Y	Y	
Housing First	Aboriginal Health and Wellness	Y	Y
	Canadian Mental Health Association	Y	Y
	Doorways	Y	Y
	Eagle Urban Transition Centre	N	N
	Housing Plus: Winnipeg Rental Network	Y	Y
	Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre	Y	Y
	Main Street Project	Y	N
	Mount Carmel Clinic	Y	N
	Resource Assistance for Youth	Y	Y
West Central Woman's Resource Centre	Y	N	
Indigenous Organizations	Aboriginal Seniors Resource Centre	N	Y
	Aboriginal Youth Opportunities!	N	N
	Bear Clan	Y	N
	Circle of Life Thunderbird House	Y	N
	Eagle Urban Transition Centre	Y	Y
	Elizabeth Fry Society	Y	Y
	Ikwe Widdjiitiwin	Y	Y
	Indian and Metis Friendship Centre	Y	N
	Ka Ni Kanichihk Inc.	Y	Y
	Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre	Y	Y
	Manitoba Inuit Association	N	N
	Native Addictions Council of Manitoba	Y	Y
	Native Women's Transition Centre	N	Y
	Ndinawemaaganag Endaawaad	Y	Y
	Ogjiita Pimatiswin Kinamatwin	Y	N
Onashowewin Justice Circle	Y	Y	
Oyati Tipi Cumini Yape	N	N	
Wahbung Abinoonjiag Inc.	N	N	
Lived Experience Group	Nine Participants in Total, 3 from CMHA, 3 from Ma Mawi, 3 from AHWC		
Senior Administrators	Addictions Foundation of Manitoba	Y	Y
	Addictions Foundation of Manitoba: Youth Services	Y	Y
	Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation	N	N
	City of Winnipeg/CE	Y	Y
	End Homelessness Winnipeg	Y	Y
	Health, Healthy Living, Seniors	Y	Y
	Health, Healthy Living, Seniors: Spiritual Care	Y	Y
	Housing Community Development	N	N
	Manitoba Housing	Y	Y
	Service Canada	Y	N
	WRHA	Y	Y

Additional Materials (Under Separate Cover)