HPS ABORIGINAL HOUSING FIRST READINESS TEAM

Presented by:
Yvonne Maracle, Sara Mayo and Cindy Sue Montana McCormack
The Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) has been renewed for a period of 5 years from 2014 – 2019 with a focus on Housing First (HF).

What is Housing First? It is an approach that focuses on moving people who are experiencing homelessness as rapidly as possible from street or emergency shelters into permanent housing with supports that vary according to client need(s).

The primary focus will be on the Chronically and Episodically homeless.
Aboriginal Homelessness in Canada

- **Why are Aboriginal populations at a disproportionate rate of becoming or over-represented in Canadian homeless population?**
  - Historical trauma plays a major role (displacement due to loss of land, residential school, 60’s scoop, racism, etc.)
  - System societal factors – fragmented families and cultural awareness
  - Aboriginal people living in cities are 8 times more likely to experience homeless (6.97% of Aboriginal vs 0.78% of general population)

- **How do Aboriginal People experience homelessness?**
  - Physical space/amenities and emotional/cultural connections
  - Spiritual homelessness – can lead to crisis of personal identity, creating a sense of loss and confusion and can effect’s one’s own mental health and well-being
Year in Review

- Literature Review

- Research Best Practices Models (i.e. Edmonton, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Toronto)

- Consultation Activities & Community Input
  - Completed survey with 455 results about HPS-HF
  - Completed one HPS – HF Community Information Session
  - Completed 5 Key informant Interviews
  - Completed 2 Focus Groups
  - Facilitated the completion and successfully submission of the HPS Hamilton Aboriginal Community Plan 2014-2019 in conjunction with the Aboriginal CAB
Year in Review

- Developed HPS Aboriginal allocation scenario(s) for review
  - Facilitated a successful Aboriginal allocation process based on all information gathered
  - Developed several Hamilton Aboriginal specific ICM scenarios

- Hamilton Aboriginal Homelessness Mini Point-in-Time Count
  - 353 Surveys Completed in 1 day event
  - Coordination & Implementation

- Hamilton Aboriginal Homelessness Symposium
  - Coordination & Implementation
  - Release results of findings
Surveys conducted by SPRC with partners

- National Aboriginal Day events (June 2014)
  - Focus on agreement with Housing First
  - 455 total responses, including 290 Aboriginal respondents

- All We Need is Community Urban Aboriginal Homelessness Survey (February 18, 2015)
  - “Point-in-Time Count” of Aboriginal persons experiencing homelessness in downtown Hamilton
  - 342 total responses, including 191 Aboriginal respondents (housed and not housed)
Challenges would include limited funding, landlord buy in, too strict criteria, lack of human resources, identifying the client, and a need to increase resources in general.

What needs to change in the system to meet these challenges? Develop an Aboriginal Team, need for an Aboriginal perspective (culture can play a major role in the healing process), Aboriginal people providing services (caring, understanding, shared history), networking and downtown location.

What type of training do we need? Mental Health first aid, Suicide Intervention, Crisis Intervention, Cultural competencies, Harm reduction, Domestic violence, Navigating the Legal System, Safety planning, etc.
Aboriginal Housing First survey results

Conducted Summer 2014 during National Aboriginal Day events in Hamilton
455 total responses including 290 Aboriginal respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement with Housing First principles and practices (score out of 7)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gathering Place (Men's Supportive Housing)</td>
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<td>Emergency Food Bank</td>
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<td>Life skills programming</td>
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<td>Honouring the Circle (Women's Transitional Housing)</td>
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<td>Traditional culture education for youth and families</td>
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<td>Additional affordable housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Housing services and help with landlord issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early intervention and diversion from homelessness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural sensitivity</td>
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<td>Cultural ceremonies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with landlords</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other supports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent subsidies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Small caseload</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation of Aboriginal homeless persons in services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improve data collection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expand Aboriginal homeless system planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Should be Aboriginal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lived experience of homelessness/poverty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Choice of agencies</td>
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<td>Current strategies working</td>
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</table>

- 70% Supports Housing First
- 98% More collaboration with mainstream

(Among Aboriginal responses only)
"Where did you grown up?" (Aboriginal only = 273 responses)

- Hamilton: 39%
- Six Nations or New Credit: 21%
- Northern Ontario: 13%
- Southern Ontario: 8%
- Western Province: 6%
- Eastern Province: 4%
- Toronto: 3%

Did you help a homeless person by letting them stay with you in the last six months? (Yes = 145 out of 411 responses)

- "Yes" among non-Aboriginal respondents: 26%
- "Yes" among Aboriginal respondents: 39%

"What is your postal code?" (Aboriginal only and Hamilton postal codes only = 203 responses)

- Central lower city north: 39%
- Central lower city South: 20%
- Mountain: 16%
- East Hamilton North: 13%
- East Hamilton South: 6%
- Stoney Creek: 4%
- Westdale/Dundas: 1%

Ages of homeless persons helped (147 persons helped in total)

- Under age 18: 9
- 18-25: 52
- 26-35: 33
- 36-45: 29
- 46-55: 15
- 56-65: 7
- 65+: 2

HPS Aboriginal HFRT Presentation  March 27, 2015
All We Need is Community
Urban Aboriginal Homelessness Survey

When:  Wednesday, February 18, 2015 (9:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m. in minus 14 degree weather)

Purpose:
The purpose of the Aboriginal Point in Time Count Advisory Committee was to research, develop and implement a survey and process that would test and provide a “best practice” model when working with urban Aboriginal people in Hamilton.

Objectives:
• Engage in discussion amongst workers who have worked with Aboriginal Homeless people to get an understanding of the issues they face
• Develop a survey that is Aboriginal sensitive
• Develop and test the procedure that would become a “best practice” model for conducting a “Point in Time Count” that includes urban Aboriginal people
• To develop a potential “baseline” in which the urban Hamilton Aboriginal homeless population can be counted
All We Need is Community
Urban Aboriginal Homelessness Survey

Advisory committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization and title</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Filice</td>
<td>City of Hamilton, Community Services Program Analyst – Homelessness Programs &amp; Housing Services Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott France</td>
<td>Metis Nation of Ontario – Employment Developer (person with lived experience)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stephen Gaetz</td>
<td>Ex. Officio, Professor and Director, Canadian Observatory on Homelessness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cole Gately</td>
<td>Core Collaborative Learning, Good Shepherd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sheryl Green</td>
<td>Community Profile Developer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jason Keye</td>
<td>Youth Outreach Worker (YOWH) – Wesley Urban Ministries/HRIC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brad Lebarron</td>
<td>HRIC – Youth Homelessness Outreach Worker</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yvonne Maracle</td>
<td>SPRC, Aboriginal Coordinator, HFR Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allyson Marsolais</td>
<td>Ex. Officio, Project Manager, Canadian Observatory on Homelessness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sara Mayo</td>
<td>SPRC, Social Planner, HFR Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cindy Sue McCormack</td>
<td>Social Planning &amp; Research Council (SPRC) – Senior Social Planner, Housing First Readiness (HFR) Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shannon Murphy</td>
<td>Transitional Support Worker, Native Women’s Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dick Passmore</td>
<td>Mental Health and Street Outreach Service – Outreach Worker (seconded from the De dwa da dehs nye&gt;s – Aboriginal Health Centre)</td>
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All We Need is Community
Urban Aboriginal Homelessness Survey

How many surveys were completed, and what is breakdown between Aboriginal/Non, Housed/Homeless, and survey site?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Aboriginal</th>
<th>Not Aboriginal</th>
<th>Aboriginal</th>
<th>Not Aboriginal</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Street surveys</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housed</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No housing</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Data source: Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton
All We Need is Community Urban Aboriginal Homelessness Survey, February 18, 2015
Among persons who were homeless, where were they staying that night and what are differences by Aboriginal status?

Data source: Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton
All We Need is Community Urban Aboriginal Homelessness Survey, February 18, 2015
Among Aboriginal persons, are they accessing Aboriginal services and are there differences by housing status?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housed</th>
<th>No housing</th>
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<tr>
<td>49%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51%</td>
<td>33%</td>
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</tbody>
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Data source: Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton
All We Need is Community Urban Aboriginal Homelessness Survey, February 18, 2015
Age groups of persons experiencing homelessness in downtown Hamilton, by Aboriginal status

Data source: SPRC All We Need is Community Urban Aboriginal Homelessness Survey, 2015

Survey gathered responses from 69 Aboriginal and 60 non-Aboriginal persons experiencing homelessness in downtown Hamilton on February 18, 2015.
Profile of Hamilton’s Aboriginal Residents
Age groups of Aboriginals in Hamilton and Ontario, compared to Hamilton’s general population

Data source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census
Map 4.

Aboriginal Ancestry
City of Hamilton
by Planning Units (Neighbourhoods)

Data Source:
2006 Census of Canada, Statistics Canada
Please see Hamilton’s Social Landscape report for
more information on data reliability issues with
Aboriginal data from the Census.

% of population
with Aboriginal ancestry

Number of
neighbourhoods
in each class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>% of Population</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>0% - 1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>1.1% - 2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>2.9% - 4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-9</td>
<td>4.9% - 6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-15</td>
<td>6.9% - 17.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>City of Hamilton average (2.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of residents who are of Aboriginal ancestry

- 0 - 49
- 50 - 99
- 100 - 199
- 200 - 399
- 400 - 610

Communities within the City of Hamilton

Highways

Escarpment
General Recommendations & Results from the Hamilton Aboriginal Agencies & Front Line Workers
General Recommendations from the Hamilton Aboriginal Agencies – Key Informant Interviews & Focus Groups

- The Food Bank was one of the major “Homelessness Prevention” projects identified and supported

- The need for staffing to be increased so that new program activity could be developed and implemented

- The Aboriginal community needed to be more involved in the decision making process to ensure that we are meeting their needs

- The Key Informants did see opportunities to work with each other developing partnerships or networking amongst themselves to improve service delivery for clients and strengthen workers ability to deliver those services

- We need to collect data and to establish Aboriginal statistics for the Hamilton Aboriginal Community
General Recommendations from the
All We Need is Community
Urban Aboriginal Homelessness Survey
Aboriginal Homeless Point-in-Time Count recommendations

- Aboriginal volunteers were essential to encourage Aboriginal residents to participate in survey.
- Aboriginal volunteers were very motivated to help with survey gathering about their own community – many volunteers had experience with homelessness and they were especially helpful in outreach.
- Magnet event with cultural programming and Aboriginal food was successful in drawing almost half of Aboriginal survey respondents currently experiencing homelessness.
- Need to develop an Aboriginal services Street Outreach card.
- Question wording “do you have a permanent residence” was confusing for some respondents.
Aboriginal Homeless Point-in-Time Count recommendations

- Logistical highlights
  - Small engagement gift (soft granola bar) and $2 Tim’s card as thank you gift were well received
  - Giveaways at magnet event were appreciated
  - Having poster about event/survey with medicine wheel on back of clipboards was great for awareness
  - Needed more time for volunteer training around survey itself
  - Hard to conduct survey on streets privately sometimes due to people gathering in groups