



# Homelessness System Review

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# 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Emergency Housing

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## Objectives 6 and 7

6. The existing shelter system should be examined, to assess emergency housing needs of various population groups and the best shelter options for different user groups

7. Homelessness services offered in the County should implement a Housing First approach, with emphasis on services that keep at-risk people from becoming homeless, and on support services that help shelter users to quickly get housing and to keep stable housing.

# The Mission

## Homelessness Services Review

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Perform Operational Review for funded Homeless & Re-Housing Services

Ensure that the target population served by the homelessness support system matches the priority population of the community

Embrace the realities and opportunities for change within our communities - challenge dominant mythologies

Identify next steps – short term and longer term opportunities for enhancement

# OrgCode Consulting, Inc

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OrgCode Consulting, Inc. is a subject matter expert in housing and homelessness.

Their core services include action-oriented research, data-informed analysis, robust facilitation and program evaluation, and training and technical assistance. They are experts in evidence-informed practices to end homelessness.

# Methodology

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## Phase 1: Data and Information Analysis

- ▶ Review of Documents including agreements, reports as well as data analysis
- ▶ Stakeholder consultations, including Service Provider Surveys
- ▶ Program Monitoring Visits, On-Site Shadowing

## Phase 2: Report of Insights

## Phase 3: Training in Effective Practices - Spring 2018

# To Achieve an End to Homelessness

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## 4 Sectors of Service that Must be High Functioning

### **Sector 1: Homelessness Prevention & Shelter Diversion**

### **Sector 2: Connecting to Permanent Solutions**

### **Sector 3: Ancillary Services**

### **Sector 4: Re-Housing & Supports**

# Greatest Strengths

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- ▶ Contact with local community partners revealed **dedicated professionals** that collaborate to improve service delivery and ensure system navigation for individuals and families experiencing homelessness and housing crises in the County.

# Greatest Strengths

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- ▶ The **leadership and guidance** provided by Northumberland County and the Regional Housing Coordinator has been exemplary thus far and the willingness of local community partners to implement new practices, policies and operations to better align with Housing First and evidence informed realities has been evident.



# Opportunities

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- ▶ With continued commitment to invest in affordable housing and the incorporation of the recommended enhancements in each of the pivotal sectors of homeless and re-housing service **attaining functional zero is indeed achievable over the next 5 years** but only with a collective commitment to invest in change and spend on impact.

# The Time Is Right...

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- ▶ The Community and Social Services Department, the Regional Housing Coordinator the CELHIN and the local community partners have demonstrated the commitment required to ensure that the entire system of care aligns and functions in an optimal manner.

# **So, What's Next ... to Achieve Sustainable Change**

# End Homelessness by:

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- ▶ *Closing the front door into homelessness* –
  - ▶ Diversion & Prevention must be enhanced
  - ▶ Enhance HCRT Coordinated Entry
  - ▶ Discharge Planning with other Sectors (health and justice)
- ▶ *Open the Back Door out of Homelessness* –
  - ▶ Housing focused Shelters that serve the most vulnerable
  - ▶ Housing First Intensive Case Management Program
  - ▶ Housing Development & Location Services

# Action the Vision

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- ▶ Immediate Priorities:
  - ▶ Housing Stabilization Programs
  - ▶ Housing Focused Sheltering
  - ▶ Shelter Diversion
  - ▶ Data Management
  
- ▶ Intermediate Priorities
  - ▶ Performance Monitoring

# Recommendations – Homelessness Prevention

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- ▶ Implement an *objective triage tool* to identify households that have the greatest risk of becoming homeless when accessing discretionary OW/ODSP and CHPI financial benefits.
- ▶ Any prevention investments must be recognized as mitigating the risks affiliated specifically with homelessness.
- ▶ *Targeted population* should be those at imminent risk of homelessness – demonstrated by the objective assessment
- ▶ Create *policies and procedures* to guide activities and create standards of care

# Recommendations- Shelter Diversion

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- ▶ Provide *training* on the nine steps to an effective diversion practice for all agencies and programs
- ▶ Enhance *customized reporting* for prevention and diversion activities to track
  - ▶ Positive housing destinations at service exit
  - ▶ Returns for future homeless services in the future
- ▶ *Policies and procedures* required

# Recommendations- Connections to Permanent Solutions

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- ▶ The *priority population for shelter must be realigned* to match the population demonstrating the greatest depth of need locally.
- ▶ Customized data reports to capture outcomes and impacts:
  - ▶ Length of stay
  - ▶ Positive housing destinations
  - ▶ Return to homelessness
  - ▶ Turn-a-ways
- ▶ Housing focused sheltering *Policies & Procedures* required



# Recommendations- Re- Housing Services & Programs

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- ▶ Dedication of *housing stabilization investments* that align with Housing First fidelity to practice will be essential.
- ▶ HCRT Prioritization list must drive the re-housing efforts locally
- ▶ Coordinated and formalized *housing location efforts* are required
- ▶ Electronic data management system is required
- ▶ **Policies & Procedures** should govern activities

# County plans new emergency shelter system for Northumberland

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- ▶ Northumberland County is moving forward with plans to implement a new emergency shelter system for the community that will best support ongoing work with partner agencies to deliver a coordinated response to homelessness, locally.
- ▶ This updated shelter system will incorporate best practices for homelessness diversion, and be based on the 'Housing First' model that now underpins all local inter-agency collaboration to address homelessness.

# Housing First Model

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The premise of the 'Housing First' model is that people can only focus on other elements of self-sustainability, such as employment, appropriate medical attention, and family management, once they have a stable home from which to build. This model is at the root of the provincial housing policy, and is the foundation for the County's Housing and Homelessness Plan.

# Thank You

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Ending Homelessness Is Easy: Creating a High  
Functioning System of Care that can Sustain Success is  
the Challenge