

Housing & Homeless Services Network

Agenda

Wednesday, May 12, 2010
Metro Hall, Room 308

9:00 – 9:15 a.m. Coffee and Networking

9:15 – 11:00 a.m.

- 1. Multidisciplinary Outreach Team (MDOT), Toronto North Support Services, Mariruth Morton**
- 2. Mobile Crisis Outreach Team, Good Neighbours Club, Kate MacNeil and Gloria Olumola**
- 3. First Steps to Home Project, WoodGreen Community Services, Pablo Escobar**
- 4. To Be Determined**
- 5. New Business/Announcements**

Future agenda items:

Michele Connell 416-397-4164/ mconnel@toronto.ca Amber Neumann 416-397-7523/aneuman@toronto.ca
or Tracey Smith, 416-397-4830/ tsmith4@toronto.ca

Changes to phone, fax, e-mail, mailing information: Laila Parpia 416-392-7198 laparpi@toronto.ca

Housing & Homeless Services Network

Minutes

Wednesday, April 14, 2010
519 Church Street Community Centre

Attending: Judy Abraham, Rob Aversa, Ron Barrow, Marek Bero, Sally Bryant, Yvette Caines, Luis Carrillos, Lorne Cappe, Anne Carruthers, Meeley Chan, Dale Coppins, Caroline Crawford, Dawn D’Cruz, Pablo Escobar, Rosemary Foulds, Alexandra Gunn, Rahman Ishtiaque, Ashley Lawrence, Lindsay MacPhee, John Methven, Steve Milne, Sharmila Mohammed, Toby Mullally, Esther Mwangi, Rodney Nembhard, Abigail Paul, Fanny Paz, Heath Priston, Corey Raycraft, Michael Rosenberg, Vicky Sanders, Mark Shapiro, Marcia Shelton, Tanya Simpson, Laurel Stroz, Sherry Waters, Katherine White, Steve White, Fanny Wong

1. Janet Fairfield assumed the Chair and called the 3rd session of the 2010 Housing and Homeless Services Network meeting to order. Minutes of the meeting held on March 10, 2010 were approved as circulated.
2. **“Changing Patterns for Street Involved Youth”, Public Interest Strategy and Communications, Larissa Gregorovitch and Sean Meagher, 416-531-4478, www.publicinterest.ca**

Changing Patterns for Street Involved Youth is a joint research project by Public Interest, Yonge Street Mission and World Vision. Yonge Street Mission noted changes in street involved youth in Toronto over the past two decades and sought guidance from professionals and engaged with youth in order to understand the changing issues youth are faced with today. Public Interest, an independent consultant, conducted the research and produced a report.

The study had three objectives:

- determine the characteristics of the homeless and street-involved youth population
- identify needs, priorities, behaviours and patterns
- determine the implications for service and supports for homeless and street involved youth

Public Interest conducted interviews with service providers and public officials. Public Interest trained and supported peer interviewers who completed over 200 interviews with homeless youth throughout Toronto in the summer and fall of 2008.

Study Highlights

- Youth don’t choose homelessness
- Age of arrival matters
- National prevention strategy is required.
- Intervention opportunities are strongest early.
- Services not always accessed by youth in early stages - outreach needed
- Services highly valued, trusted
- Sense of safety affects outcomes
- Sympathetic staff can reach youth

- Mental health gateway critically needed.

Selected Findings:

- Youth for the most part, became homeless for reasons beyond their control and that they believed were beyond their capacity to resolve. 49.8% had no safe home to go to. 16 years of age was the most common age for youth to arrive on the streets. Older arrivals tend to have episodic homelessness. Prevention, even temporary appears to be beneficial.
- Over 14% were born in Ontario outside the GTA, 32.3% were born in Canada outside Ontario. 11.1% were born in the Caribbean, 6.1% were born in Africa, 5.6% were born in Europe, 2.5% were born in Asia and 1.5% were born in South America. (23% in the GTA/ 47% elsewhere in Canada /27% Immigrants)
- There are specific windows of opportunity for interventions that help youth to make the transition back to housing. Youth do not appear to leave the street at random intervals but instead tend toward particular significant windows for making changes in their lives. One significant window for change is during the first 3 months of homelessness. Survey results showed far more youth who have been on the street for less than 3 months (18%) than youth who had been there for 3 - 6 months. (3.7%). This suggests that many youth leave the street during the first 3 months of homelessness. That makes the first 90 days of homelessness a significant focal point for potential intervention.
- Youth showed a strong tendency to focus on short term strategies to address needs. Social group choices reflect those short term priorities.
- Youth rely heavily on services to overcome challenges and barriers. 63.4% regularly use services. Over half use multiple services. 97.6% of youth who use services find them helpful. Youth are more likely to trust a good case worker (31%) or agencies (20.7%) than friends (17.2%). People who rely on agencies were more likely to report positive changes in their lives. Service users are more likely to be older, longer on street, more involved in street culture. Youth suggestions for more outreach efforts were corroborated by data.
- Youth have different criteria for safety. 30% of shelter residents feel unsafe. Couch surfing causes high anxiety for women (63.8%). Safety often set by sense of control and predictability. Youth tend to seek out services that are welcoming, accommodating, sympathetic and respectful. Youth tend to avoid services that are unwelcoming, judgmental, indifferent or disrespectful. Youth tend to dislike chaos, drama, crisis and unclean conditions.
- Youth ignored convenience and quality as considerations for choosing services.
- When youth named possible improvements to service they named psycho-social criteria over practical considerations 41.8% to 28.8%. When asked who youth turn to for help with the challenges they face, they were significantly more likely to name agencies or caseworkers than friends or family. Clearly service providers play a big role. Safe, stable, respectful, youth friendly services that reach out actively are the most successful.
- 84.5% of youth say they can get the health care they need. 71% got care downtown, even when they lived in the suburbs. 41.5% of youth reported mental health issues. 55.8% of youth said they had trouble accessing mental health services. A barrier to mental health services

tends to be rooted in service delivery model. Youth need a sympathetic gateway to mental health services.

The report provides a set of recommendations. A full copy of the report is available at www.publicinterest.ca or www.ysm.ca.

3. Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) Affordable Housing Project, Affordable Housing Office, Lorne Cappe, 416 397-4252, lcappe@toronto.ca

The City of Toronto's Affordable Housing Office is working in partnership with CAMH to finance an affordable housing development as part of the redevelopment of the 1001 Queen Street site.

Forum Equity Partners and Verdiroc Development Corporation have been selected as the lessee/developer for the first non-CAMH-use block of land on the southwest corner of Queen St. W. and Ossington Ave. The mixed-use development will have street-level retail shops and several floors of much-needed affordable rental housing. The affordable housing component will include 179 new homes for seniors, persons with disabilities, victims of domestic violence, and recent immigrants. Construction is scheduled to begin in July 2010, with estimated completion in late 2011. The Affordable Housing Program funding will total \$21.5 million, with a further \$2.6 million in City assistance.

The site has an iconic history. The 27-acre site has been home to a psychiatric hospital since the Toronto Lunatic Asylum was opened in 1850. The original asylum buildings were demolished in the mid-1970s and replaced with the current institutional campus. CAMH was created in a 1998 merger of four existing institutions and charged with improving the quality of and access to mental health and addiction care in Ontario.

The vision of the redevelopment is to create an urban village that will replace the institutional stigma with a real community setting, creating a client-centred and health-promoting environment and facilitating the integration of clinical care and research and policy, and mental health and addiction. Nine new city blocks, new and extended city streets, and a wide mix of building uses will seamlessly weave the CAMH site into the surrounding neighbourhood and bring new vitality and life to the Queen St. West community.

Many of the site's buildings have been designed with environmentally responsible and sustainable features in order to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification. These will be the first hospital buildings in Ontario (and third in Canada) to achieve LEED Gold.

The Centre for Discovery and Knowledge Exchange Building, fronting on to Queen St. W, will provide a prominent location for the integration of elements of the Research Program (non-animal neurosciences, social policy research) with CAMH's Policy, Education and Health Promotion Program. As the informal "front door" to CAMH, this building will also house the Workman Theatre, client and family information centre, seminar and training rooms, central pharmacy, and a client community centre.

When fully redeveloped, the site will be about evenly divided between hospital and non-hospital use buildings, contributing to the overall project vision of an integrated 'urban village'. Non-hospital-use

buildings will comprise a mix of uses, such as shops, residential, commercial space, and community use, creating a genuine neighbourhood feel.

For more information, please go to: www.toronto.ca/affordablehousing or www.transforminglives.ca

4. Drop-In Review, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, Rosemary Foulds and Anne Carruthers

The Community Initiatives Unit has recently completed its comprehensive review of drop-in centres here in Toronto. Consultation was a prominent feature of the review with interviews, focus groups, surveys and six sector wide consultations reaching out to individuals who use drop-ins, drop-in staff (both front-line and management) as well as other sector funders. The Review substantiated that drop-in centres make a unique contribution to the homelessness services sector. They provide concrete resources and services that help people who are homeless to find housing as well as assist people who are precariously housed to stabilize and improve their housing.

The Review findings have provided a foundation for the City's policy direction in supporting the drop-in sector. Recognizing that a safe and welcoming space is fundamental to the provision of drop-in services, the City has prioritized capacity and access. For example, four drop-ins have received funding to increase their staffing levels and nine drop-in centres are providing 4,800 more hours of service – mainly on weekends and statutory holidays. Further, supports are also being provided to improve access to training for front-line staff and volunteers as well as encouraging partnerships to provide nutritious food.

Key materials produced during this review include:

- Literature Review
- Report of Interviews and Focus Groups with People Who Use Drop-In Centres
- The Review and Analysis of Funding and Staffing
- Measuring Success
- Toronto Drop-In Network Good Practices Toolkit
- Drop-In Review Consultation Report

Current efforts underway include investigating issues such as service standards and service co-ordination. As this is a highly diverse and autonomous sector, an Implementation Group consisting of representation from the sector and the City is being recruited to guide movement forward.

For more information and to access the key materials produced during this Review please visit www.toronto.ca/housing/drop-inreview.htm. For comments and questions about the Drop-In Review, please contact Rosemary at rfoulds@toronto.ca.

5. New Business/Announcements

- **The Dream Team Annual Fundraiser Dinner, Dawn D'cruz, 416-318-3580**
The Dream Team is a group of consumer survivors who advocate for safer, affordable supportive housing for people living with mental health and addictions issues. They are hosting a fundraiser on April 29 at 6 pm at the Lithuanian Hall on 1573 Bloor Street West. Guest speakers include Tatum Wilson and Pat Capponi. There will be live music by the Deloraines and a theatre presentation. Tickets are \$30.00. For more information and to purchase tickets please contact coordinator@thedreamteam.ca or 416-516-1422 x 263.

- **Resources Exist for Networking and Training (RENT), EYET, Janet Fairfield, 416-686-3390 x9989**

RENT is hosting a workshop on “Housing Standards: Promoting Safe, Habitable Housing Conditions for All” on Wednesday April 21 from 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at 947 Queen Street East. To register log on at www.housingworkers.ca and click the workshop title or contact Janet at program@housingworkers.ca.

RENT will be presenting a second Housing Sector Forum focusing on the Immigrant and Refugee Housing Committee on April 29 from 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at 947 Queen St. East. The focus will be on housing issues faced by vulnerable immigrants and refugees as well as sharing resources that are available to help these groups find appropriate housing.

- **WoodGreen Community Services, Pablo Escobar, 416-645-6000 x2525**

The Rooming House Networking Group is holding a networking meeting on May 18 from 1 – 4 p.m. at the 519 Church Community Centre. The results of a recent research study on supports for rooming houses will be shared. The event will also explore how to build supports for rooming houses and provide an opportunity to meet rooming house landlords, both licensed and unlicensed. Flyers were distributed. Please inform landlords of this upcoming event. For more information or to RSVP contact Pablo at the above number.

Next Meeting:

**Wednesday, May 12, 2010
9:15 am
Room 308, Metro Hall
55 John Street**