

Housing & Homeless Services Network

Agenda

Wednesday, June 9, 2010
Metro Hall, Room 308

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

9:15 – 11:00 a.m.

1. **Live Green Grants, Toronto Environment Office, Kristina Hausmanis**

2. **CAMH Redevelopment Project – Transforming Lives, Kama Lee Jackson and Yuri Ma**

3. **Federal Homelessness Programs in Canada: Trends, Current Policies, Prospects, Michael Shapcott, Wellesley Institute**

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, May 12, 2010
Metro Hall, Room 308

Attending: Rob Aversa, LaToya Beckford, Kevin Blackwood, Alice Broughton, Peggy Byrne, Hugh Cameron, Luis Carrillos, Lorraine Clarke, Stella Coady, Michele Connell, Dale Coppins, Caroline Crawford, Michael Dean, Dawn D’Cruz, Deanna DeMarco, Suzi Edwards, Janet Fairfield, Sarah Fernando, Alexandra Gunn, Mike Higgins, Ashley Lawrence, Lara McLenan-Ben, Carol-Anne McLoughlin, Steve Milne, Sharmila Mohammed, Mariruth Morton, Toby Mullally, Mark Roininen, Michael Rosenberg, Vicki Sanders, Shazia Shahid, Mark Shapiro, Tanya Simpson, Tracey Smith, Radhika Sujithkumar, Sherry Waters, Danielle White, Katherine White, Steve White, Tom Wiedemann, Alison Wilson, Gerri Wycks

1. Janet Fairfield assumed the Chair and called the fourth session of the 2010 Housing and Homeless Services Network meeting to order. Minutes of the meeting held on April 14, 2010 were approved as circulated.
2. **Multidisciplinary Outreach Team (MDOT), Toronto North Support Services, Mariruth Morton, 416-356-5263, mariruthm@tnss.ca**

MDOT is a Toronto partnership of organizations committed to working with people who are living outside with a health, mental health and/or substance use issue to help them secure and maintain housing. Partner agencies include Streets to Homes, Toronto North Support Services, St. Michael’s Hospital, Centre for Addiction & Mental Health, Fred Victor Centre, Sherbourne Health Centre, Inner City Health Associates, and COTA Health.

Funding is provided by Government of Canada’s Homelessness Partnership Initiative, administered by the City of Toronto and the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care through Inner City Health Associates.

MDOT brings healthcare and psycho-social support to Toronto’s street homeless. It is a mobile team of professionals with expertise in health, mental health, co-occurring substance use issues, street outreach and homelessness. The program aims to end street homelessness by providing timely assessment, consultation, medical treatment, service planning, advocacy and access to medical services. The services are short-term and focused on comprehensive assessment and linking to existing resources. Consultation to outreach teams is also provided.

The MDOT Staff Team includes four Street Outreach Case Managers, a Housing Support Worker, a Mental Health Counselor, a Registered Nurse, part-time Psychiatrists, a part-time Concurrent Disorders Specialist and a Program Manager.

Eligibility criteria:

- Live on the street in the GTA
- Not have responded to other programs and attempts to assist or engage
- Have one or more of the following issues:
 - Serious and persistent mental illness

- Personality disorder
- Concurrent disorder (co-occurring substance use and mental illness)
- Developmental challenge/ABI
- Untreated medical needs.

Benefits:

- each discipline brings its strengths
- the team works collaboratively
- the breadth of resources from each agency and organization are maximized/utilized
- mental health and addictions case management expertise are brought to the street
- clients have access to psychiatric assessment and hospital services.

Challenges:

- Locating and identifying new clients
- Time needed to engage and establish relationship
- Obtaining client consent
- Obtaining client's agreement to speak with doctor or accept medical treatment
- Complexity of concurrent disorders in formulating treatment plan, diagnosis
- Need to assess client & formulate treatment plan quickly and in difficult circumstances
- Short term service for hardest to house clients.

In 2009, nearly 70% of the clients MDOT worked with intensively were housed and provided with follow up supports.

20% of M-DOT clients are hospitalized for significant periods of time (+ 3 mos.).

71% of assessed clients were diagnosed with schizophrenia.

45% of M-DOT clients have a concurrent disorder.

For more information on MDOT contact Mariruth at mariruthm@tnss.ca.

3. Mobile Crisis Outreach Team, Good Neighbours Club, Kate MacNeil and Gloria Olumola, 416-366-5377

The Good Neighbours' Club is a drop-in centre for homeless and marginally housed men over 50. Members give back by volunteering their time to help prepare meals. They are open 365 days a year.

The Good Neighbours' Club is a lifeline, providing access to the basics – meals, a hot shower, clothes, laundry, a mailing address and a phone - as well as supporting members to get back on their feet. In addition to basic services, support care workers assist with referrals, and filling out forms.

Programs offered by the club include Support Care, Mobile Crisis Outreach Team, Clinic, Diabetes clinic, Counsellor, Addiction Counselling, AA Meetings, Storytelling, Writing Workshop, Music Workshop, Community Garden, Discussion Group and Community Exploration and Funeral Services.

Mobile Crisis Outreach Team:

A crisis outreach service for Seniors (COSS). 7 Days a week 9a.m. – 5p.m.

Eligibility Criteria (some exception to eligibility may be made):

- 65 years of age
- Mental health and or Substance use
- Within catchment area

Services Include:

- Mobile crisis and intervention
- Short term intensive case management
- Harm reduction

- Immediate nursing

The team provides a continuum of supports from intense to less intense crisis management.

For more information Kate MacNeil or Gloria Olumola at (416) 366-5377.

4. First Steps to Home Project, WoodGreen Community Services, Pablo Escobar, 416-645-6000 x 2525

The First Steps to Home program is a new transitional housing program for men over 55 with mental health issues, substance use issues and experiences of homelessness or unstable housing. The program opened in April and is located at 650 Queen St. E. in the renovated New Edwin Hotel. The building includes 28 fully furnished bachelor units provided with their own kitchenette and bathroom, laundry facilities, a resident common area, rooftop terrace and garden, programming space, a community drop-in and 24 hour reception staff.

The goal of the program is to support participants to develop the stability and skills required to live independently in the community.

The program offers an innovative model of harm reduction transitional housing with a strong research component. The most innovative aspects of the program are the no guest policy, the fact that program participation is a requirement, and the length of the program is 1 – 4 years.

In the Residential Tenancy Act (RTA), transitional housing is defined as housing for less than 1 year and is exempt from the RTA. FST transitional housing program is 1 – 4 years and is therefore covered under the Act. No guest policy and program participation require an exemption from the RTA by the provincial government. To implement exemptions now, residents currently sign a 1 year housing agreement while negotiations are being finalized with the Ontario government.

An external research team is evaluating the program. The Ontario government has asked to review the scope of the proposed research to help them make a decision in terms of the exemption.

Another somewhat innovative aspect of the program is the community engagement process. Community outreach efforts were made to residents and businesses in response to misinformation about the program.

Eligibility criteria:

- Men, 55 years of age and older, with mental health and/or substance use issues who are street involved, homeless and/or have a history of unstable housing.
- Individuals who are interested in transitioning from living on the streets, in shelters, and unstable housing to permanent long term housing in the community.
- Individuals who are interested in being part of a wrap-around program with on site supports including homemaking, nursing, health, case management, social recreational, peer and volunteer.
- Individuals who are willing to sign a contract agreeing to:
 - develop an individualized program participation plan with their case manager
 - participate in program supports on an ongoing basis
 - live in housing that has a zero guest policy
 - adhere to housing rules and regulations found under the Residential Tenancy Act
 - have their rent paid directly to the landlord
 - relocate to permanent housing in the community after 3 or 4 years.

On site supports and services are provided by WoodGreen Community Services and partner agencies: Community Outreach Program in Addictions (COPA) and CAMH – Shared Care. These supports and services include: intensive case management, harm reduction and addiction services, supportive counselling, personal support and homemaking, weekly assistance keeping unit clean, assistance with activities of daily living such as grocery shopping, nursing and medical care, life skills development, social and recreational activities, volunteer opportunities, community leadership and peer programs, support transitioning to permanent housing and follow up supports.

The program is at full occupancy. Unfortunately, First Steps is not currently accepting referrals outside of the partner agencies.

For more information on the program contact Pablo Escobar at 416-645-6000 x 2525

5. 2009 Street Needs Assessment, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, Laural Raine, 416-392-0546

As in 2006, the 2009 Street Needs Assessment was made possible through the partnership of a wide range of individuals, community agencies, City Divisions and provincial ministries, who contributed their time and effort to provide an up to date and comprehensive picture of homelessness in the City of Toronto. In particular, the 2009

Street Needs Assessment would not have been possible without the participation of more than 450 volunteers, along with 278 team leaders, who made it a success. With an overall response rate of almost 40%, people who were homeless in the City of Toronto once again took the opportunity to have their voices heard.

The purpose of the Street Needs Assessment is to understand the characteristics of the homeless population in Toronto and to determine the services that people who are homeless need in order to help them find and keep permanent housing. The results will be used to identify the services needed by homeless people, many of whom are from equity seeking groups (e.g. Aboriginal people, refugees, women, people with disabilities), in order to assist them to find and maintain housing. Results will also be used to make further program adjustments and service improvements to meet the needs of homeless people.

Volunteers and team leaders were trained to conduct the survey as well as to interact with homeless individuals from diverse backgrounds.

Overview of key findings:

- There was a decrease of 51% compared to the 2006 outdoor homeless population,
- The number of families staying in the family shelter system are largely determined by international geopolitical circumstances and federal immigration policy, and increases and decreases accordingly,
- Aboriginal people are still overrepresented in homeless population but fewer are sleeping outdoors,
- Panhandling is down and employment has increased as a reported source of income,
- More work is needed to get people on waiting lists for housing, and follow-up on eligibility for ODSP,
- The total number of homeless people in Toronto has remained stable,
- Homeless people want permanent housing, and
- The top five responses of what would help an individual find housing remain unchanged from 2006:
 - Help finding an affordable place,

- More money,
- Transportation to see apartments,
- Help with housing applications, and
- Help getting identification.

The Staff Report to Council and the Street Needs Assessment Results Report are available for download at www.toronto.ca/housing.

6. New Business/Announcements

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

RENT is holding a series of 11 workshops to enhance core competencies for housing workers. The spring series runs from April 15- May 26 and the fall series runs from September 15 – November 3rd. The goal of the program is to provide the essential skills needed to support low-income and vulnerable clients find and keep their housing. *Please note that the registration is for the entire series and not for an individual workshop.*

RENT is hosting a workshop on “Serving your Clients with Hoarding Issues” on May 27 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.

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

The Rooming House Networking Group is holding a networking session 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. For more information contact Pablo at the above number.

- **MDOT, Mariruth Morton, 416-356-5263**

MDOT will be losing one of its part time nursing staff. If you know of nurses that are available please contact Mariruth at the above number.

- **Edmund Place Town Hall Meeting**

There will be an open house on May 17 from 3 – 6 p.m. at PARC, 1499 Queen St. W. Please join them to learn about the progress of Edmund Place so far, tell them what you think, find out how to apply for housing and much more. All are welcome.
For more information call 416-537-2262.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, June 9, 2010
9:15 am
Room 308, Metro Hall
55 John Street