

Housing & Homeless Services Network

Agenda

Wednesday, September 14, 2011
Ralph Thornton Community Centre
765 Queen St. E. (Queen and Broadview)

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

9:15 – 11:00 a.m.

- 1. WoodGreen's Homeward Bound Program, Pauline Hockenstein**
- 2. YWCA's Elm St. Development, Theresa Roberson**
- 3. Toronto Christian Resource Centre's 40 Oak St. Development, Phil Nazar**
- 4. City of Toronto Wellbeing Index, Harvey Low**
- 5. New Business/Announcements**

Future agenda items:

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Housing & Homeless Services Network

Minutes

Wednesday, June 8, 2011
Metro Hall, Room 308/309

Attending: Lystra Alexander, Amjad al-Jawhary, Ron Barrow, Gemma Bisessar, Emily Bleels, Georgia Bogle, Sylvia Braithwaite, Meeley Chan, Cindy Chalaris, Michele Connell, Dale Coppins, Caroline Crawford, Donna Dalrymple, Jennie Ernewein, Jamie Facciolo, Azar Farahani, Anna Fleming, Brunilda Gjergji, Lorne Gratton, Alexandra Gunn, Gaye Hainsworth, Laurie Hall, Janet Huynh, Anselm Ikiebey, Jill Inverary, Nico Koenig, Ashley Lawrence, Tenano Lesandro, Leisha Lewis-Wilson, Sibyl Likely, Tionie-Marie McLean, Linsey MacPhee, Mercedeh Madani, Rochelle McAlister, Mary-Jane McKitterick, John Methven, Steve Milne, Patricia Mueller, Toby Mullally, Rodney Nembhard, Sheryl Pollock, Yvette Roberts, Michael Rosenberg, Fatima Saliu-Ediagbonya, Sonja Samsa, Vicki Sanders, Mark Shapiro, Louise Smith, Jody Steinhauer, Christine Swearing, Chris Tudela, Thania Valle, Sandra Vaughan, Andrea Weerdenburg, Elis Ziegler,

1. Janet Fairfield assumed the Chair and called the third session of the 2011 Housing and Homeless Services Network meeting to order. Minutes of the meeting held on April 13, 2011 were approved as circulated.

2. **Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association, Margaret McCutcheon**

ONPHA formed in 1988 to advocate for provincial support for a non-profit housing program. Their mission soon broadened to include uniting and supporting a strong community-based affordable housing sector as well as to strengthen their members' capacity in promoting housing excellence. They accomplish this through policy, advocacy and government relations, education and annual conferences, support for housing management groups, building local support networks, and disseminating regular communication on housing issues/concerns. For example, ONPHA's Knowledge Advantage Program delivers over 40 courses and workshops for non-profit housing boards and staff across the province each year, offers distance education opportunities, and brings professional development to members' doors with customized courses. They also support local networks of housing providers in Ontario's 47 service areas, help build good working relations between non-profits and municipal Service Managers, and share information on good local practices. ONPHA hosts regional meetings throughout Ontario, and have electronic listservs connecting members with common concerns.

ONPHA unites over 760 non-profit organizations providing housing in 220 communities across Ontario. Members include municipal and private non-profits of all sizes, with all types of funding. Their primary focus is Affordable Housing, Supportive Housing and Low Income Rentals. The tenants they serve include seniors, low-income families with children, the working poor, people living with developmental disabilities, HIV/AIDS, addictions or mental illness, the homeless/hard-to-house and victims of violence and abuse.

For more information and/or to become a member, please visit www.onpha.on.ca.

3. Resources Exist for Networking and Training (RENT): New Website Launch, Elis Ziegler

As a multi-service organization, East York/ East Toronto Family Resource Centre (EYET) provides family resource programs, community services, parent/child drop-ins, childcare programs, and an integrated continuum of housing programs including:

- **East York Housing Help Centre** assists people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to find and keep housing;
- **Resources Exist for Networking and Training (RENT)** builds the capacity of the housing help sector by facilitating the housing workers' network in which coordinated resource development is a priority;
- **Landlordconnect.ca** is a RENT resource that provides housing help/landlord liaison service and an online vacancy list of affordable, private market units for housing workers to access for their clients.

By joining the RENT network, members are able to register online for training sessions, receive announcements and seasonal e-bulletins, borrow videos, access colleagues and mentors, post questions and issues, and participate in online discussions. Changes have evolved on the website to include heat alert information, news and resources, media sources (both local and international), on-line videos, mentoring, and the housing help resource tool kit.

On June 23, 2011, RENT is re-launching its improved websites: www.housingworkers.ca and www.landlordconnect.ca at the 519 Church Street Community Centre from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. The event is entitled *Double Anniversary Event of Canada's Leading Housing Sector Services* to celebrate RENT's 10th anniversary and the fifth anniversary for Landlordconnect.ca. When the re-launch of the website goes live, members will be required to update their profile information.

4. Housing Help Association of Ontario, Mary Jane McKitterick

RENT began to incubate the establishment of the Housing Help Association (HHAO) about three years ago. HHAO is a provincial association of organizations that deliver the spectrum of free housing help services that prevent and reduce homelessness. As a provincial association, HHAO can communicate as a collective voice with the general public, decision makers, governments and funders. Other goals include providing a collegial learning culture and strengthening the capacity to serve communities.

HHAO provides support and coordination to agencies that provide housing help services across Ontario. Housing help workers are the specialists on the front lines of the housing help sector offering three core services: housing access, housing stabilization and eviction

5. Ontario Association of Hostels, Patricia Mueller and Sylvia Braithwaite

The Ontario Association of Hostels (OAH) was formed in 1992, led by representatives from Toronto shelters who recognized the need for a provincial association of hostel and shelter providers. In addition to offering a forum for the sharing of issues and concerns, the association was viewed as a means by which hostel and shelter operators could work together to create opportunities to reduce and eliminate homelessness across Ontario and advocate on behalf of their clients.

From its inception, OAH has been a voluntary, member-driven association. Over the years, many individuals and the agencies they represent have dedicated their time, energy and expertise to actualize its vision. OAH currently acts as a provincial coordinating body for emergency hostels located throughout Ontario, providing support and resources to member hostels, providing education and information to various stakeholders, including the general public, regarding the services offered and population served, as well as acting as an advocate on behalf of clients, service providers and member agencies.

Ontario Association of Hostels:

- Is committed to end homelessness through advocacy for the provision of affordable housing options that meet the varied needs of the homeless population.
- Believes that all three levels of government have to work collaboratively to create a housing strategy that will create and support social housing and facilitate affordable private market rentals. Funding for transitional and permanent housing, whether directed to developers, not-for-profit housing providers, or municipal governments requires criteria that clearly identify the homeless population as a priority.
- Understands that there is an ongoing need for more effective discharge planning from federal and provincial institutions, including correctional and healthcare facilities. It is essential that this planning is done in collaboration with community services so that emergency shelters are not the only ones working on this issue.

Toronto Board

Where the Ontario Association is made up of representatives from shelter providers across the province, the Toronto Board is a subcommittee of OAH that includes members from Toronto-based shelters. They help to support the mandate of OAH as well as consider Toronto specific issues and concerns. Further, representatives from each sector (family, men, women, co-ed and youth) and a City Hostel's staff meet regularly to share operational and case management ideas.

Learning Forum

OAH will be hosting a Learning Forum on September 22 and 23, 2011 at Metro Central YMCA, 20 Grosvenor St. Expected workshops include: Restoring Ex-Prisoners to our Communities, Trauma Informed Care, Suicide Talk and Professional Boundaries. Participants will be able to tour of some of Toronto's shelters on the 23rd.

For more information visit their website at www.ontarioshelters.ca.

6. Toronto Drop-In Network, Linsey MacPhee

The need for drop-ins evolved in response to the growing homeless crisis in the 90s. The TDIN started 12 years ago in the west end when a group of drop-in staff gathered together to discuss common issues. East end drop-ins had also begun to organize and approximately six years ago the groups joined together. Their membership currently includes 50 drop-ins. TDIN provides a forum for discussion, information dissemination, resource sharing, training and public education and can respond quickly to emerging issues.

TDIN will be launching a new website this fall which will feature both a public and member only access areas.

7. New Business/Announcements

Project Water – Jody Steinhauer

Jody is part of a larger group of businesses who are interested in donating supplies and resources to the homeless community. They recently donated 250,000 bottles of water. She is looking for ways to connect with agencies. She invites you to visit her website at www.projectwater.ca

Ontario Disability Association event – "*What stops us from working?*"
June 29th @ 10 a.m. at College St. United Church (Bathurst and College)

Next Meeting:

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9:15 a.m.
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