

**From:** [Joanne Simons](#)  
**To:** [councilmeeting](#)  
**Cc:** [Myna Kota](#)  
**Subject:** Casey House's comments for 2023.HL1.6 on February 7, 2023 City Council  
**Date:** February 6, 2023 10:48:00 AM

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To the City Clerk:

Please add my comments to the agenda for the February 7, 2023 City Council meeting on item 2023.HL1.6, Cold weather and the effects on those experiencing homelessness.

I understand that my comments and the personal information in this email will form part of the public record and that my name will be listed as a correspondent on agendas and minutes of City Council or its committees. Also, I understand that agendas and minutes are posted online and my name may be indexed by search engines like Google.

**Comments:**

As a specialty hospital in Ward 13 that provides care for people experiencing homelessness, Casey House urges the City of Toronto to provide 24/7 indoor warming spaces with low-barrier access until April, as per motion HL1.6.

The severe lack of shelter and housing in the city negatively impacts people's health and well-being, which are worsened by inclement weather. In harsh winter weather conditions, getting people to warm environments as soon as possible is critical. For people experiencing homelessness, the absence of a safe, stable place to sleep and access to the necessities of life makes it difficult to attain stability and adhere to a daily routine. As a hospital we see that as a result, complex physical and mental health challenges are exacerbated and have a cumulative impact: chronic physical pain can intensify, emotions may become less regulated, and medication routines are easily disrupted – all of which can also make it difficult for people to have the wherewithal to access available care and services. The negative impact on people's adherence to treatment plans subsequently exacerbates chronic illnesses, and hinders their ability to attend to follow-up support – all of which disrupts the continuum of care.

With the continuing drug poisoning crisis, housing crisis, and rising cost of living, the need to provide people experiencing homelessness with access to low-barrier 24-hour warming centres during the winter season is beyond urgent; and, it is critical to ensure that anyone who needs a space to stay warm isn't turned away.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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**Joanne Simons** Chief Executive Officer

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