

# Promising Practices in Supportive Housing: Dunn House

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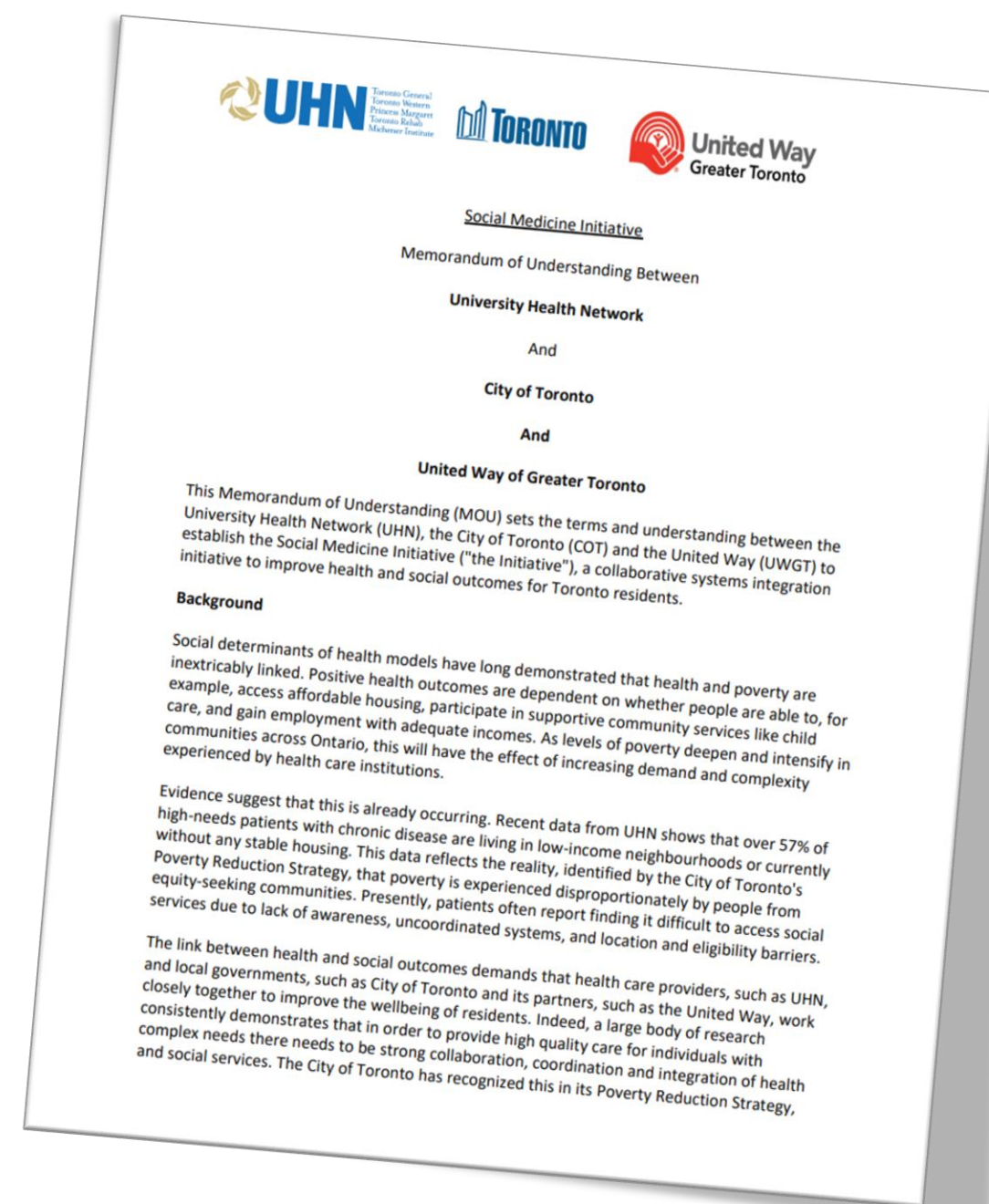
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## **Valesa Faria**

Executive Director  
Development Review  
City of Toronto

# The first-of-its-kind housing partnership between University Health Network, United Way and the City of Toronto

- Investment from all partners and every level of Government
  - **UHN** leased the land to the City of Toronto
  - **United Way** provided funding for a commercial kitchen and food program
  - **Federal government** provided capital investment through the Rapid Housing Initiative
  - **Ontario Health** funding health and social care supports
  - **City of Toronto** funding supportive housing operator, **Fred Victor**, housing operator and support provider for Dunn House



# Community Engagement

## Welcome Committee

25 community members committed to planning and promoting activities that build collective values around Parkdale's welcoming traditions

## Community Learning Circles

A collective space for listening to stories, learning about important issues, identifying needed actions and resources, as well as addressing community questions and concerns

## The Neighbouring Fund

Seed funding opportunity: \$500-\$2000 towards a locally-based project that will support new neighbours moving into UHN's Social Medicine Housing in Parkdale

Spring  
2023

Campaign Launch  
& Establishment of  
the Welcome  
Committee

Summer  
2023

Community  
Learning Circle #1:  
Right to Housing,  
Displacement, &  
Housing Diversity

Fall  
2023

Community  
Learning Circle #2:  
Social Medicine &  
Housing First

Spring  
2024

The Neighbouring  
Fund Launch &  
Selection

Summer  
2024

Community  
Learning Circle #3:  
Hope, Healing, &  
Recovery

Fall  
2024

Neighbour-Led  
Tours &  
Neighbouring Fund  
Projects

# Dunn House Eligibility

Supports "**super-utilizers**" - UHN's most medically and socially complex patients with the highest utilization of emergency departments and hospital readmissions

## UHN's Eligibility Criteria

2+ UHN inpatient admissions in 6 months

OR

6+ UHN ED visits in 6 months

- Over 18 and within the Toronto Region
- 2+ barriers which may include, but are not limited to:
  - Lack of social support at home or in the community
  - Polypharmacy (5+ medications)
  - Active substance use
  - Physical disabilities
  - Difficulty accessing services
  - Mental health conditions



## City of Toronto's Eligibility Criteria

Patient is on the City of Toronto's By Name List and experiencing chronic homelessness

OR

Patient is Indigenous or Youth and homeless

Required housing documentation complete  
(i.e. Proof of Status, income, notice of assessment, MD note as needed)

STARS Assessment (Service Triage, Assessment, and Referral Support)

Unit viewing and lease signing

Patient moves home





### 4-story building:

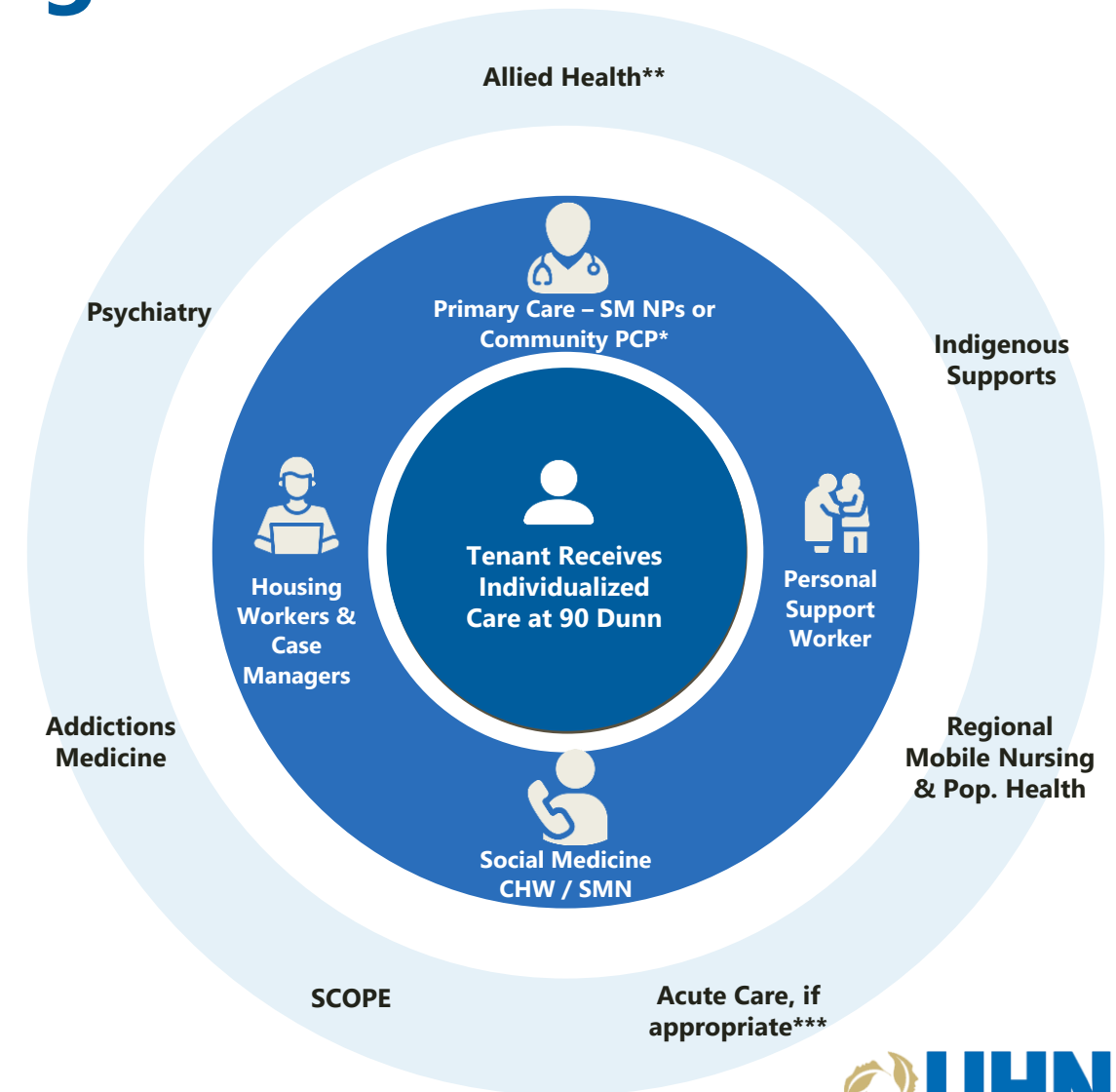
- 1 elevator
- Commercial kitchen
- Common lounge & dining area
- Shared laundry

### 51 single occupancy studio units:

- Fully furnished
- Kitchenette in each unit
- 15 barrier-free units

# The Social Medicine Housing Care Model:

The clinical care model at 90 Dunn Ave. provides tenants with **low barrier** access to health supports, referral to UHN specialist care and connection to community supports, with a particular focus on **relationship/trust building** and fostering **tenant autonomy**. Dunn House applies a **harm reduction** approach to care.



[1] \*Note: Onsite Social Medicine (SM) Nurse Practitioner (NP) to support where tenants do not have an existing and/or timely access to a community primary care provider (PCP)

[2] \*\*Note: Allied Health may include but may not be limited to referrals to Ontario Health at Home, dental and chiropractic

[3] \*\*\*Note: If tenant is required to be transferred to hospital, 90 Dunn Ave. interdisciplinary team to liaise with acute care team, as needed to ensure continuity of care

# Dunn House: Key Insights

## Lessons Learned

- Some **tenants at Dunn House presented higher-than-anticipated support needs**, highlighting the importance of thorough initial assessments and flexible care planning to accommodate varying levels of tenant requirements
- **Transition of patients to Dunn House needed to proceed at the pace of individuals** involved, as some were difficult to locate or required more time to engage—underscoring the importance of a patient-centered approach that prioritizes readiness over rigid timelines
- As a newly established partnership, **UHN and Fred Victor are navigating early challenges in aligning hospital and community-based approaches** – underscoring need for clear communication, well-defined roles, and deliberate efforts to build a cohesive, interdisciplinary team committed to supporting tenants