

For Information Only

Homelessness Programs and Initiatives Overview

Presented To:	Community Services Committee
Presented:	Monday, Feb 29, 2016
Report Date	Friday, Feb 12, 2016
Type:	Presentations

Resolution

For Information Only

Health Impact Assessment

This initiative addresses barriers and is intended to enhance services to persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Service data will be collected to monitor the results by program usage.

Background

The City of Greater Sudbury (CGS) receives funding from the Federal, Provincial and Municipal government to provide services and supports for people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness in our community. Each funding envelope comes with different guidelines, eligible expenses, reporting requirements and time frames. Homelessness initiatives are coordinated through the Social Services Division. The funding is utilized in a strategic and integrated manner.

Providing homelessness services requires strong community partnerships and integrated service delivery across a variety of sectors including housing, income support, corrections, health, mental health, and addictions. The City of Greater Sudbury works closely with community stakeholders to develop local solutions and continues to evolve stronger and more collaborative supports. Local plans and strategies, developed with community consultation such as the Ten Year Housing and Homelessness plan, help identify priorities for our community.

In 2007 CGS adopted the Housing First philosophy, which aligns with Federal and Provincial principles for addressing homelessness. Housing First is an approach to ending homelessness that centers on providing homeless people with housing quickly and then providing services as needed. What differentiates a Housing First approach from traditional emergency shelter or transitional housing approaches is that it is "housing-based," with an immediate and primary focus on helping individuals and families quickly access and sustain permanent housing. All programs funded through CGS Homelessness initiatives place an

Signed By

Report Prepared By

Gail Spencer
Coordinator of Shelters and Homelessness
Digitally Signed Feb 12, 16

Health Impact Review

Gail Spencer
Coordinator of Shelters and Homelessness
Digitally Signed Feb 12, 16

Division Review

Luisa Valle
Director of Social Services
Digitally Signed Feb 12, 16

Recommended by the Department

Kevin Fowke
Acting Chief Administrative Officer
Digitally Signed Feb 16, 16

Recommended by the C.A.O.

Kevin Fowke
Acting Chief Administrative Officer
Digitally Signed Feb 16, 16

emphasis on moving people from homelessness to permanent housing.

Homelessness

Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI)

CGS administers the CHPI program which supports people to get and stay housed by providing funds for:

- Last month's rent deposit
- Utility deposits
- Rental arrears for those facing eviction
- Utility arrears for those facing disconnection
- Household items for people in exceptional circumstances

Persons in receipt of social assistance can apply for this fund through their Ontario Works (OW) or Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) caseworker. Persons with low income who are not in receipt of social assistance can apply through the Canadian Red Cross.

This program is funded through CGS with Provincial CHPI funding, and provides homelessness prevention supports that were impacted when the Province eliminated the Community Start Up and Maintenance Benefit (CSUMB) from social assistance in 2013. In 2014 over 1700 households were supported to remain housed through this program.

Homelessness Network

The Homelessness Network is a collaboration of seven agencies, led by Centre de Sante Communautaire de Sudbury, that provide ongoing support for persons who are homeless and/or at risk of homelessness. The Homelessness Network has recently created a centralized intake and assessment process, with a focus on providing more ongoing case management to persons with higher needs.

The following agencies comprise the Homelessness Network:

- Centre de Sante Communautaire de Sudbury (Corner Clinic)
- Canadian Red Cross
- Elizabeth Fry Society
- John Howard Society
- N'swakamok Native Friendship Centre
- L'association des jeunes de la rue
- Sudbury Action Centre for Youth

Emergency Shelters

CGS also partners with two service providers to operate four emergency shelter programs in our community. These programs are open 24 hours day, 365 days a year to provide a safe warm place for persons who are homeless. The Salvation Army operates a 22 bed program for men, and a 26 bed program for women and families. L'association des jeunes de la rue operates a 16 bed facility for male and female youth aged 16 to 19. Persons who access a emergency shelter program are immediately connected with an Ontario Works caseworker for income support and referrals to housing supports. In 2014 there was an 85% average nightly occupancy, and the average length of stay was 15 days.

Out of the Cold Emergency Shelter (OTC)

The OTC Emergency shelter is a low barrier shelter program that is operated by the Salvation Army. It provides up to 30 cots and a warm safe place for persons who are homeless and may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol or otherwise disconnected from mainstream shelter programs. The program is

open every night from November 1st, 2015 to April 15th, 2016. The need for this program was identified as a priority by the community through the development of the Harm Reduction Initiative, and is closely linked to the Managed Alcohol Program operated by the Canadian Mental Health Association. This year CGS received a funding grant through the Local Poverty Reduction Fund to hire two client navigator staff to assist people using the OTC shelter to access health and housing supports.

Extreme Cold Weather Alert Program

The Extreme Cold Weather Alert Program is a short-term emergency response to provide additional drop-in centre hours and outreach services during periods of extreme cold. When the weather is predicted to reach a low of minus 15, or minus 20 with a wind chill, extra services are put in place which include a 24 hour warming station at the Elgin Street Mission and an outreach van that operates from 7:00 pm to 7:00 am.

Samaritan Centre

New Hope Outreach Services operates the Samaritan Centre, which houses the Elgin Street Mission, the Blue Door Soup Kitchen, and the Corner Clinic. The Samaritan Centre provides services to persons who are homeless or vulnerable. The Elgin st Mission provides a 24 hour warming station under the Extreme Cold Weather Program, and the Corner Clinic houses the Homelessness Network Coordinator and two housing case managers. CGS provides an annual funding grant of \$27,000 to New Hope Outreach Services for security and custodian services, which allows them to be eligible for tax exception status.

Homeless Individuals and Families information System (HIFIS)

The mainstream emergency shelter programs and Homelessness Network agencies utilize the HIFIS database to capture data about the homelessness service use in our community. CGS receives an annual Federal funding grant of \$20,000, until to 2019, for a HIFIS Community Coordinator position which is partnered with the Social Planning Council. The HIFIS data is reported up to the Federal government and is included in the annual Report Card on Homelessness.

Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS)

CGS has entered into a five year funding agreement and will receive \$226,189 on an annual basis from 2014 to 2019 under the Federal Homelessness Partnering Strategy. The Community Advisory Board on Homelessness recommends projects under this funding agreement and ensures the deliverables of the Community Plan are met. Starting in 2016, there is a requirement of the Federal agreement that 40% of this funding envelope be allocated to a Housing First Program. Federal funding has been allocated to the start up and operation of the Out of the Cold Emergency Shelter program and training in preparation for a Housing First Program.

In 2015, CGS utilized some of the HPS funding and partnered with Dr. Carol Kauppi from Laurentian University to complete a Period Prevalence Homelessness Count in our community. The report was released publically and identified specific sub groups within homeless populations including at risk, absolute, chronic and episodic, aboriginal, veterans, youth and children.

Since 2008, the Community Advisory Board and CGS has produced an annual Report Card on Homelessness. The completion of an annual Report Card is used as a way to monitor, measure and evaluate the system in place to address homelessness within the City of Greater Sudbury.

HPS Federal funding has also been utilized over the years to develop and establish the following community initiatives:

- Victoria Place, a six bed transitional housing program operated by the Canadian Mental Health Association

- Beyond the Rock, a six bed transitional housing program for men continuing their recovery goals, operated by Monarch Recovery services
- Foyer Notre Dame, to provide two transitional beds for youth attending school, operated by L'association des jeunes de la rue

Linkages to other sectors

Providing effective services to people experiencing homelessness requires strong linkages and collaboration with other organizations and sectors. Some examples of these include:

- Direct linkage between Ontario Works and emergency shelters
- Urgent status category for homeless persons within the Social Housing Registry
- Community Paramedic Program directly within emergency shelter facilities
- Member partner of Community Mobilization Sudbury
- Member of Harm Reduction Steering Committee