

Symposium: Promising Practices for Aging in the Right Place (AIRP) for Homeless-Experienced Older Adults (Chair: Atiya Mahmood)

Overview on AIRP

Sarah Canham, Associate Professor, University of Utah, Adjunct Professor, Simon Fraser University

Lived Experience of Housing Precarity/Homelessness

Chris Danielsen, Founder, Power N Knowledge

Practices of AIRP

Jenny Konkin, President and Co-Founder, Whole Way House Society

Research in AIRP

Atiya Mahmood, Associate Professor, Department of Gerontology and
Rachelle Patille, Regional Project Coordinator, AIRP Vancouver

Policy Implications of AIRP

Laura Kadowaki, Adjunct Professor, SFU

Q&A Session

Promising Practices for Aging in the Right Place (AIRP) for Homeless-Experienced Older Adults

June 2, 2023



Technology
CLSA Aging in the Right Place
Research Demascope
Elder Abuse Social Isolation Aging Families
Gerontology
Gerontology Research Centre
Simon Fraser University
LGBT+ Culture Education Innovation
Life Course Knowledge Multimorbidity
Built Environment Intergenerational
Lifestyle Health Promotion

The 30th John K. Friesen Conference

FORGING NEW FRONTIERS
IN AGING RESEARCH



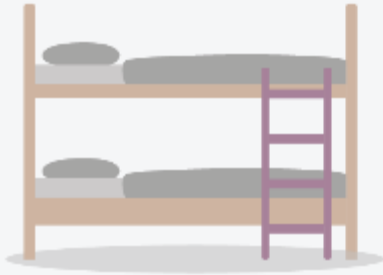
What is your vision for your home when you are 50 years old?

Do you envision moving after age 50?

Where will you go?

What will influence your decisions?

1.



Emergency, temporary, or transitional shelter/housing with supports



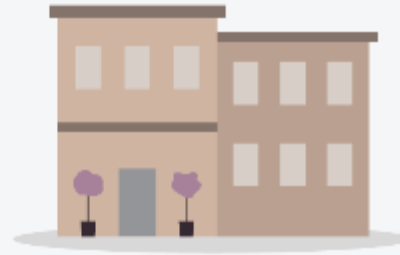
2.



Independent housing with offsite supports



3.



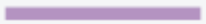
Supported independent housing with onsite non-medical supports



4.



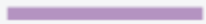
Permanent supportive housing with onsite medical and / or specialized services



5.



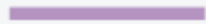
Long-term care



6.



Palliative care / hospice



Canham et al. (2022). Shelter/housing options, supports, and interventions for older people experiencing homelessness. *Ageing & Society*, 42(11), 2615-2641.

Canham et al. (2022). Identifying shelter and housing models for older people experiencing homelessness. *Journal of Aging and Environment*, 36(2), 204-255.

Our Overall Goal is...

to improve the shelter/housing options to meet the unique and complex health and social needs of older persons with experiences of homelessness (OPEH) across Canada.

Majority of older adults want to age in place and are able to with sufficient resources



Majority of older adults want to age in place and are able to with sufficient resources

Secure and optimal housing for older people should support an individual's unique lifestyles and vulnerabilities



Majority of older adults want to age in place and are able to with sufficient resources

Secure and optimal housing for older people should support an individual's unique lifestyles and vulnerabilities

Older persons with experiences of homeless should have options to age in the right place



4 Stages of Data Collection

1. De-identified Document Review
2. Enviromental Audits
3. Provider Interviews
4. Client Interviews



PARTNERSHIP

One Project Director,
13 co-applicants,
15 collaborators,
40 partner organizations,
and 9 older adult advisors



3 city-specific Local Advisory Committees in **Montréal**, **Calgary**, and **Vancouver** will offer partners an opportunity to make contributions to the project.

Aging in the Right Place: A Conceptual Framework of Indicators for Older Persons Experiencing Homelessness

Presented by:
Sarah L. Canham

Co-authors:
Rachel Weldrick
Atiya Mahmood
Tamara Sussman
Christine Walsh



Objective

To develop a framework of aging in the right place indicators unique to older people with experiences of homelessness



Community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach

Literature review of existing research

Iterative process of community consultation and model refinement



Indicators of Aging in the Right Place

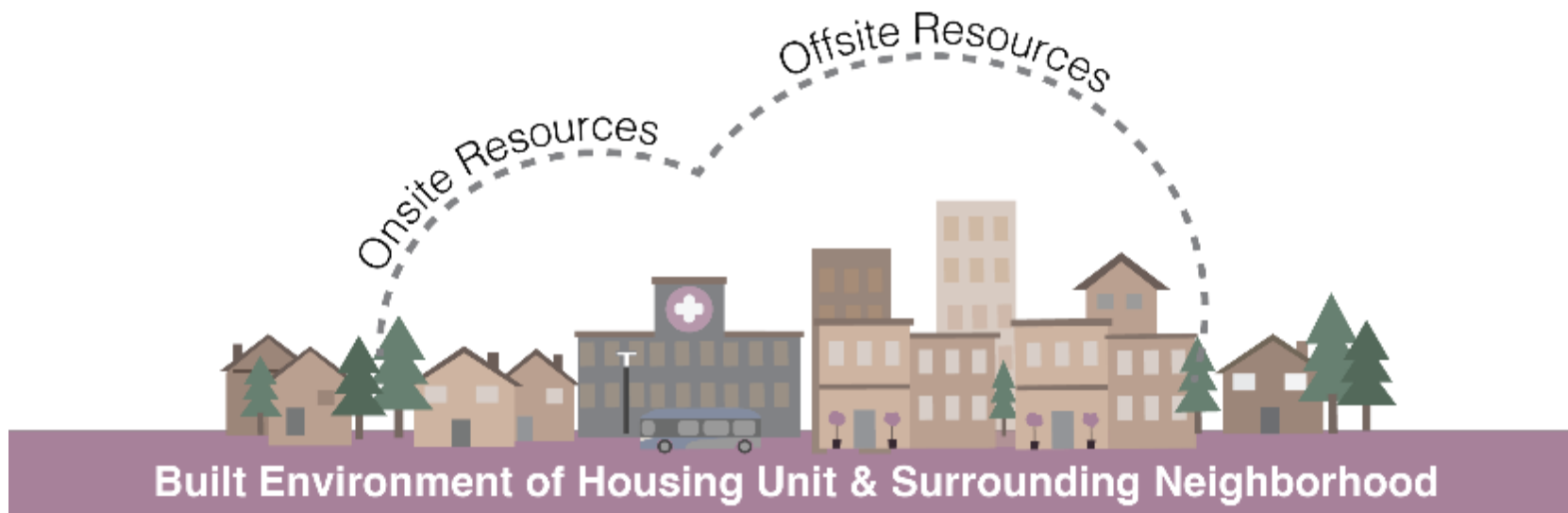
For Older Persons Experiencing Homelessness



Built Environment of Housing Unit & Surrounding Neighborhood

Indicators of Aging in the Right Place

For Older Persons Experiencing Homelessness



Indicators of Aging in the Right Place

For Older Persons Experiencing Homelessness

Social Integration



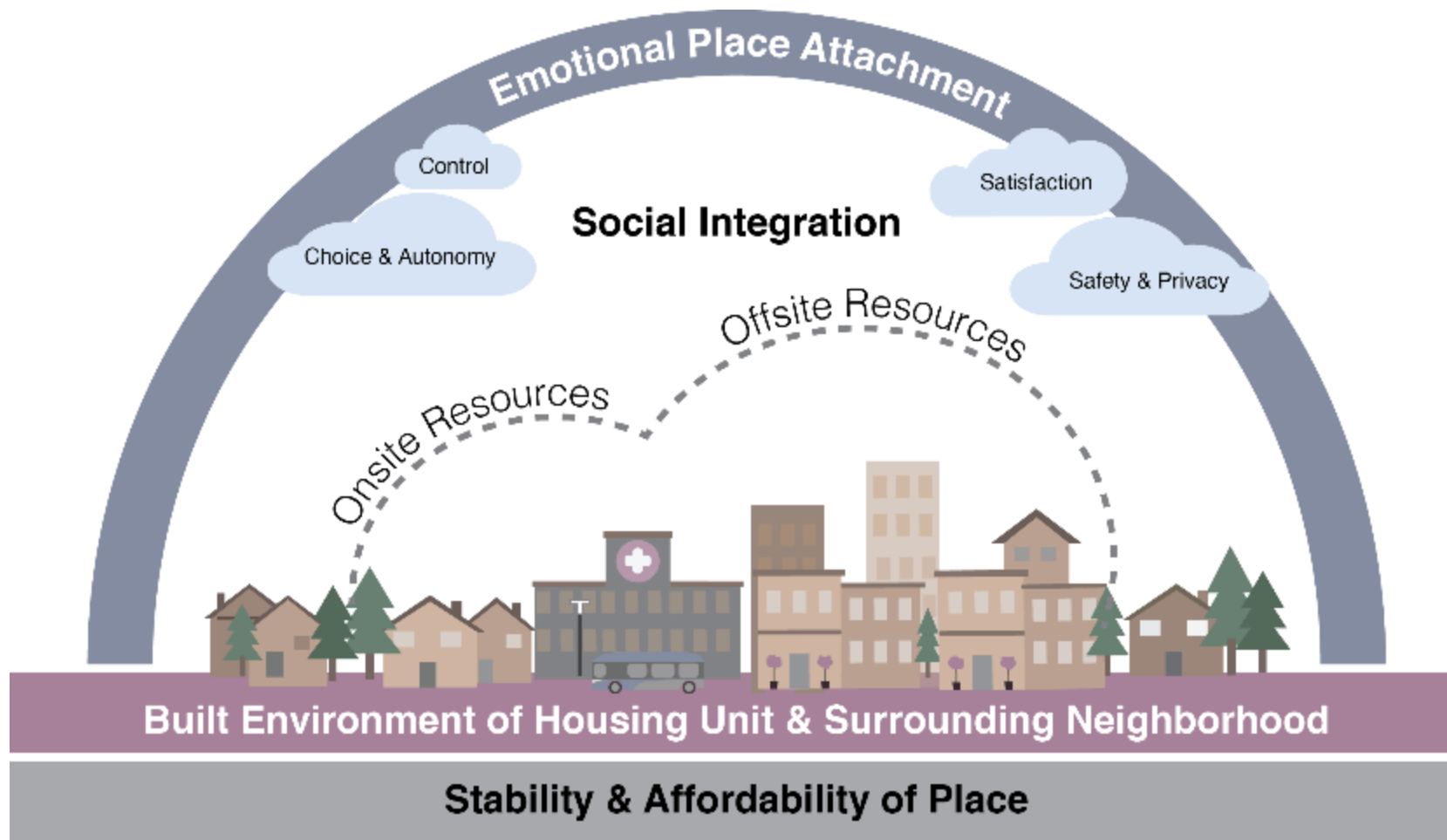
Indicators of Aging in the Right Place

For Older Persons Experiencing Homelessness



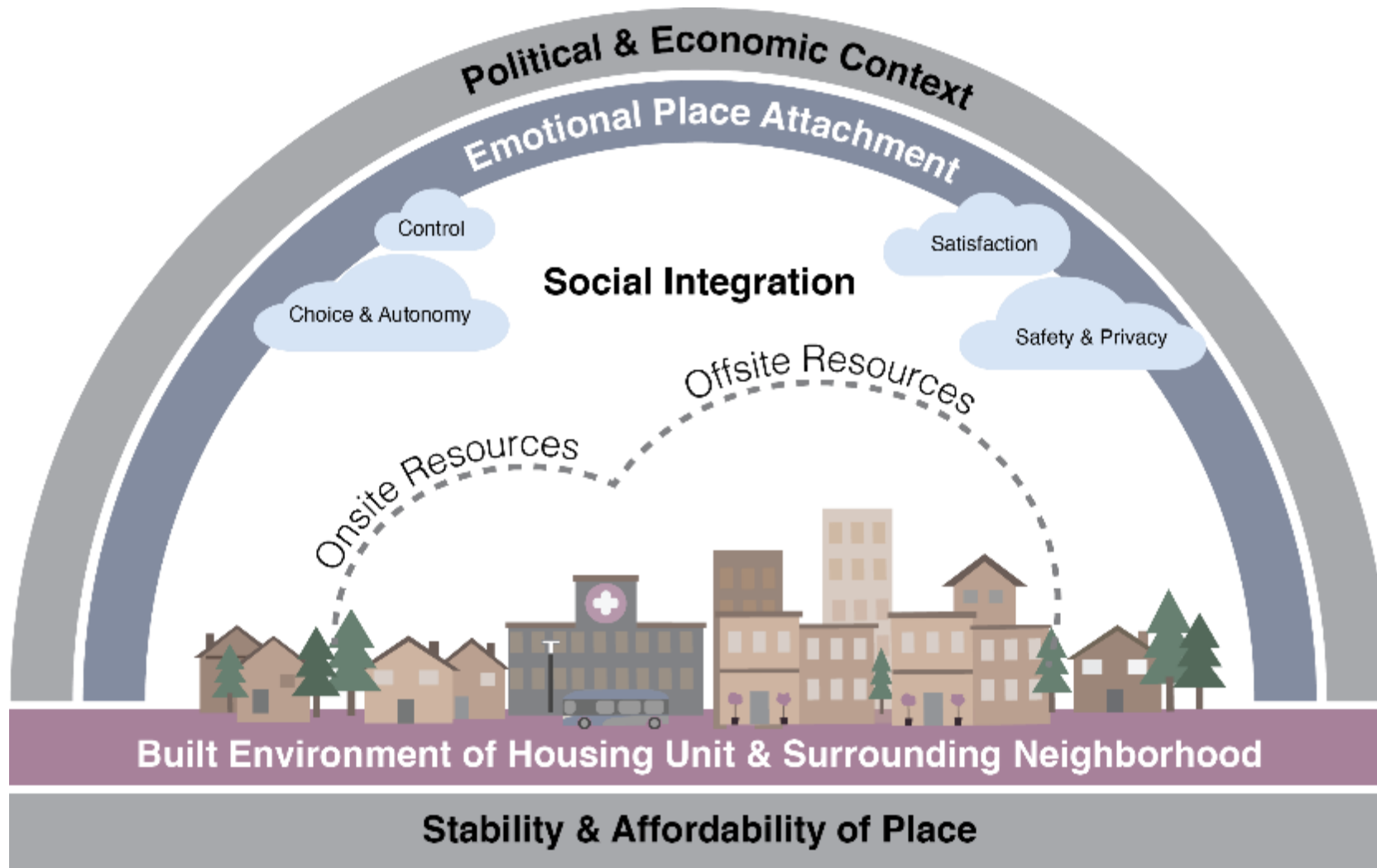
Indicators of Aging in the Right Place

For Older Persons Experiencing Homelessness



Indicators of Aging in the Right Place

For Older Persons Experiencing Homelessness



Inform Research
on older people
experiencing
homelessness
or housing
insecurity



Inform Research
on older people
experiencing
homelessness
or housing
insecurity

Inform Practice
in aging and
homelessness
services by
tailoring
supports



Inform Research
on older people
experiencing
homelessness
or housing
insecurity

Inform Practice
in aging and
homelessness
services by
tailoring
supports

Inform Policy
by advocating
for programs
and funding
that support
diverse needs



To learn more or
connect with us:

<https://www.sfu.ca/airp.html>

https://twitter.com/airp_vabe



AIRP
Aging in the Right Place
PARTNERSHIP

VABE
Vieillir au Bon Endroit
PARTENARIAT



SSHRC  CRSH



Misschrissyd

Empowering and supporting women that have been victims of homelessness, narcissism, the court system, and the services that are there to protect us that didn't!

Find me on Instagram & Tiktok
@misschrissyd



Be on the lookout for my new app and workshop coming up!



WHOLE WAY HOUSE
RECONNECT. REBUILD. RECENTER

Seniors Supportive Housing Strategy

Downtown Eastside, Vancouver, BC, Canada



About









- Whole Way House is a registered Canadian charity founded in 2013 by siblings Jenny and Josh Konkin, while managing the Silver and Avalon Hotels, SRO's owned by their grandparents in the DTES of Vancouver.
- It was started to help build a healthy community in housing while combatting loneliness and isolation amongst residents.



Our Model

- Whole Way House partners with non-profit housing organizations to provide onsite community-building programs and tenant support services to low-income seniors, veterans & vulnerable residents in non-profit housing in the DTES, and across Metro Vancouver. We bring homeless or inappropriately housed seniors and veterans off the BC Housing waitlist into our supported model to ensure successful tenancy. We also support those who are in currently in housing who are at-risk of homelessness or decline.
- We bring homeless or inappropriately housed seniors and veterans off the BC Housing waitlist into our supported model to ensure successful tenancy. We also support those who are in housing who are at-risk of homelessness or decline
- Our support services allow senior residents who are at-risk of homelessness to age well in place with safe, secure and supportive housing.
- As seniors age and may experience decline, non-profit housing providers across Canada are facing a crisis with seniors who are no longer able to live independently however they do not require or qualify for assisted living or long-term care- consequently they are ending up in hospital, shelters, inappropriate housing or even on the street.
- The Whole Way House Seniors Supported Housing model allows senior residents to **age well in place** by coordinating their care in safe, secure and supportive housing and taking proactive measures to prevent seniors from slipping through the cracks into homelessness, unnecessary hospitalization or early assisted living.

Nine Partner Sites (4 in Pilot Project)

<p>Veterans Manor (VMHS) Low-income housing for senior and veteran men at risk of homelessness in the DTES</p>  <p>In partnership with BC Housing</p> <p>LEARN MORE</p>	<p>601 East Hastings (UGM) Two year transitional, abstinence-based housing for vulnerable residents after recovery in the DTES</p>  <p>In partnership with Union Gospel Mission</p> <p>LEARN MORE</p>	<p>Maurice McElrea Place (UGM) Permanent, affordable, abstinence-based housing for vulnerable residents after recovery and/or with disabilities in the DTES</p>  <p>In partnership with Union Gospel Mission</p> <p>LEARN MORE</p>
<p>Alexander House (AHS) Affordable housing for low-income seniors in the DTES</p>  <p>In partnership with BC Housing and Coastal Church</p> <p>LEARN MORE</p>	<p>Chelsea Tower (NCS) Affordable housing for low-income seniors in Mount Pleasant</p>  <p>In partnership with BC Housing</p> <p>LEARN MORE</p>	<p>Chelsea Terrace (NCS) Affordable housing for low-income seniors in Burnaby</p>  <p>In partnership with BC Housing</p> <p>LEARN MORE</p>
<p>Granville House (AHS) Affordable housing for low-income seniors in Vancouver (Granville Bridge)</p>  <p>In partnership with BC Housing and Coastal Church</p> <p>LEARN MORE</p>	<p>The Orchard (UGM) Permanent, affordable, townhouses for low-income families and single moms in Surrey</p>  <p>In partnership with Union Gospel Mission</p> <p>LEARN MORE</p>	<p>Shiloh House New Partner Site In partnership with Reaching Home</p>



Metro Vancouver Homeless Count:

Percent of Homeless Population are Seniors (55+)

9% in 2008

16% in 2011

18% in 2014

21% in 2018

24% in 2019

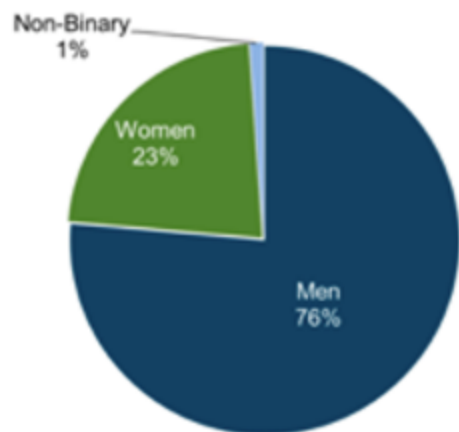
Seniors now makeup 24% of the homeless population, which has more than tripled since 2002.

In 2012, almost one in seven Canadians was a senior; by 2030, that number will jump to nearly one in four!

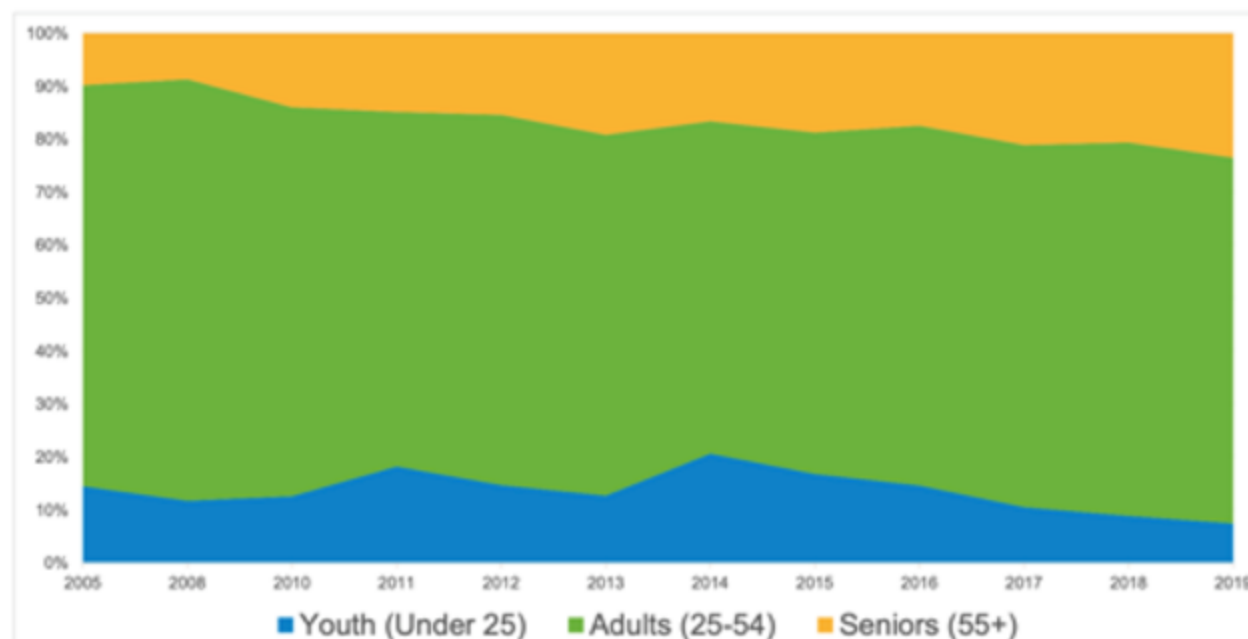
Age Trend: 2005-2019

There is currently no proposed seniors supportive housing in the Rapid Response to Homelessness plan or funding to implement supports to prevent homelessness in existing seniors low income housing. Given the age demographic of our Baby Boomers who will require further support to remain housed, this number is only going to continue to increase if we do not implement support services for these seniors. According to the 2016 census, the risk of homelessness exists for over 15,000 senior-led households in Metro Vancouver.

Total Homeless Population by Gender (n=1,256)




Number of Seniors 55+ experiencing homelessness is growing.



-
- Currently, seniors experiencing homelessness are being lumped into shelters and supportive housing sites that are inappropriate and unsafe for their needs.
 - Seniors are the fastest rising demographic in Metro Vancouver's homeless population who receive the least amount of homelessness support resources or designated funding.
 - Housing operators are extremely concerned for their health and safety.
 - **The COVID-19 Pandemic has only increased their vulnerability and heightened their need for appropriate support services and care**

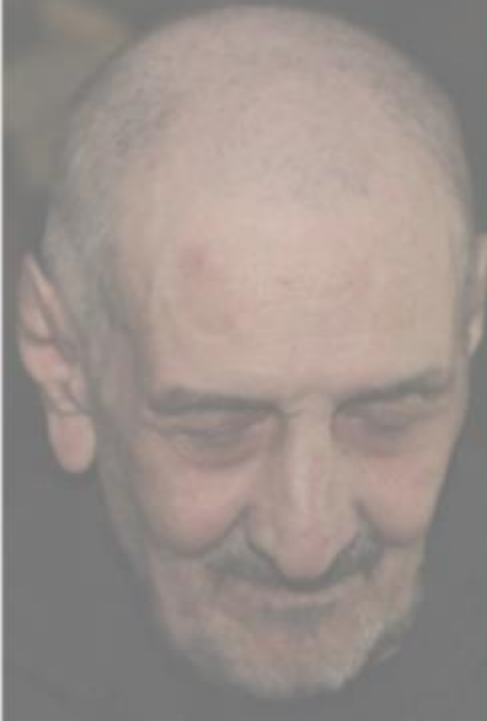




This is more than a housing crisis, this is a heart crisis. We need to reconnect with people in a meaningful way so they can access the support services they need.

Whole Way House has a housing model that addresses the innate human need for belonging and sense home.

WHY ARE SENIORS BECOMING HOMELESS?

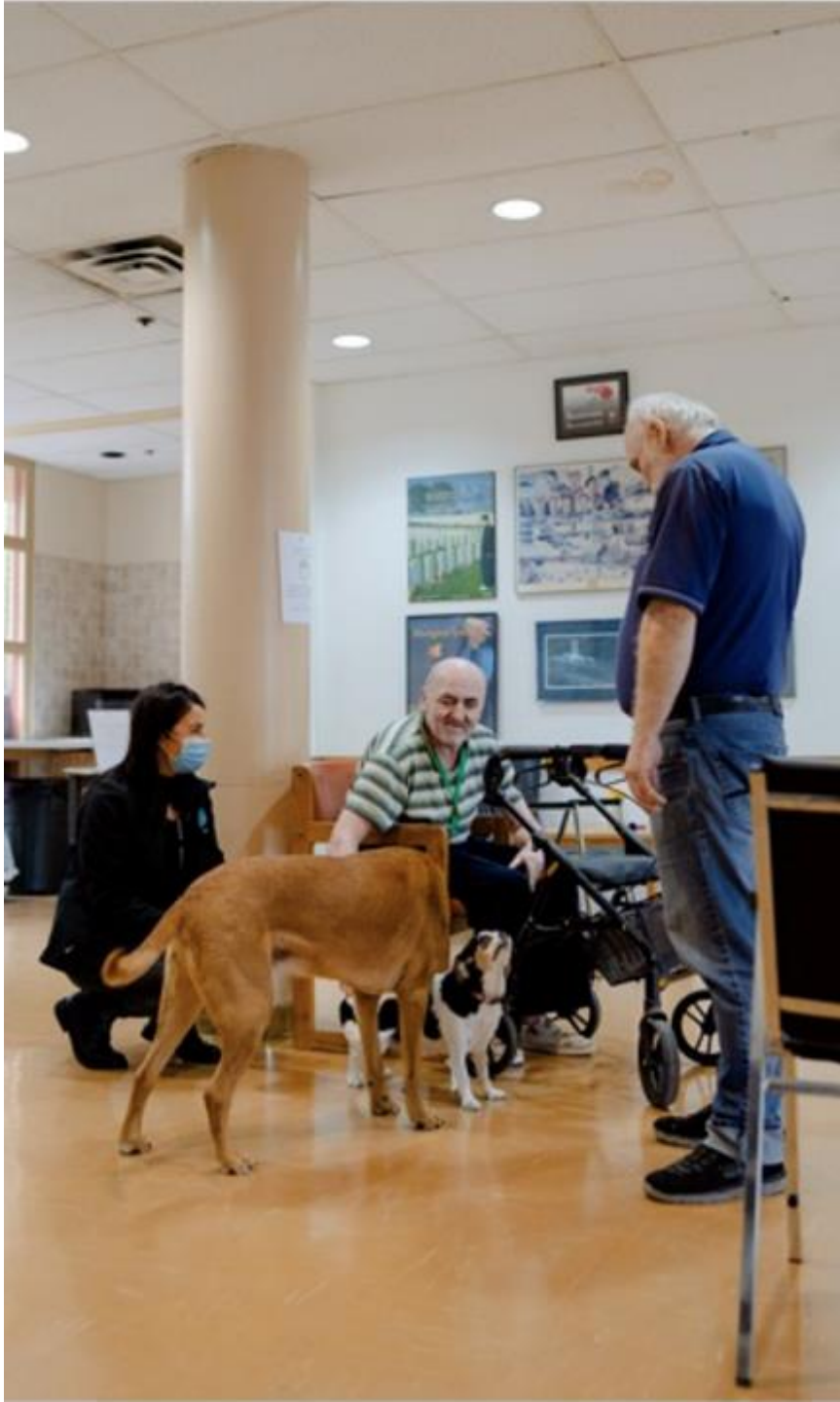


- Unpaid rent (due to memory loss, accessibility to the bank, budgeting, affordability, extended hospital stays)
- Home cleanliness & hoarding
- Lack of food security
- Decline in personal hygiene/self care
- Lack of social network/support system
- No access to medical appointments
- Unable to organize their personal affairs, bills, paperwork, forms, etc.
- Vulnerable to scams and thieves
- Don't know how or who to ask for help, no trusted network

HOW DOES WHOLE WAY HOUSE HELP SENIORS AGE IN PLACE?



- Money management & budgeting assistance
- Access to food security & groceries
- Coordinating with health authorities and case managers for assessments, appointments, vital services
- Access local resources for medical, mental health and addiction services, safety resources and tools
- House cleaning assistance
- Proactive room checks to set residents up for successful tenancy
- Daily social outings and activities
- Regular exercise programs
- Transportation and/or coordination to special medical appointments
- Organizing personal affairs, bills, paperwork, forms, appointments etc
- Free emergency medical training for all staff and residents onsite
- Assistance with housing goals and needs
- Regular room and wellness check ins



How we work

RE | **CONNECT**

ReConnect by building meaningful relationships where we can combat loneliness and isolation in a safe and supportive community

RE | **BUILD**

ReBuild a sense of belonging and purpose through opportunities to contribute, education and training

RE | **CENTER**

ReCenter around a meaningful and purposeful life through one on one tenant support services and connecting to community resources



OUR PROGRAMS: PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL & FINANCIAL WELLNESS

1-on-1 Tenant Support

Access community resources, health care, groceries, laundry, counsel, bedding, food and other support. Welcome Gift. Monthly home & wellness check ups.

Family Dinner

Building a sense of family and belonging. Sharing a sit down, family-style meal that is served.

Free Shopping

In lieu of handouts, residents are given free tokens and opportunity to purchase preferred items.

Open Drop-In

Books, games, movies and conversation with volunteers.

Coffee Club

Offer hot coffee, tea, bagels and other breakfast items to give residents a great start to their day.

Financial Support

Provide escorted trips to bank, budgeting assistance and coordinate tax returns with volunteer accountants.

Afternoon Outing

Physical activity providing residents with a guided opportunity to explore outdoors.

Community Garden

Promote activity outdoors and exposure to natural beauty. Gardening provides hope.

Free Haircuts

Coordinate complimentary haircuts & beard trims with professional barbers.

Birthday Parties

Monthly event to congregate and celebrate residents birthdays so they know they are valued.

Hospital Visits

Physical and emotional support for residents that are hospitalized, afraid and lonely.

Clean Team

Help residents, especially those with mobility issues, maintain clean rooms.

Pet Therapy

Visiting dogs and fish tanks promote peace and create connection, affection & fun.

Games

Build meaningful and supportive friendships while enjoying coffee, board games and conversation.

Movie Matinée

Popcorn, communal seating and a great movie to promote social interaction and relaxation.

Super Smoothies

Promote social interaction and relationship building while serving ultra-nutritious snack

Seated Exercise

Physio-designed program to promote increased strength, mobility and fun.

Crock Pot Cooking Club

Practical skills training and building a sense of pride, worth and belonging.

Holiday Meals

Celebrate Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas with friends & family over a special sit down dinner.

Special Events / Activities

Annual Family Picnic in the Park, PNE excursions, creating great memories together to promote health.



Vital Tenant Support Services: One on One Support

Coordinating Health Care

Requesting case manager assessments (for home support, OT, higher care, early identification of dementia, stroke, etc.)

Medical appointment reminders

Requesting medical appointments

Providing more insight into baseline behaviour and changes

Requesting a case manager to assess needs for higher care

Coordinating Health Care Continued...

Ensuring tenant is aware/understands their follow up

Coordinating pharmacy deliveries/pick up

Work closely with Home Support team for basic home and care needs (supplying personal hygiene items, cleaning supplies, snack for meds, etc.)

Financial Support

Pension/SAFER/OAS/GIS application assistance

Provide safe escorted trips to bank

Budgeting assistance

Coordinating rent payment

Coordinating access to free tax services

Accessing Bloom Group Adult Guardianship Program

Housing Applications & Government Forms

Applying for Government ID

Bank account assistance

Income Assistance/Disability/Pension/SAFER/OAS/GIS application assistance

Assistance with housing applications for appropriate housing along the continuum

Food Security

Assistance with groceries

Coordinating meal replacement purchases from local non-profits (Ensure)

Hospital Care & Coordination

Ensuring rent is paid during extended hospital stays

Coordinating with hospital staff before discharge to ensure after care is in place

Clean Units

Regular home wellness checks to identify any potential issues

Help residents, especially those with mobility issues, maintain clean rooms by providing shared supplies, volunteer groups, light support

Reduce Vulnerability/ Heighten Safety Measures

Ensure their funds are safe

Identify elder abuse

Community Meetings/Open Forums

24-hour tenant checklist



WHOLE WAY HOUSE MEAL DELIVERY PROGRAM OVERVIEW 2020 COVID-19 RESPONSE



MORE THAN A MEAL - MAKING REAL
CONNECTIONS & SPREADING HOPE

NOTES OF HOPE

Seniors received handmade cards from supporters to remind them that they are not alone.

SUCCULENTS FOR SENIORS

Seniors received their own succulents to bring life and hope into their homes and have their own plant to care for.

MUSICAL PERFORMANCES

- World renowned violinist, Rosemary Siemans played O Canada for our veterans on Canada Day.
- Derek Davidson honoured our veterans with a private outdoor bagpipe performance to commemorate their service on Remembrance Day.
- WWH staff sang happy birthday and brought cards and balloons to celebrate being another year young.
- Carnegie Outreach brought a harpist play in some courtyards.



PROVINCIAL ELECTION

WWH delivery staff handed out flyers for mail in ballots and vote by phone info to ensure our seniors voices were heard in 2020.

600 BOXES OF HOPE

Each senior and vulnerable resident will receive a Christmas box filled with treats and a hand written card to ensure they know that although they may be isolating, they are not alone this Christmas.



From March 2020 to August 2021, Whole Way House, along with its' partners, was able to deliver over 260,000 free meals to veterans, seniors and vulnerable residents in the DTES and across Vancouver.



600 

19 

6 

4 

7 

PARTNERS IN OUR MEAL DELIVERY PROGRAM



Emergency Weather Response: Heat Dome 2021 & 2022

Immediate response to prevent harm was possible because we were onsite.





Setting Seniors Up For Success



Stabilization

- Clear is kind
- Welcome packages
- Home Success Visits
- Consistency

Prevention

- Building trust
- Connection and community
- Value and purpose

Dignity

- Autonomy
- Empowerment
- Opportunities
- Fairness

Seniors / News / Local News / Health

Project helps low-income B.C. seniors, a growing population with health, housing woes

New pilot project brings activities and support to isolated low-income seniors, to keep them at home longer and out of care homes and hospitals

Lail Culbert

Sep 09, 2022 • September 9, 2022 • 8 minute read • [Join the conversation](#)

Lorraine Ahearn and Terry Kennedy at Granville House program run by Whole Way House which is a non-profit that supports seniors in the DTES and has recently partnered with B.C. Housing to expand and offer four additional low-income buildings with on-site programming and support services for seniors. PHOTO BY NICK PROCAVLO /PNG

VANCOUVER SUN

“It gets me out of bed and it gives me something to do. I know somebody’s going be down here and I can talk to people,” said Lorraine Ahearn, 73. “I have a different outlook now on life. So, everything’s better. Everything.”

Ahearn has lived in this B.C. Housing building, on the north shore of False Creek, for 14 years, but says having daily companionship and organized events led her to make major changes in just a few months: She stopped, with the backing of her doctor, taking her antidepressant medicine. She started exercises to reduce the pain in her frozen shoulder. And she gets out of bed early in anticipation of the day, rather than languishing alone until noon.

VANCOUVER SUN

"Just saying that you'll help, that's all the money in the world to me," resident Jim Sheasgreen said of the assistance and camaraderie he's experienced since Whole Way House arrived.

"It pulled me right up to the surface. I wasn't very sociable at all."

Sheasgreen had lived in Granville House for 19 years but only recently learned his neighbour Terry Kennedy's name. Now they frequently sit together, playing games and drinking coffee.

"I sit here and get beaten on a regular basis when I'm playing cribbage," Kennedy adds with a hearty laugh.

"This Whole Way House, when it came about, was the best thing that's happened because it helps your sanity. You get to be seen (rather than) sit in your room in solitary confinement all the time.

"They've got to keep this going. Don't shut it down."

lculbert@postmedia.com



Tracy Lam and Sam Chiu play mah-jong at Alexander House. PHOTO BY NICK PROCAYLO /PNG

VANCOUVER SUN

Her staff pinpointed four buildings where they saw the most need and, in April, SFU researchers conducted a survey that asked 239 residents about their physical and emotional well-being.

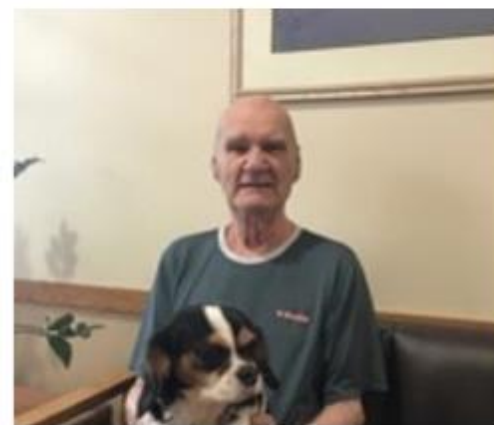
Among the SFU findings:

- 82% found it hard to make ends meet and half were worried they could lose their homes.
- Roughly half said that they didn't feel close to people, that they wouldn't have anyone to help them if they were sick in bed, and that nobody would find them within 24 hours if they fell down with an injury.
- two-thirds didn't have any services or activities to give them a sense of purpose or meaning in life.
- More than half felt downhearted and blue, and a slightly larger percentage said they struggled with their health.



SUCCESS STORIES

- **TIBOR:** I found Tibor walking down Powell St. in a snowstorm, freezing and sliding on the ice. I pulled over and picked him up for fear he would die out there. He was confused and had taken the wrong bus on the way to No Frills and didn't know where he was. He was living in a dangerous SRO where he was being victimized and had lost his home support due to aggravated behavior. We brought him into our supportive housing at Veterans Manor and he has become the most gentle and thankful man, we were even able to get his home-support reinstated. This is dignity!
- **TINO:** When Tino went completely blind, he no longer felt safe living in an SRO. With the help of BCH, we were able to move Tino off the SHR from the hotel and help him get settled into the Veterans Manor, where he now feels safe, secure and supported.
- **ALFIE:** With the help of BCH, we were able to help Alfie move here from Oppenheimer Lodge, where he was being victimized. When we went to pick him up, all of his belongings and money had been stolen. He is so happy to live here, where he is safe and has access to food security & pet therapy, which helps his anxiety. He thanks us daily.



Avalon Hotel (DTES SRO) Case Study

98%

Building infractions: Damage reduced by 98% in under 4 years

Bylaw infractions reduced from 136 down to 3 in under 4 years. Instead of causing damage, residents began taking care of their homes.

- When given respect and treated with dignity, residents wanted to contribute to the care and upkeep of their homes.
- More cooperative with room and building maintenance; less likely to vandalize the building.
- Positive attitude change towards building management and city and fire inspectors.

90%

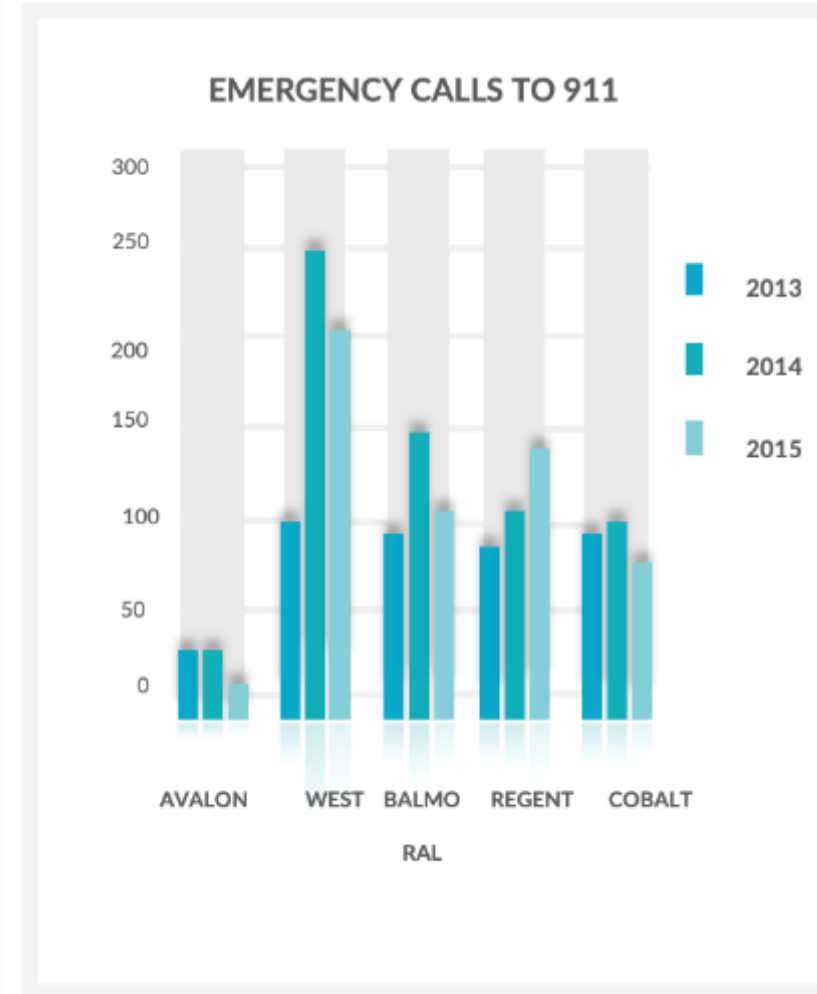
Calls to 911: 90% less than in surrounding SRO's

During our time at the Avalon, our average number of calls to 911 was 24 per year, compared to a shocking 150-250 calls in neighbouring SRO's.

- Created a culture of support, dignity and respect through our support services and community building programs.
- By addressing social isolation, we observed a significant reduction in negative and harmful behaviours, which directly led to fewer emergency calls.
- VPD commented on the significant difference in 911 call vol compared to surrounding SRO buildings.

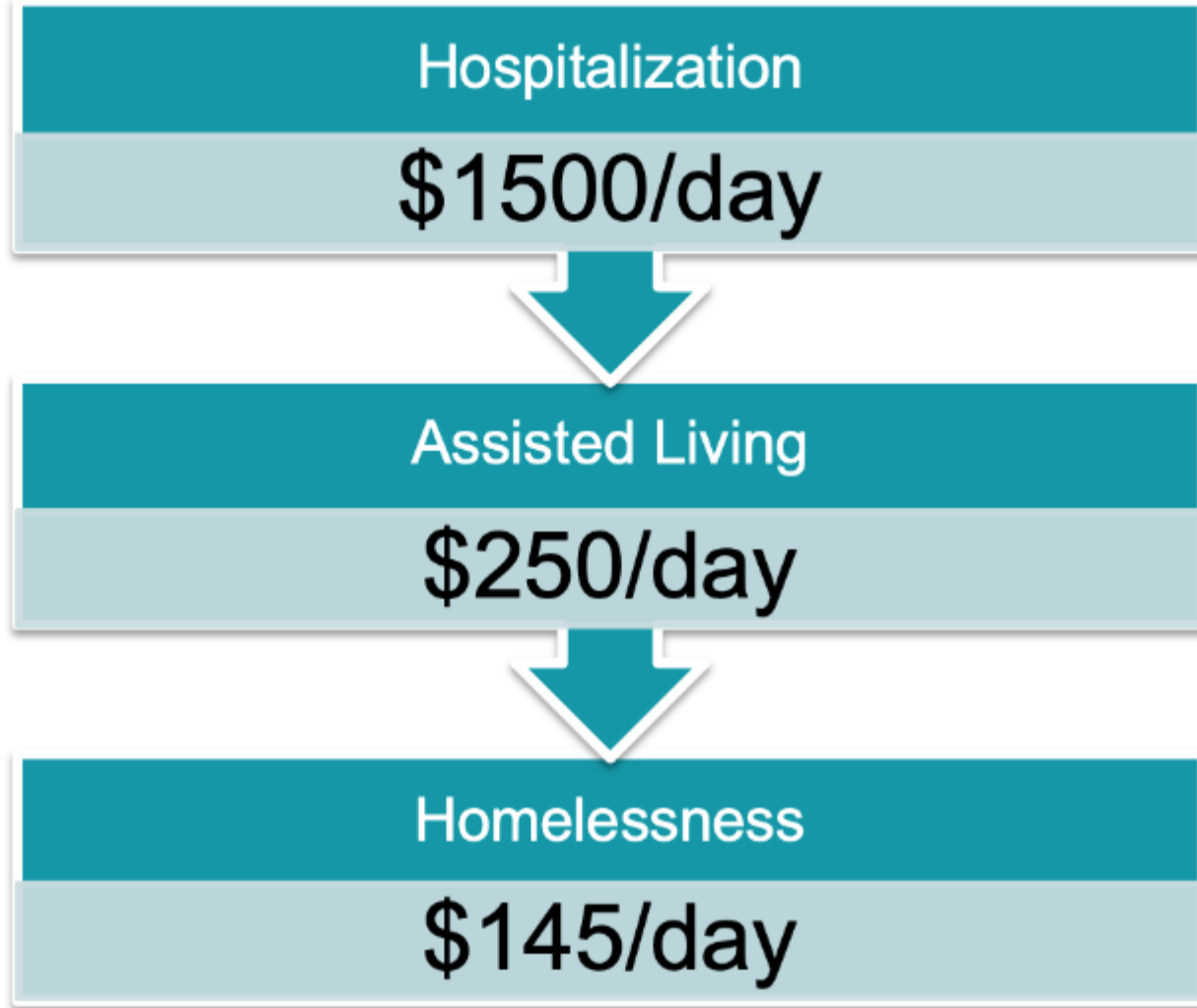
- A drastic decrease in negative turnover and an increase in positive move-outs along the housing continuum
- 84% decrease in police incidents, violence or other altercations (*six in 2010 vs. one in 2014*), saving thousands of dollars in emergency calls to 911 and dispatched officers
- 98% decrease by-law infractions from 2010 to 2014.
- Increase in participation and cooperation with medical and mental health programs and support workers.
- More than 1200 resident volunteer shifts served, creating a less dependent community capable of self-government.
- Over 25 residents received assistance to find employment, continue their education or enrolled in Alcohol and Drug recovery programs.

Positive Outcomes





AVERAGE COST ESTIMATE



When seniors are unsupported, they can face hospitalization, early assisted living or even homelessness, which are extremely costly.

Because we can leverage the capital investment that has already been made into housing, we can lower the cost of all three areas by making this housing accessible to homeless and at-risk seniors and prevent more seniors from becoming homeless.

Being proactive is 95% more cost effective than being reactive and allows our seniors to age well in place.



Whole Way House
Support Services =
\$1-8/day





HOW OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH BC HOUSING & HOUSING NPO IS SUCCESSFUL

As rooms turned over in the past 1.5 years, we have helped house 40 new vulnerable seniors - 39 have remained housed.

97%
RETENTION
RATE

Because these residents are now engaged with support services, they are *healthier physically, mentally and emotionally*, which allows them to stabilize and remain in safe and secure housing.



BC HOUSING



Collaboration is Key



Affordable Housing Societies



BC HOUSING



**New
Chelsea
Society**



**SIMON FRASER
UNIVERSITY**



**UNION
GOSPEL
MISSION**

SHILOH
HOUSING
SOCIETY



Funded by Infrastructure Canada





WHOLE WAY HOUSE

RECONNECT. REBUILD. RECENTER

THANK YOU

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Exploring 'Aging in the Right Place' through Community-Engaged Research: Photovoice with Older Adults with Lived Experience of Homelessness

Patille, R. ¹, Mahmood, A. ¹, Victoria, I. ¹, Bookmyer, G. ¹, Chung, S. ¹, & Canham, S. ^{1,2}

¹Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada

²University of Utah, Salt Lake City, USA



Agenda



Background



Methods



Photovoice



Sample of
Participants



Emerging
Themes



Conclusion



Background



Aging in the Right Place (AIRP) for older adults^{1,2}



Older persons experiencing homelessness (OPEH) in Canada³⁻⁹

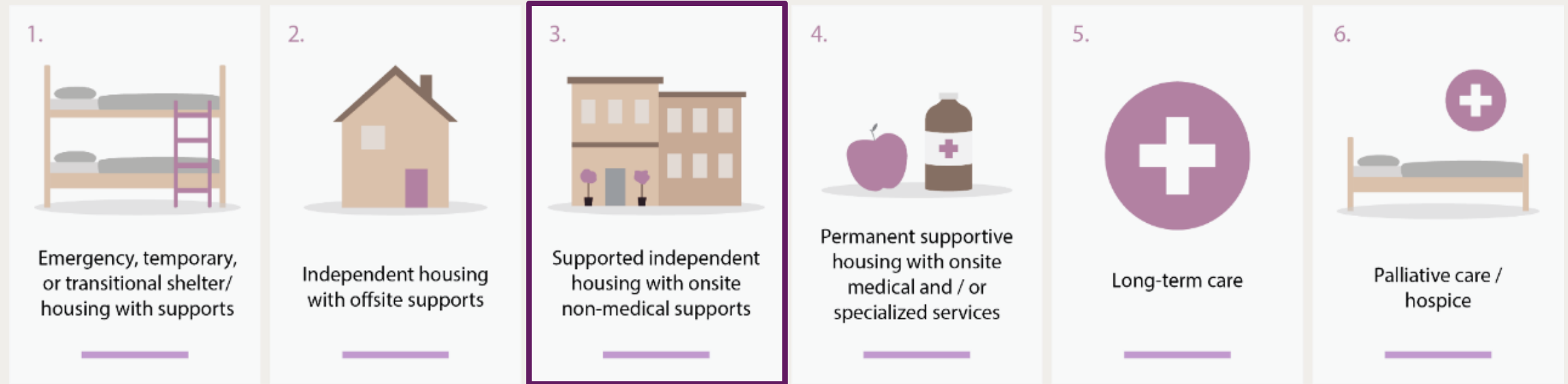


Need to evaluate 'right' set of housing for OPEH^{4,9-14}



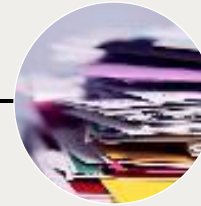
Utilizing the photovoice method among OPEH to better understand AIRP
11-15

Shelter/Housing Continuum

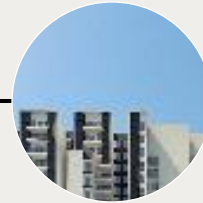


Methods: Data Collection

Aging in the
Right Place



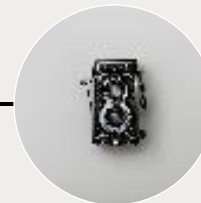
Document review



Environmental audit

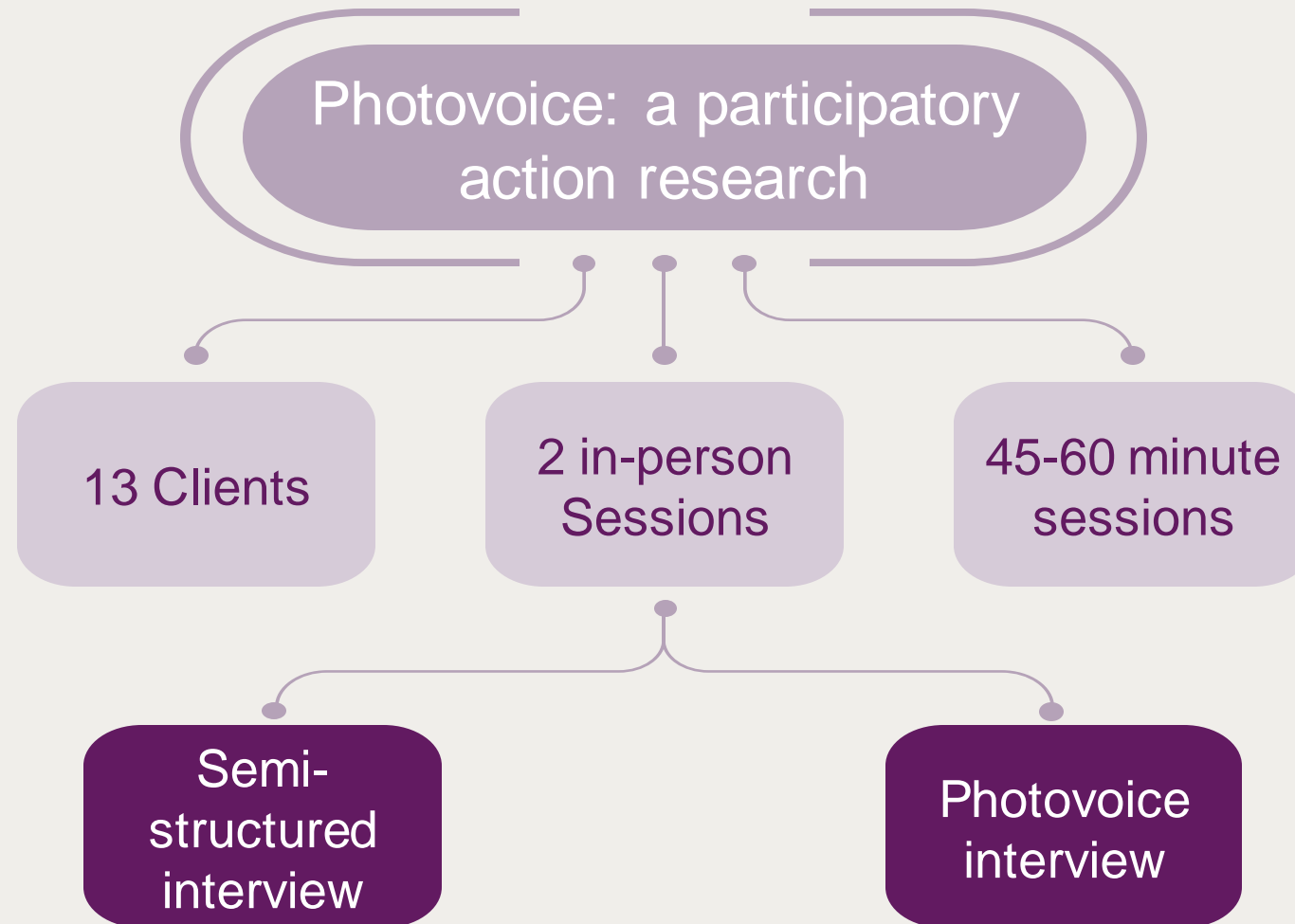


Provider interviews



Client photovoice
interviews

Client Photovoice Interviews



What is Photovoice?

Photovoice is a qualitative method used in **community-based participatory action research strategy** to document and reflect reality in a hands-on manner. ¹⁵⁻¹⁶



Clients took photos that represent ***aging in the right place*** to them, to visualize, and illustrate, perceptions and perspectives.

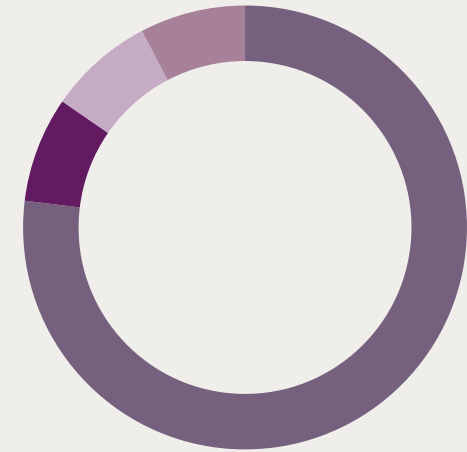
Participants

13 participants

Female (n=9)
Male (n=4)

Age range: 60-90
years old

Ethnicity: 10
Caucasian, 1
Iranian, 1 West
Indian, 1 Mixed Race



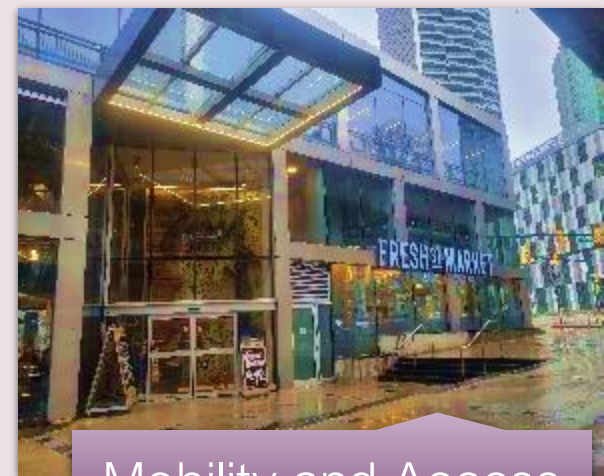
■ Caucasian ■ Iranian ■ West Indian ■ Mixed



31% Male, 69% Female

Demographics

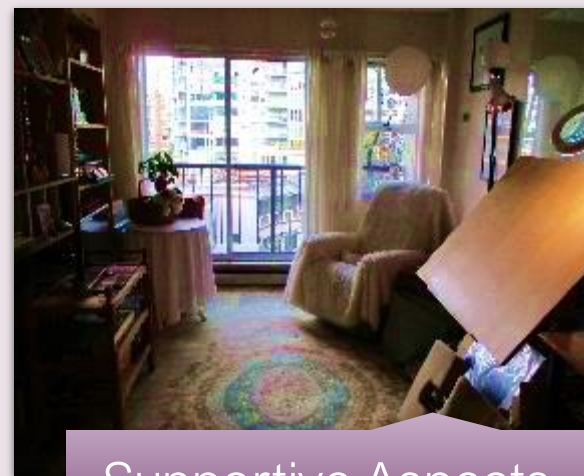
Emerging Themes



Mobility and Access
in the Community



Opportunity for
Social Interaction



Supportive Aspects
of Program



Engagement with
Built and Natural
Environment

Mobility & Access in the Community

“This photo is [the] bus stop, it’s got this shelter. It means that ‘Translink’ knows these people come, and sometimes they have to wait maybe 15 minutes or even sometimes half an hour. If it’s raining or very windy, this is very good. That’s why I like the shelter. It saves the passengers, and they can be more comfortable to tolerate the time and the weather. Sometimes I use this bus going to Metrotown for my volunteer work at the community center.” C9



“This is a great convenience that came in several years ago. And it’s really important to me... I’m so much older, makes my grocery shopping so much easier. And I really appreciate that. Aging in the right place definitely means having good access for grocery shopping. And having this really excellent produce shop also, within close distance, on the way gives me so much more choice.” C2

Social Interaction



“This is where we come together to play games, have special dinners, watch movies, as well as other activities. But most importantly, build new friendships with each other, bridging the different cultures and people together... So blessed to be here to get to know all these wonderful people in the group and include them as family and special friends to me.” C7

Supportive Nature of Program



“My new residence was equipped with amazing building security. Multiple 24-hour cameras, FOB entry, front and back, deadbolt locks on all the unit doors. And best of all, double gated parking. All highly valued. Keeping my car and myself very protected. This awesome building was the perfect fit. I knew God had chosen it for me to be happy, cared for not alone and safe sound and secure.

The perfect home to age in the right place. As stress free as possible.” C7



“I really enjoy my apartment. I feel cozy in here and I really like having such a rich environment. I like having lots of stimulation, and I have access to it.” C2



”It’s a collection of things. I like to look at this picture of Garibaldi Lake. Oh, there is many things. There is my calendar. There are some photos like what I get from my friends. It’s a nice place, I think to sit. And do whatever you want to do reading, writing.” C4

Engagement with Built & Natural Environment



“One of the paths that I frequently visit all the time I always see something new that catches my eye, and it caught my eye and because it was a different kind of a flower, which is only grown in that area, and I’ve never seen any other flowers in around the lake anywhere else. And I thought that's kind of cool. Yeah, because it's not going to last long. Right? But it reminds me of aging in the right place.” C10



“This is the ninth-floor rooftop deck. So, this was one of the great perks of this building. View of North Van, West Van, Stanley Park, Crab Park, the Ocean Harbour, the Convention Center, Canada Place, the mountains, the Port of Vancouver. It just goes on and on. Even after eight years living here, the roof top deck still takes my breath away. I feel a freedom so deep, often makes me cry with joy”. C7

Wrapping up Photovoice Findings

Community Connectivity

- Access to public transportation that is walkable, dependable, and sheltered
- Being near or able to easily access affordable amenities (necessary and pleasure)

Social Interaction

- Social space at building that is welcoming
- Organized and purposeful social programming that facilitate meaningful connections

Supportive Aspects of Program

- Safety and security (building, unit, and parking) contributes to a stress-free environment
- Feeling at home and a sense of belonging through personalization
- Sense of independence

Built and Natural Environment

- Connected to nature in an accessible fashion
- Being able to venture to the built and natural environment out of mere desire allows for the expression of exploration, choice, freedom, and control

Conclusion

Photovoice provides an opportunity for OPEH to actively engage in research in a participatory fashion.

The four emerging themes identified from photovoice interviews can help bridge current gaps in knowledge to transform program practices related to housing for OPEH.

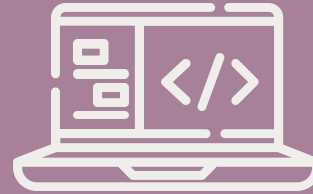
Offering insight on the barriers and facilitators of AIRP through action-based research.

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https://twitter.com/airp_vabe



<https://www.sfu.ca/airp.html>

————— Thank you! —————



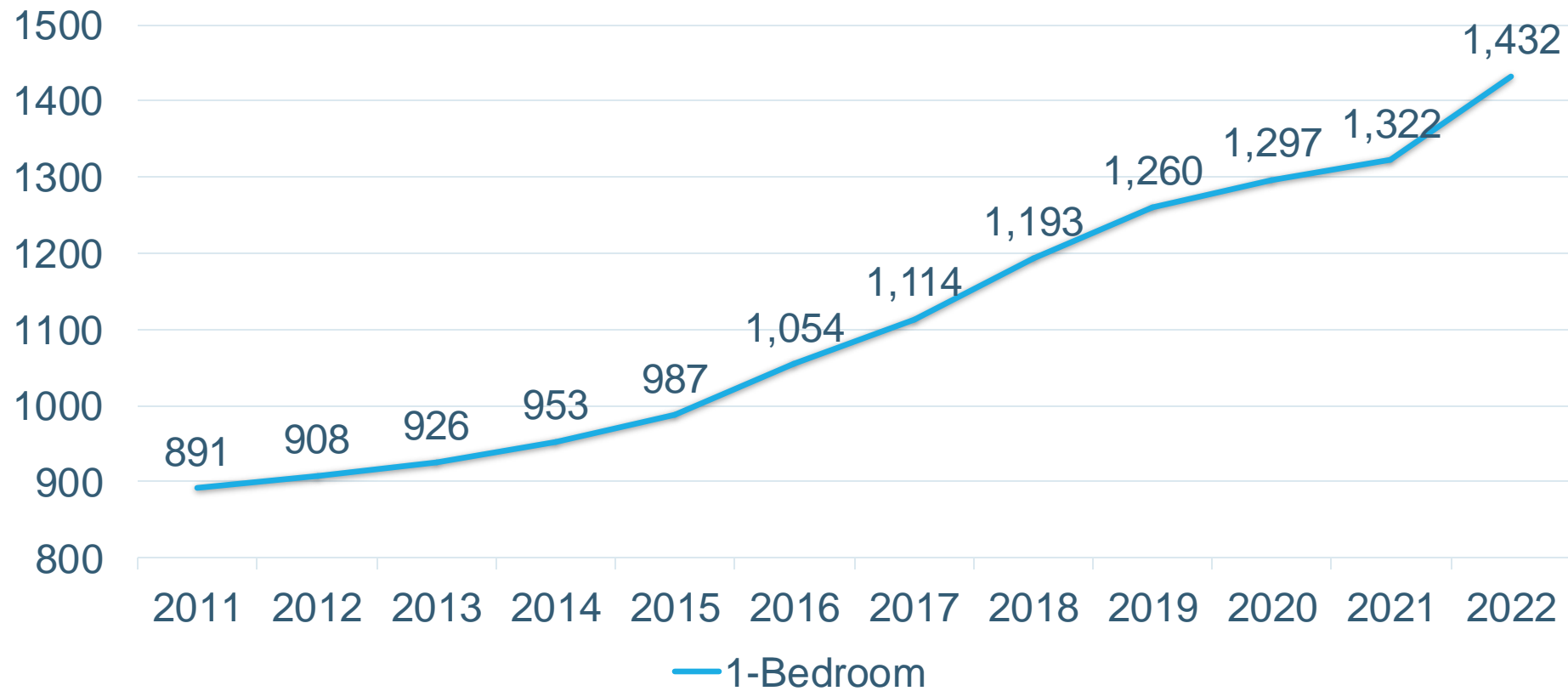
HOUSING PRECARITY AND OLDER ADULTS IN BC

Laura Kadowaki
June 2, 2023

Growing number of older adults who are precariously housed or homeless

- Over 2017 to 2021 the waitlist for seniors subsidized social housing units increased from 5,988 to 8,707 (BC Housing, 2022)
- In Metro Vancouver the percentage of homeless who are older adults has increased from 9% in 2008 to 24% in 2020 (BCNPHA, 2020)
- In 2016, 1 in 5 senior-led renter households in BC were at risk of homelessness (spending 50% or more of their income on housing) (BCNPHA, 2023)

Context of Housing Precarity in BC



A 70 year old living on an income of \$1,822.40 per month would spend **79%** of their income on housing.

1. Income

- Older adults often live on fixed incomes and are reliant on government benefits (e.g., CPP, OAS, GIS, BC Seniors Supplement) that are failing to keep pace with the rising costs of living
- Pre-retirement age (55-64) older adults are in some cases even worse off than the 65+ age group as they are not yet eligible for retirement benefits

"We are in a housing crisis. But we're also in an income disparity crisis. And so, you know, and again, to emphasize, these are folks that worked, and worked hard all their lives, you know, and provided for themselves and are now finding themselves in a place where they can't manage."

2. Housing

- Interviewees emphasized there is a severe lack of subsidized housing
- Evictions/renovictions, redevelopments, and seasonal/regional influxes of people are contributing to the loss of affordable private market options
- Governments need to specifically examine the housing needs of older adults and recognize that they need senior-specific strategies and a full continuum of affordable housing options that will meet a range of needs
- Strategies are needed at the municipal/community (e.g., coalitions/action tables, municipal policies, etc.) and provincial levels (e.g., increase SAFER, stricter regulations on rent increases and evictions) to address housing affordability

3. Community-Based Seniors Services

- Interviewees noted the need for more local, senior-specific housing navigation supports and services
- Support is often provided off the side of the desk and usually exceeds capacity
- Older adults may require assistance navigating housing systems, filling out their taxes, applying for benefits/grants, dealing with landlords, etc.

"I would say I noticed quite a bit of moral distress, spiritual distress among staff -- like I feel it myself too. Because my job description isn't to be a housing navigator and I do it because the needs there and we're here to serve older adults, but my job is not to be really that frontline. And I'm still spending probably about 10 hours a week doing this on top of my other work. And yet again, I'm choosing to do it because the needs there, but it's not enough, and we need really like a full-time position to just even do housing navigation and sort of referrals and service work, like frontline work, in regard to this. But even if we did have that frontline worker, as a housing navigator, we're still not really addressing the supply or the space or the kinds of housing."

4. Aging in Place

- Interviewees stated the need for more aging in place supports to help older adults remain in their own home or maintain their tenancy in rental housing
 - Services to address mental health needs (e.g., hoarding, dementia)
 - Aging in place and home maintenance supports (particularly in rural communities)

"I've had people that we've just had to move into emergency housing because their circumstances are so bad. And, you know, for instance, they have inadequate insulation, a broken window, no heat except for a woodstove. And as they get more and more frail, they're not capable of managing the woodstove."

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