

Promising Practices for Supporting Homeless- Experienced Older Adults

November 4, 2022

Sarah L. Canham
Chris Danielsen
Jenny Konkin
Karen Whiteman

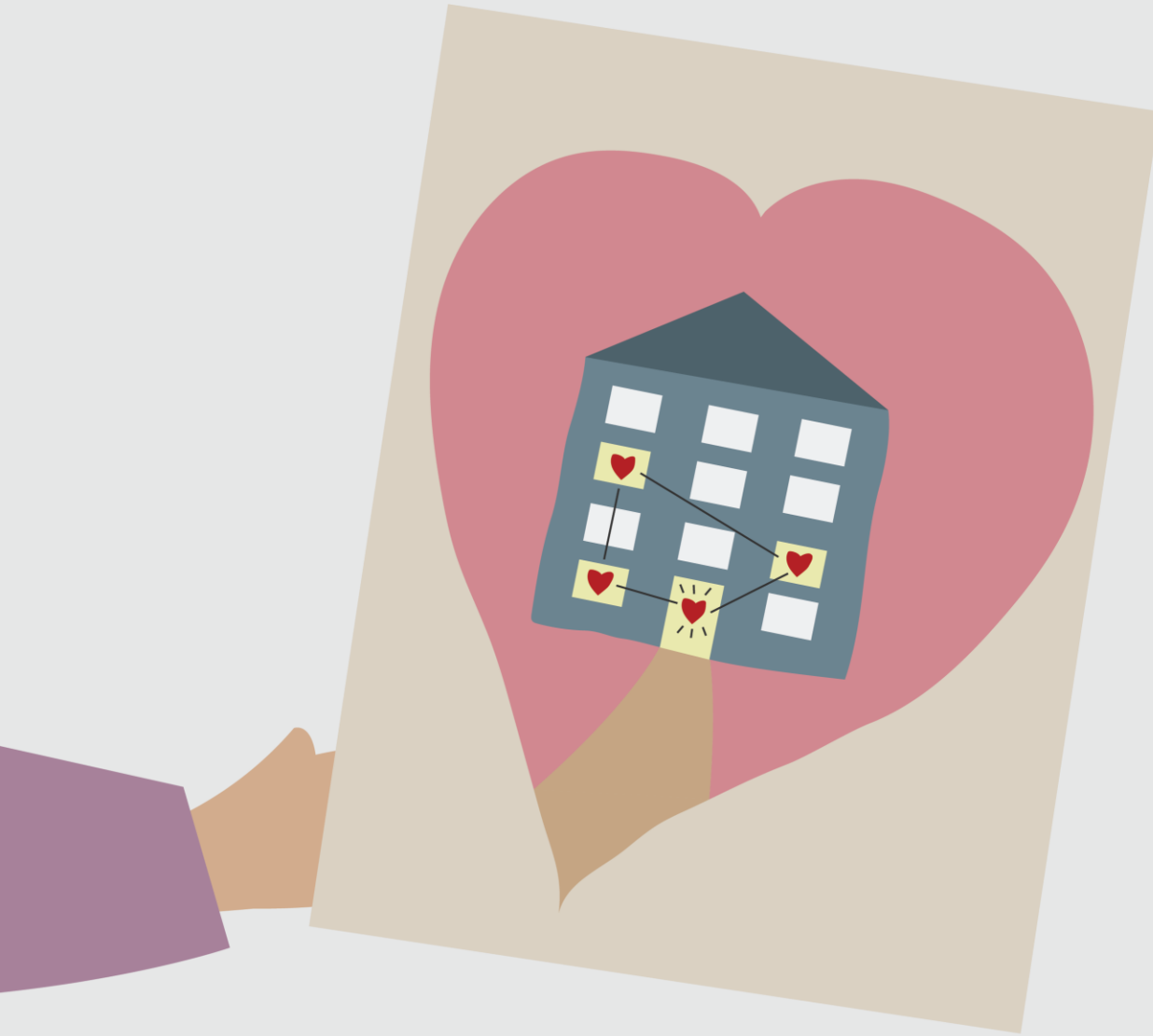


Aging in the Right Place: A Conceptual Framework of Indicators for Older Persons Experiencing Homelessness

Presented by:
Sarah L. Canham

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





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

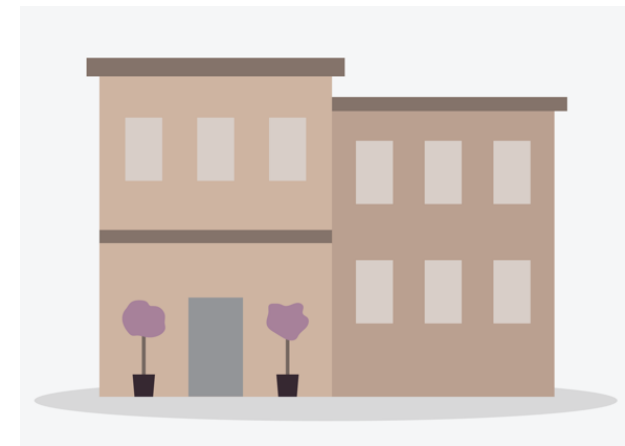
Do you envision moving after age 50?

Where will you go?

What will influence your decisions?

Background

- Aging in the right place (AIRP) recognizes that secure and optimal housing for older people should support an individual's unique lifestyles and vulnerabilities
(Golant, 2015)
- Minimal research has considered how older people with experiences of homelessness (OPEH) may age in the right place



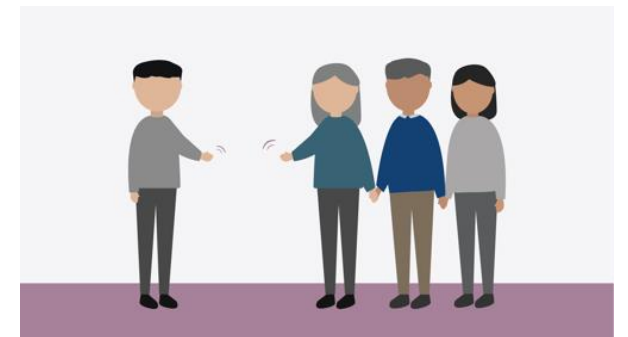
Objective

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



Methods

- Literature review of existing research
- Community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach
- Iterative process of community consultation & model refinement



Indicators of Aging in the Right Place

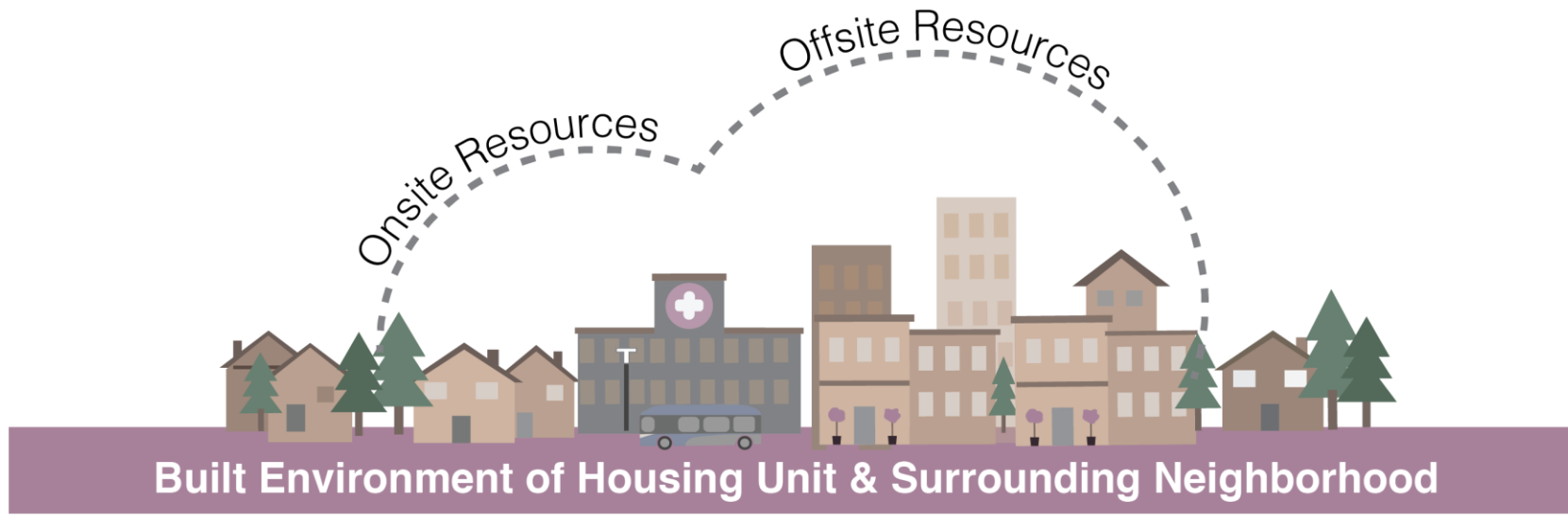
For Older Persons Experiencing Homelessness



Built Environment of Housing Unit & Surrounding Neighborhood

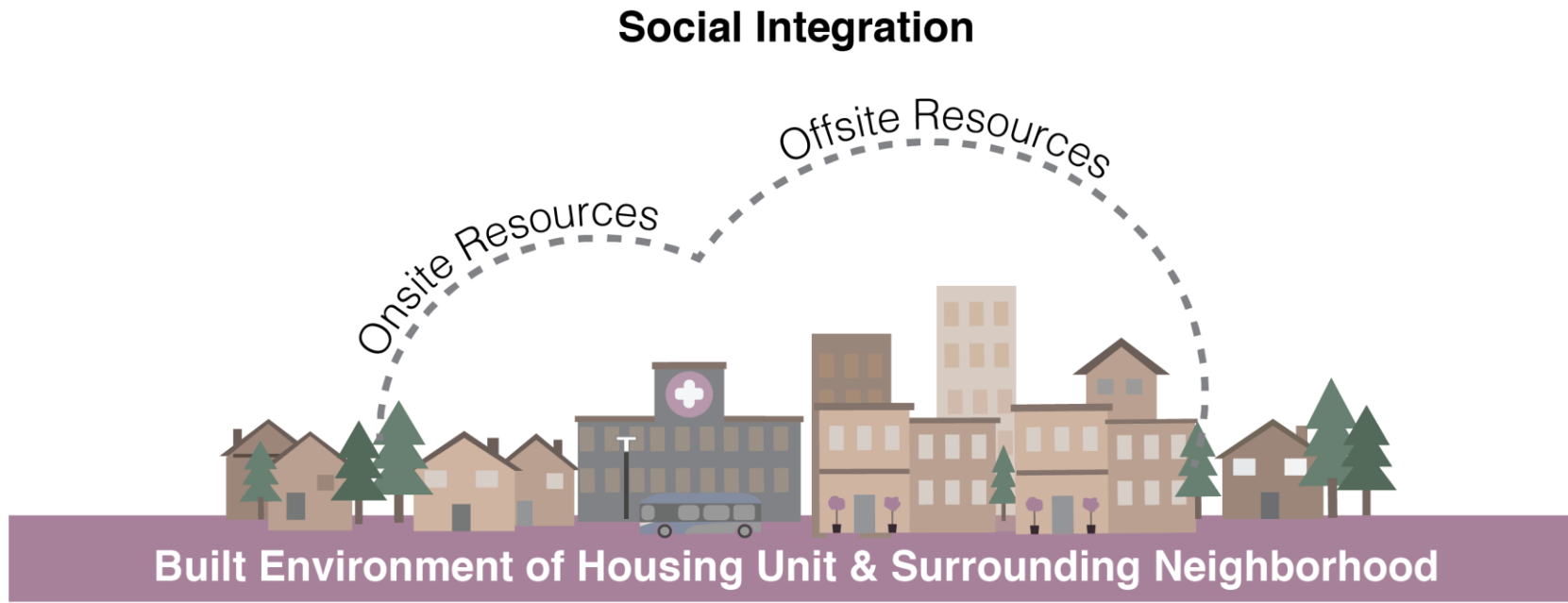
Indicators of Aging in the Right Place

For Older Persons Experiencing Homelessness



Indicators of Aging in the Right Place

For Older Persons Experiencing Homelessness



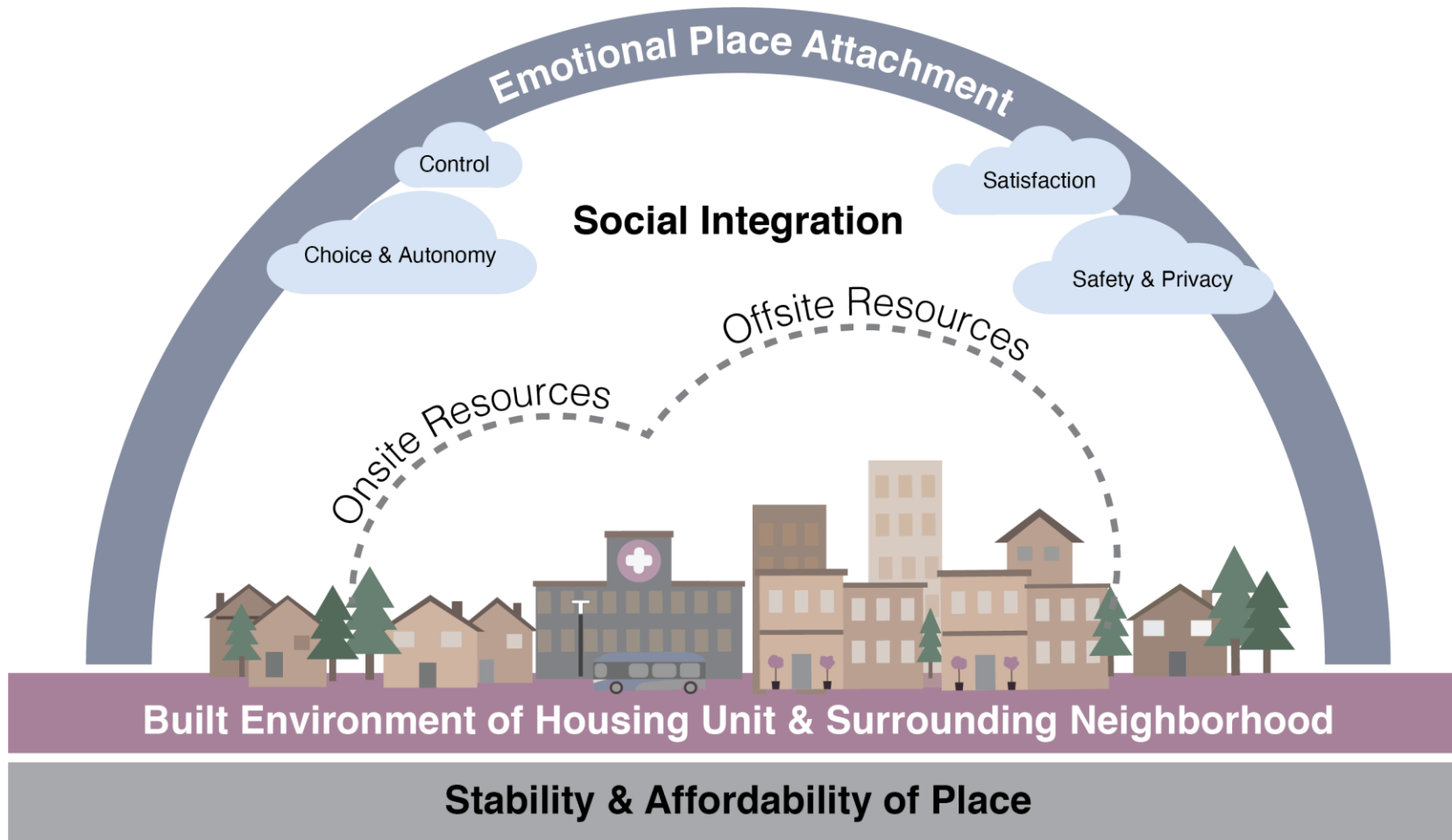
Indicators of Aging in the Right Place

For Older Persons Experiencing Homelessness



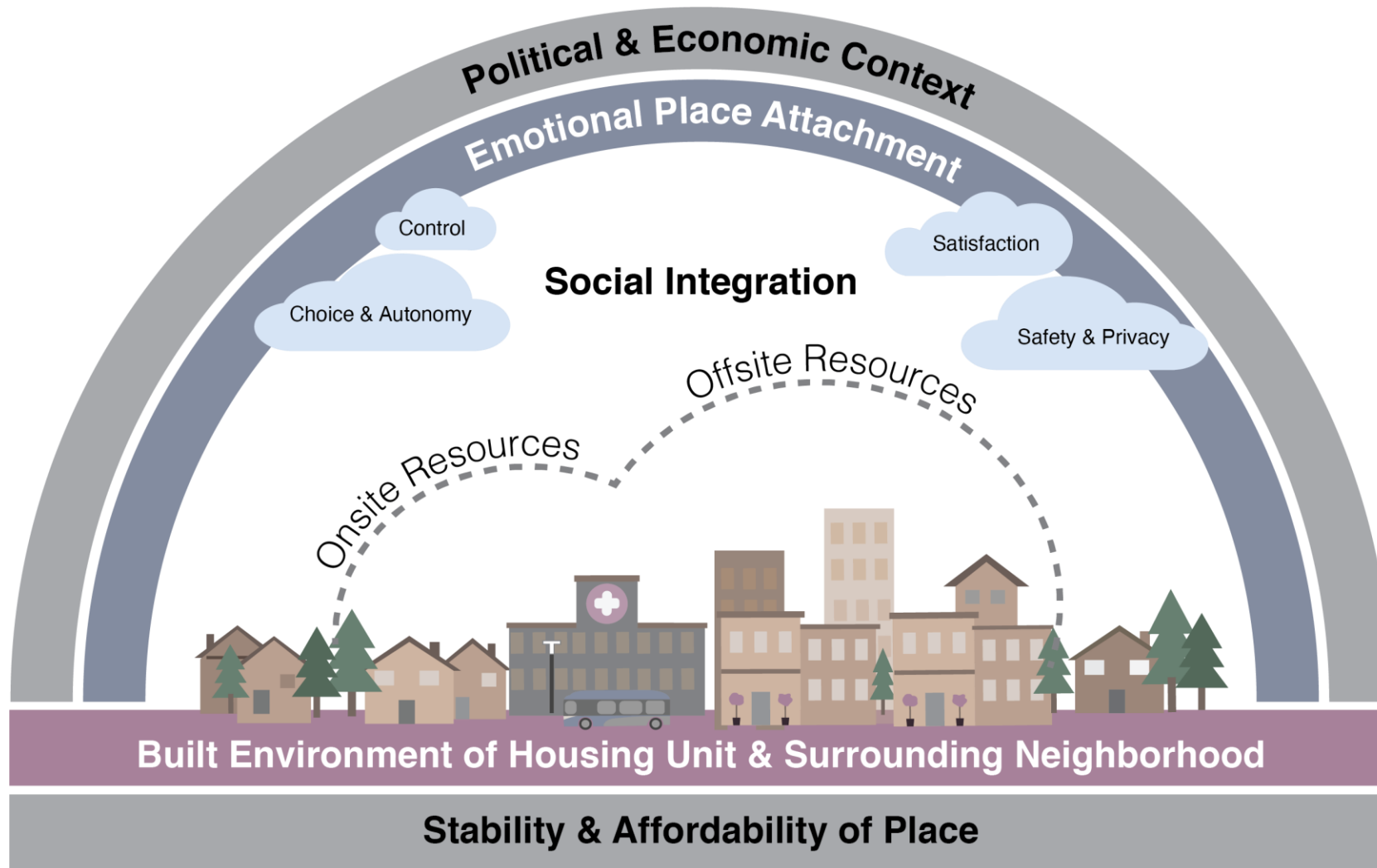
Indicators of Aging in the Right Place

For Older Persons Experiencing Homelessness



Indicators of Aging in the Right Place

For Older Persons Experiencing Homelessness



Conclusion



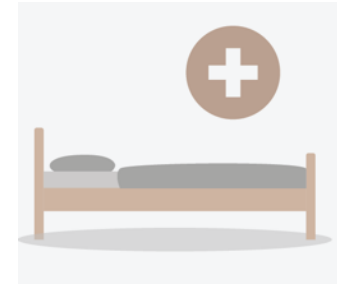
Research

Informing research with older people experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity



Practice

Identifying client needs / tailoring support to promote aging in the right place & secure housing



Policy

Advocating for programs & funding that support diverse needs of older people with experiences of homelessness

To learn more or
connect with us:

Sarah Canham

sarah.canham@utah.edu

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

https://twitter.com/airp_vabe



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
GSA, June 2022



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)

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



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

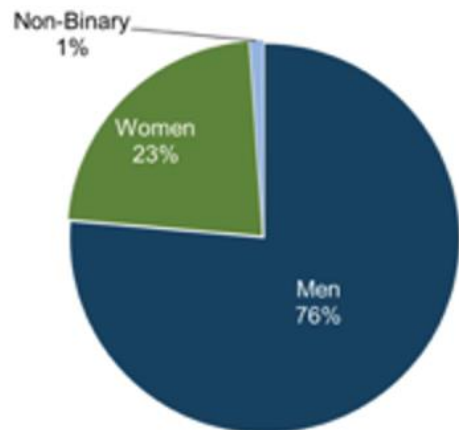
Seniors now makeup 24% of the homeless population, which has more than tripled since 2002.

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

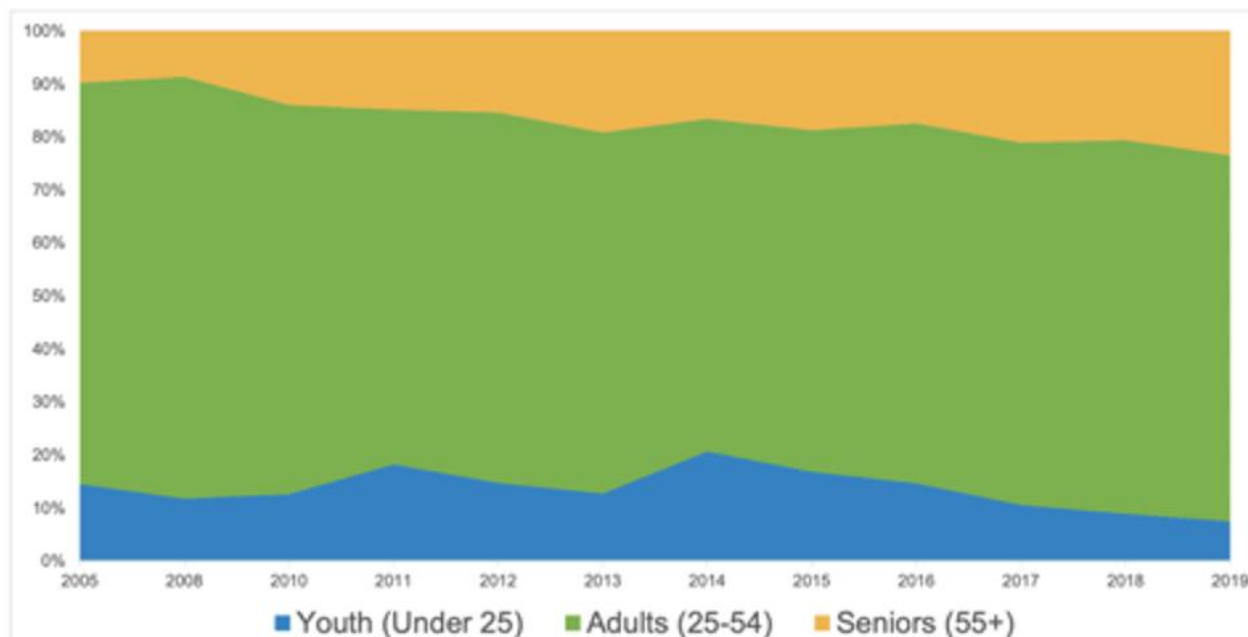
Age Trend: 2005-2019

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**

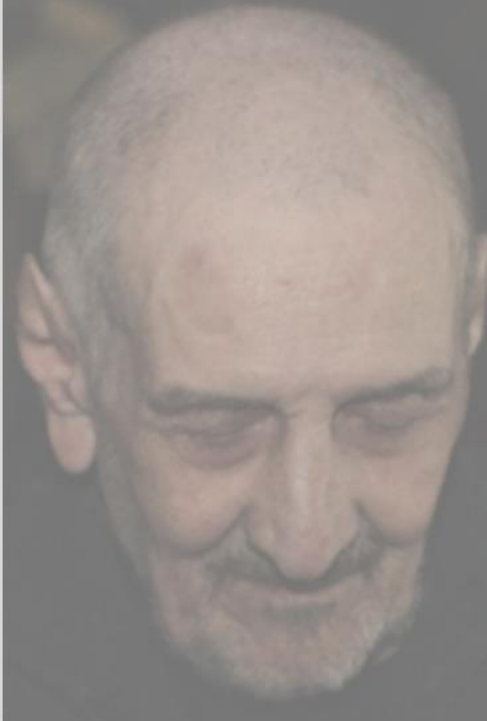




This is more than a housing crisis, this is a heart crisis. We need to reconnect with people in a meaningful way so they can access the support services they need.

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

WHY ARE SENIORS BECOMING HOMELESS?

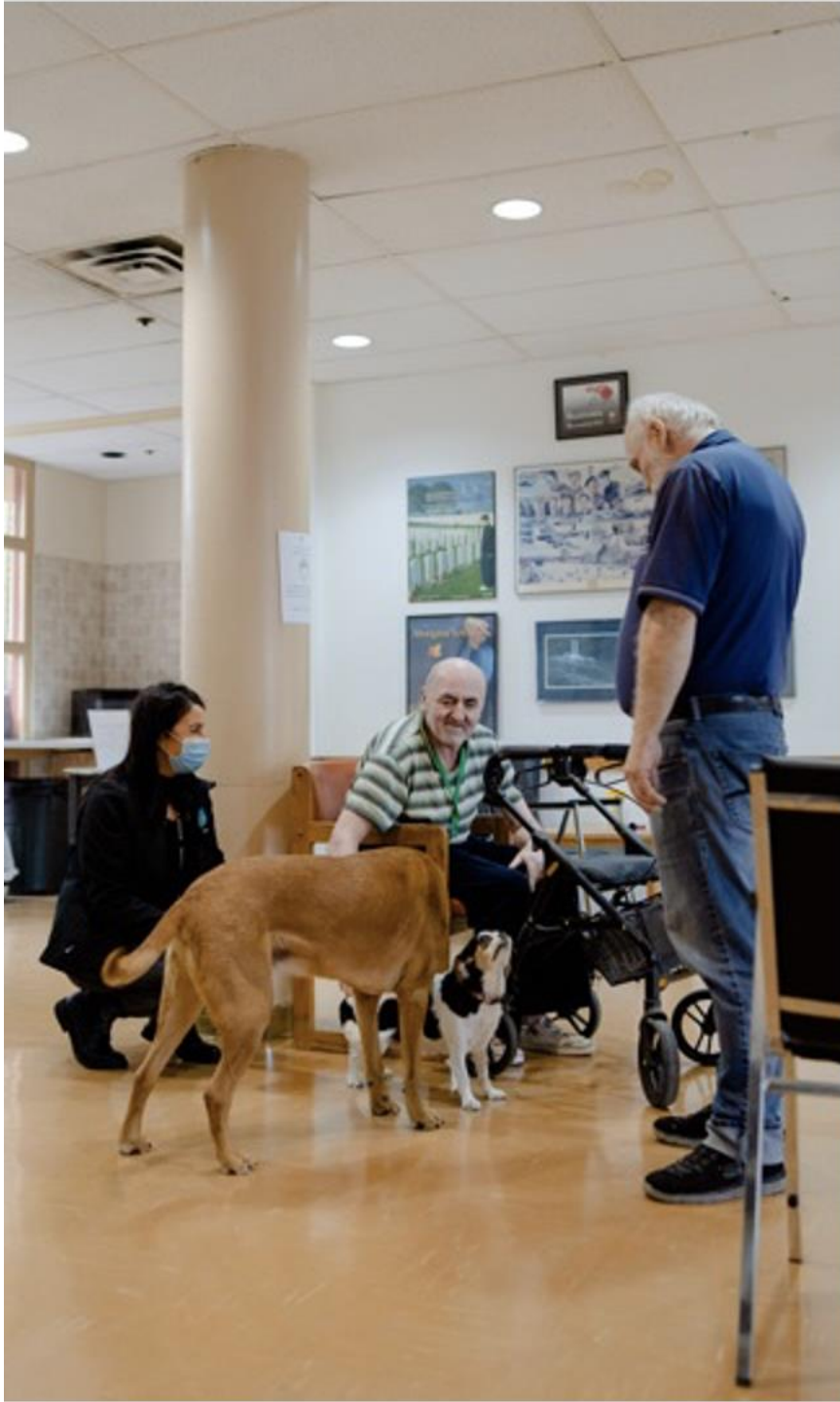


- Unpaid rent (due to memory loss, accessibility to the bank, budgeting, affordability, extended hospital stays)
- Home cleanliness & hoarding
- Lack of food security
- Decline in personal hygiene/self care
- Lack of social network/support system
- No access to medical appointments
- Unable to organize 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.

Financial Support

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

Hospital Visits

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

Super Smoothies

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

Family Dinner

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

Afternoon Outing

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

Clean Team

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

Seated Exercise

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

Free Shopping

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

Community Garden

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

Pet Therapy

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

Crock Pot Cooking Club

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

Open Drop-In

Books, games, movies and conversation with volunteers.

Free Haircuts

Coordinate complimentary haircuts & beard trims with professional barbers.

Games

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

Holiday Meals

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

Coffee Club

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

Birthday Parties

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

Movie Matinée

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

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.

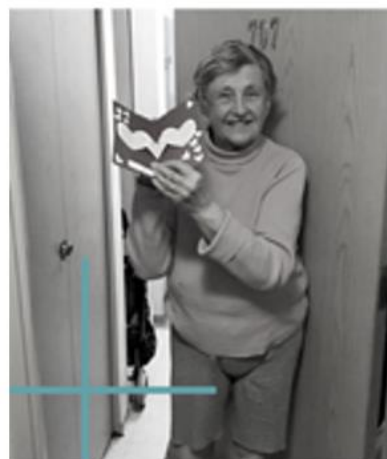
MUSICAL PERFORMANCES

- World renowned violinist, Rosemary Siemens 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

Leil 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 PROCAILO /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."

lcubbert@postmedia.com



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

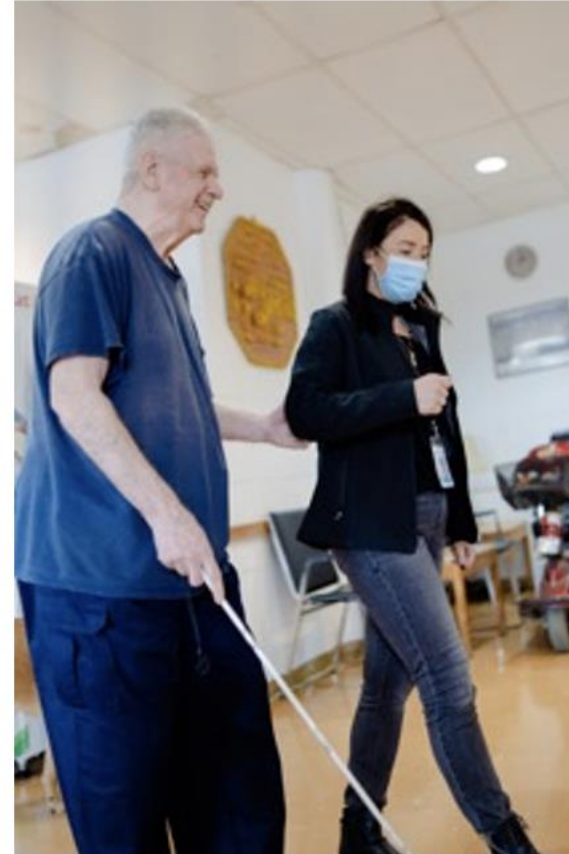
Among the SFU findings:

- 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%

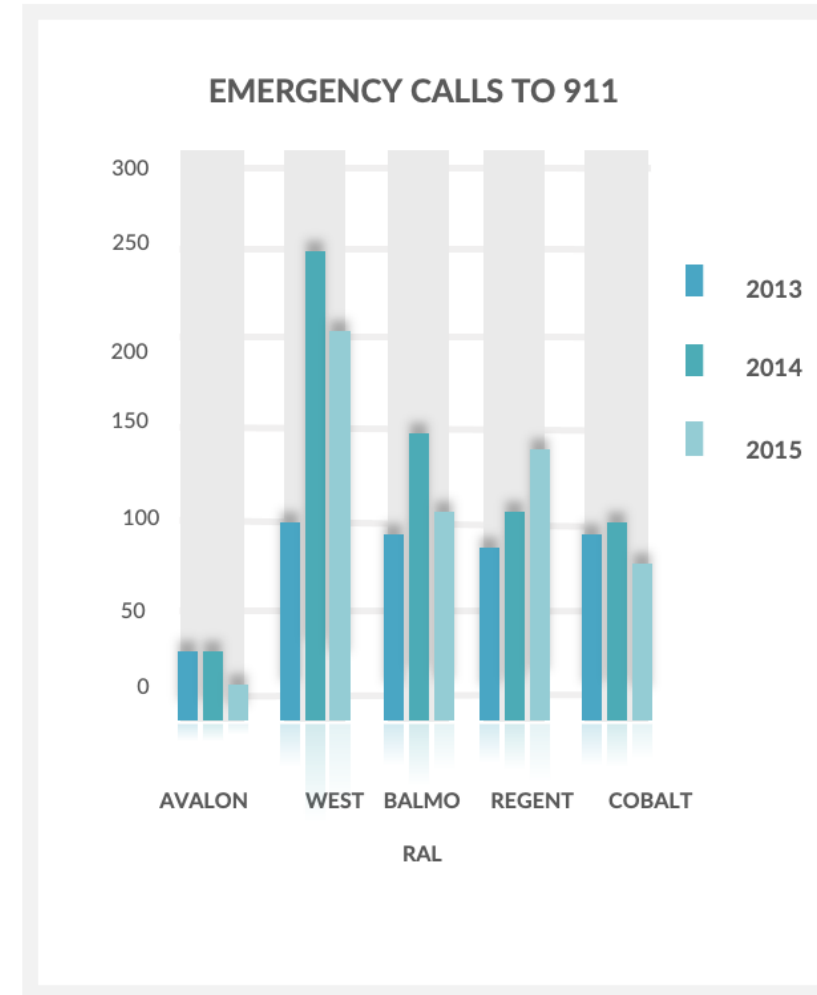
Calls to 911: 90% less than in surrounding SRO's

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.

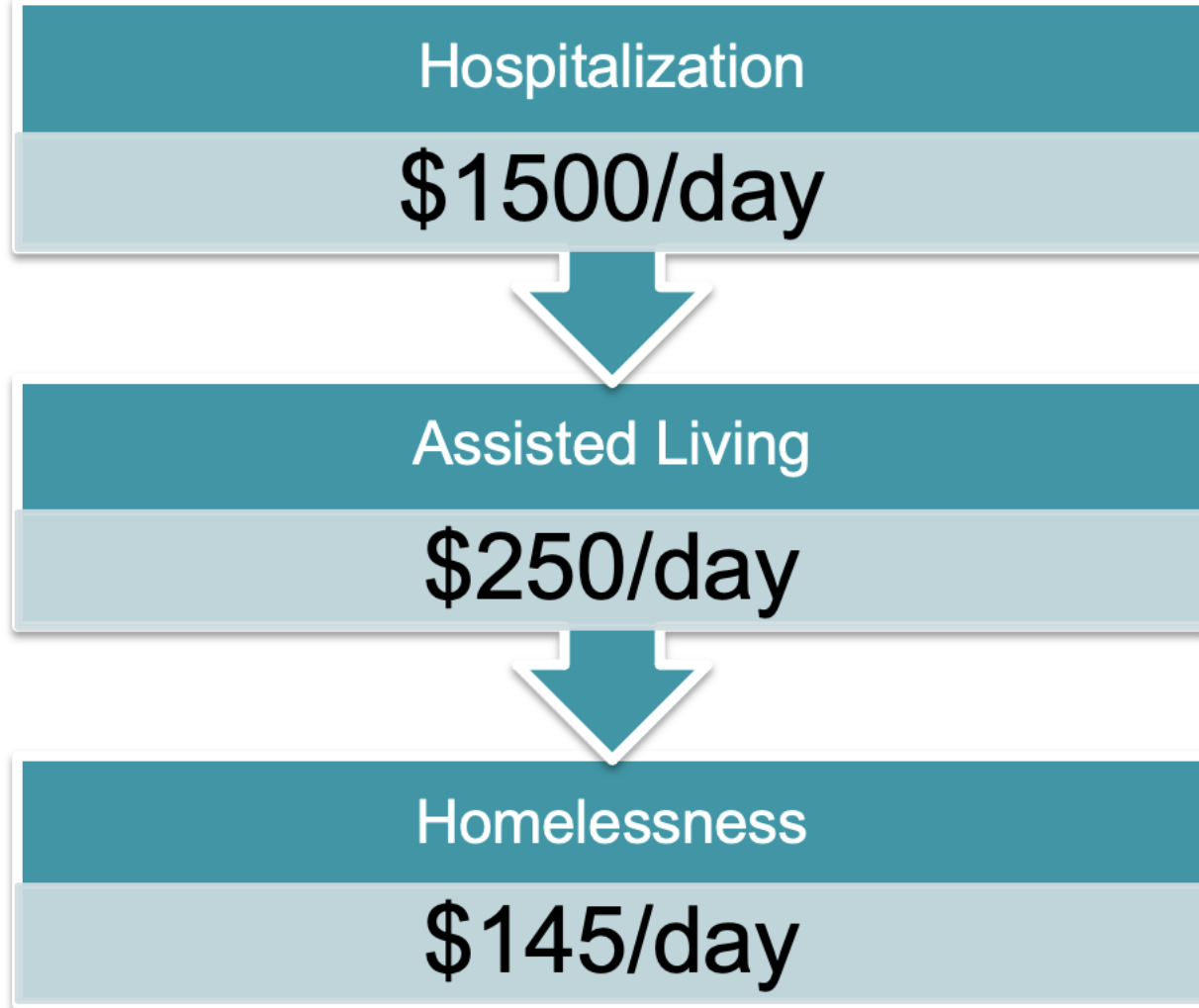
- A drastic decrease in negative turnover and an increase in positive move-outs along the housing continuum
- 84% decrease in police incidents, violence or other altercations (*six in 2010 vs. one in 2014*), saving thousands of dollars in emergency calls to 911 and dispatched officers
- 98% decrease 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**

*Average cost of homelessness in Vancouver is \$53,000 year according to the Metro Vancouver Homelessness Count





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

SFU

SIMON FRASER
UNIVERSITY



SHILOH
HOUSING
SOCIETY



Funded by Infrastructure Canada

Canada





WHOLE WAY HOUSE

RECONNECT. REBUILD. RECENTER

THANK YOU

Contact:

Jenny Konkin,

President & Co-Founder

(p) 604.825.1624

(e) info@wholewayhouse.ca

(w) www.wholewayhouse.ca

ELDER ABUSE



Kerby Centre
for the 55 plus

OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION

- Elder Abuse Defined
- Elder Abuse Key Facts (WHO, 2018)
- Types of Elder Abuse
- Risk Factors (Theories)
- Elder Abuse and the Law
- Elder Abuse Support (EART)
- Kerby Shelter and How we help

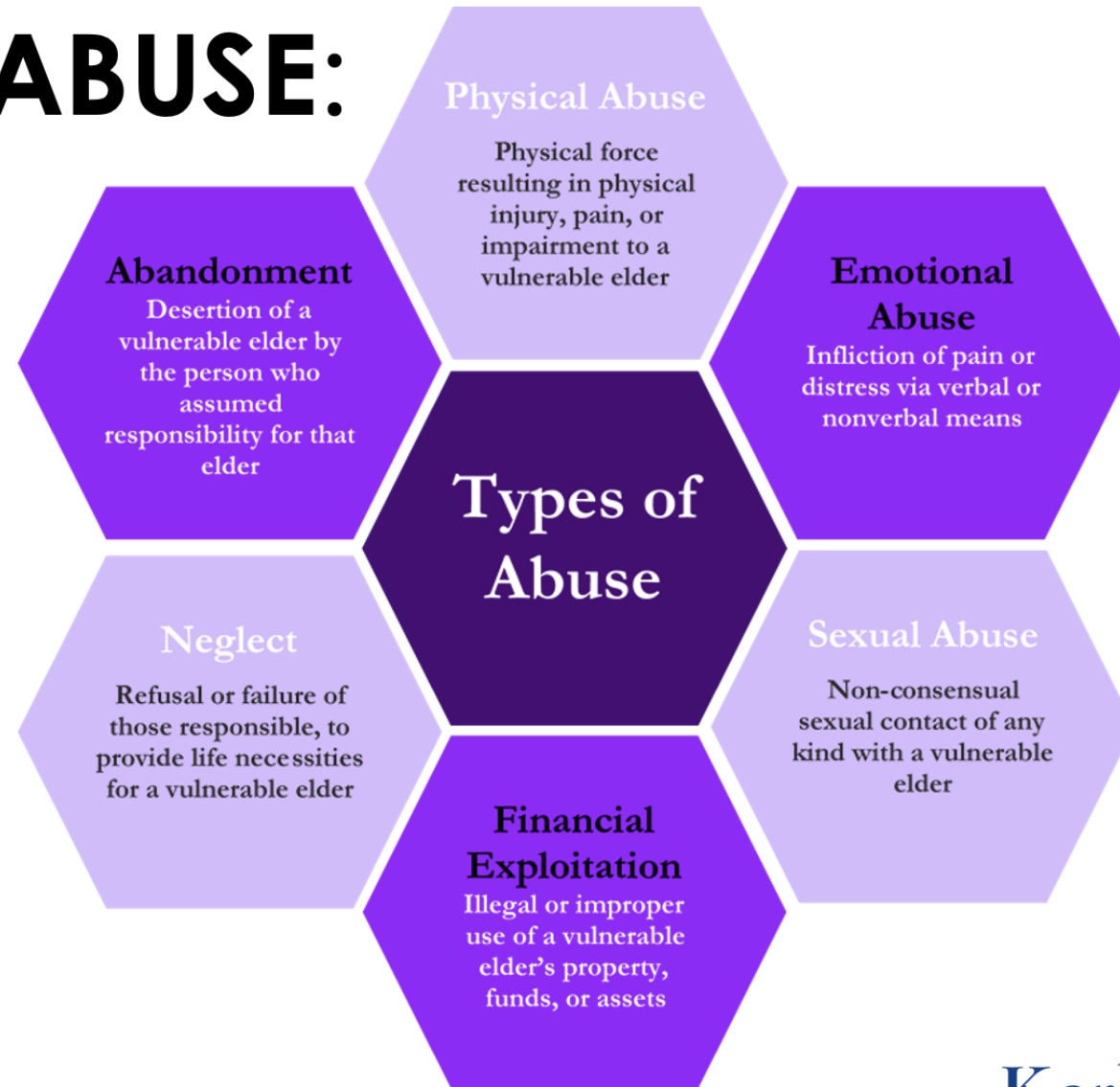
ELDER ABUSE KEY FACTS

- Around **1 in 6** people 60 years and older experienced some form of abuse in community settings during the past year.
- Approximately **25%** of crimes against seniors are committed by family members, usually a spouse or adult child.
- Elder abuse can lead to serious physical injuries and long-term psychological consequences including homelessness.
- Elder abuse is predicted to increase as many countries are experiencing rapidly ageing populations.



TYPES OF ELDER ABUSE:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Financial
- Neglect
- Abandonment



WHY DOES THIS HAPPEN? RISK FACTORS

For the senior being abused:

- Physical or Mental Health
- History of abuse or Trauma
- Income status – Low or High can both result in a senior being vulnerable
- Social isolation
- Living situation - room-mate or living alone/family
- Support networks non-existent or lacking
- COVID-19 isolation

For the person inflicting the abuse:

- Power and Control Motivated
- Low Socio-Economic Status – abusing seniors can be an economic advantage for people struggling financially.
- Caregiver stress AND/OR burn-out of family members
- Homeless and/or addictions
- Mental Health contributing to abuse of others
- Ageism
- Cycle of Family Violence



Financial abuse involves the misuse of a senior's funds or property through fraud, trickery, theft or force.

ELDER ABUSE AND THE LAW

There is no specific crime of elder abuse under the Canadian Criminal Code, the federal statute that creates criminal offences.

Nor is there any other Canadian statute that criminalizes the mistreatment of elderly people in particular.



Sheltering Programs for Older Adults in Canada



500

There are over 500
emergency and
transitional
shelters in Canada

13

Only 13 of them are
specifically for older
adults

2.5%

5

These 13 shelters
are found in only
5 provinces
(BC, AB, MB, ON, NL)

Elder Abuse Support

Elder Abuse Resource Line (EARL)

- 24/7 help line for seniors experiencing elder abuse, those seeking information about elder abuse and/or people requesting shelter from abuse.
- Housed in Kerby Elder Abuse Shelter.

Elder Abuse Response Team (EART)

- A collaboration between Calgary Police Service, Carya & Kerby Centre
- Addresses suspected criminal and noncriminal cases, such as ongoing verbal abuse .
- For seniors over the age of 65, living in Calgary.
- Priority is to assist clients with safety planning and utilizing supports in agency.



KERBY ELDER ABUSE SHELTER

BY KERBY CENTRE

Kerby Centre
for the 55 plus

Our Vision

A happy, healthy senior population.

Our Mission

To assist older people to live as well as possible, for as long as possible, as residents in the community.

Services

Elder Abuse Resource Line
(EARL)

3 - Month Shelter Stay

Community Caseworker

Elder Abuse Resource Line

- Intakes
- Referrals
- Resources
- Prevention and Intervention





Jeffrey, former resident

Shelter facts + figures

- Our shelter provides temporary transitional housing for up to 3 months.
- In 2021 we provided more than 2,900 safe nights to seniors fleeing abuse.
- The shelter operated at 99% capacity for the last two years.
- 370 seniors were turned away due to capacity.



90 day stay

We offer 24-hour support and assist with daily living, legal, medical and dental referrals, assistance finding permanent housing, financial literacy, counselling, and other social supports



Kerby Centre
for the 55 plus

Community Case Worker



Successes



Thank you!