HIV Supported Housing in Western Canada: Mapping Services Study

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“When someone doesn’t have a safe place to live ... everything else is irrelevant.”

- Service provider
Study Background

- **HIV supported housing services**
  - include services and programs that provide a wide array of care and support services for people living with HIV with housing provision at the core

- In western Canada, adults living with HIV are presenting to HIV supported housing services with increasingly diverse and complex service needs, and services are expanding to meet these needs

- Service providers are motivated to approach HIV supported housing services delivery in a more systematic way to provide optimal care for people living with HIV
Study Purpose

● To describe HIV supported housing service networks; and service needs and gaps - in the cities of Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver

● First phase of a research project that will engage with HIV housing service providers in western Canada to develop service outcome measures
Methods

- Community-based research approach

- Service system mapping
  - Fact sheets, service maps and tables have been developed for Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver

- 28 key informant interviews
  - 20 service providers and 8 adults living with HIV
  - Peer research associate for Vancouver interviews
  - Supplemented with information from agency documents and websites
Interview Questions

- What HIV supported housing and other health and social services exist in your city?
- How do supported housing services interact with other housing, HIV services and health and social services?
- What gaps are there in housing and other services?
Edmonton Service Map (draft)

Edmonton Housing and Supports Service Map
for Adults living with HIV
August 2013

This listing is not all-inclusive. For more information, phone 211 Edmonton

Kairos House, Catholic Social Services
- 8 beds
- 24 hour support for HIV+ individuals with medical and psychosocial needs, unable to find support elsewhere, or are at risk of homelessness or unstable housing
- Outreach program

Herb Jamieson Centre
Short-term or emergency room and board for men only

Boyle McCauley Health Centre
Pathways to Housing program

Capital Region Housing Corporation
Affordable housing for low income families and single individuals. Rent is based on 30% of gross income.

Hope Mission
Housing First, transitional and long-term housing

George Spady Centre
Shelter, detox and housing

Salvation Army
6 month residential addictions recovery for men

Boyle Street Community Services
Housing First program

Living Positive
Counselling, advocacy, outreach in people’s homes or on the street, bus tickets, help finding housing and employment, the Gay Men’s HIV Support Group

HIV Edmonton
One-on-one support and education to people living with HIV, referral to physicians, dentists, therapeutic counseling and social services agencies, referrals to basic needs services

Northern Alberta Program, Alberta Health Services
A broad range of care and support provided by a multi-disciplinary team. Serves northern Alberta

Alberta Health Services
- Home care
- Sexually Transmitted Infections Clinic

Streetworks
- 6 daytime fixed sites plus evening outreach by van or on foot
- Health assessments, testing, screening (TB), immunizations, health education and advice, minor treatments, and emergency care

Legend

- HIV supported housing
- Other housing
- HIV social services
- HIV health care services
- Other HIV-relevant health and social services
Edmonton Service System
Barriers and Gaps in Service

Lack of housing options for people with HIV:
- If people don’t have housing, “they’re on the street, they’re more in drug and alcohol and then they lose family ... and then they fall in drug addiction, sharing and not safe sex and infect more people ... plus there’s no stable place for medication.” (Adult living with HIV)

- “No place to call home ... and individuals having the support to maintain that home.” (Service provider)

Lack of understanding of HIV & difficulty disclosing HIV status:
- “I’m really leery to tell ... that I have HIV.” (Adult living with HIV)
More housing with the supports people need to maintain their housing:

● “There are a number of Housing First programs here in Edmonton and I don’t know any city that wouldn’t wish that there was more. Our homeless count has gone down over time but it’s still high.” (Service provider)

Harm reduction housing:

● “We need housing here in Edmonton other than Kairos House ... specifically a harm reduction kind of housing with live-in support.” (Service provider)
Calgary Service Map (draft)

Calgary Housing and Supports Service Map for Adults Living with HIV
August 2013

The SHARP Foundation
Beswick House
-10 beds
-HIV+ clients with complex medical and psychosocial needs, unable to find support elsewhere, at risk of homelessness or unstable housing
-long-term, palliative, or transitional care

The SHARP Foundation
Project Kathleen
-3 beds
-HIV+ women with complex health and psychosocial profiles
-women can access from anywhere in Alberta

HIV Peer Support Program
-People living with HIV share their lived experience, knowledge and skills with others living with HIV

AIDS Calgary
-Provides a range of practical support services and advocacy for people living with HIV or at risk so they can live a better quality of life
-Offers education programs for anyone in the community.

Alberta Health Services - Southern Alberta Clinic
Medical care for all HIV-positive patients in southern Alberta

The SHARP Foundation
Scott House
-3 beds
-HIV+ clients with medical and psychosocial needs but can manage daily living

The SHARP Foundation
Project 2011
-4 beds
-HIV+ clients with independent living skills requiring some medical/psychosocial support

Other Supported Housing
-CASS - Langin Place
-Calgary Dream Centre
-Calgary Drop In Centre
-Fresh Start Recovery Centre
-Mustard Seed
-Victory Foundation
-YWCA

Alpha House
-Temporary and permanent supported housing for individuals whose lives are affected by alcohol and other drug dependencies

Emergency Shelters
-Calgary Drop-In Centre
-Salvation Army
-Mustard Seed
-YWCA
-Alpha House

CUPS
-Effectively combats drug addiction
-Provides medical treatment

Horizon Housing Society
-Owns and operates 581 units of affordable, integrated and supported homes

Calgary Housing
-Subsidized and affordable housing for people with low incomes
-Calgary Housing owns housing operated by other agencies

Sunrise Native Addictions
-Residential and outpatient addiction treatment located in N.E Calgary

Basic Needs Social Services
-Provides financial assistance

Other Social Services
-South Alberta Brain Injury Society
-Association for the Rehabilitation of the Brain Injured
-DOAP team (partnership between Alpha House & CUPS)

This listing is not all-inclusive. For more information, phone 211 or visit the agency website.

Legend
-HIV supported housing
-Other housing
-HIV social services
-HIV health care services
-Other HIV-relevant health and social services
Lack of appropriate housing options:
- It is “safe, affordable housing that is often a key component missed in the wellness of people living with HIV.” (Service provider)

Lack of supported housing for adults living with HIV who have complex needs:
- “It’s just the challenges of providing enough services for someone.” (Service provider)

Stigma experienced by adults living with HIV & not feeling able to disclose their HIV status:
- “If you’re living in a shelter, how do you take your medication?” (Service provider)
More supported housing programs and a network of services to meet the complex needs of adults living with HIV:

- “If all of the other components to moving that person forward to a more independent and healthy lifestyle of living with an HIV diagnosis aren’t in place then we’re really doing a disservice.” (Service provider)

Education of agency staff, health care staff, and the public about HIV and HIV services:

- “One of the successes we’ve had is any agency in Calgary that is funded through the Calgary 10 Year Plan to end Homelessness had to go through HIV 101 ... so in theory every one of those agencies has an understanding of HIV.” (Service provider)
Vancouver Housing and Supports Service Map for Adults Living with HIV

This listing is not all-inclusive. For more information, phone XXX-XXX-XXXX or visit: www.com

Legend
- HIV supported housing
- HIV social services
- Other supported housing
- HIV health care services
- Other HIV-relevant health and social services

Dr. Peter Centre 24-hour Specialized Nursing Care Residence
22 long stay and 2 short stay suites with specialized nursing care for adults with HIV/AIDS and complex health issues including mental illness and addiction.

Wings Housing Society
Wellness programs for people living with life-threatening illnesses that include meals and cooking classes, counselling, support groups, recreational programs, naturopathic and Chinese medicine, and home care.

Friends for Life
Wellness programs for people living with life-threatening illnesses that include meals and cooking classes, counselling, support groups, recreational programs, naturopathic and Chinese medicine, and home care.

A Loving Spoonful Daily meals, family pantry program, Ensure program and an Emergency Services program.

Vancouver Native Health Medical, counselling and social services for the Downtown Eastside's Aboriginal community.

AIDS Vancouver Outreach and prevention services, a grocery program, community resource centre, support programs, and case management.

B.C. Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation Income and employment assistance, bus pass and information on other services.

Health Initiative for Men (HIM) Services for gay men: STI testing, rapid HIV testing, early HIV testing, peer support, professional counseling, personal strategic advising and sexual health education.

Adult living with HIV

Dr. Peter Centre Enhanced Supported Housing Program
5 individual furnished suites with customized supports including: case management, housekeeping and individualized living skills support. Residents can access the Day Health Program and the Residence's after-hours nursing support.

McLaren Housing
Advocacy and support (income, housing, health care, etc.), social programs, educational opportunities, Complementary Health Fund, a variety of physical and mental health services, and prison outreach.

Positive Living BC
Positive Women’s Network
Individual and group support, social programs, food bank, lunch program, outreach visits, information and referrals, and housing subsidies for women (transinclusive).

Vancouver Native Health Medical, counselling and social services for the Downtown Eastside's Aboriginal community.

Atira Women’s Resource Society
Provides a variety of housing options, legal advocacy, counselling, outreach support and self-employment initiatives to women (transinclusive). They operate 14 buildings and 2 shelters in Vancouver, Burnaby and Surrey.

Positive Living BC
Wellness programs for people living with life-threatening illnesses that include meals and cooking classes, counselling, support groups, recreational programs, naturopathic and Chinese medicine, and home care.

McLaren Housing
Advocacy and support (income, housing, health care, etc.), social programs, educational opportunities, Complementary Health Fund, a variety of physical and mental health services, and prison outreach.

RainCity Housing
Emergency, supported and long-term housing options and support for people living with mental illness, addictions and other challenges.

McLaren Housing
Advocacy and support (income, housing, health care, etc.), social programs, educational opportunities, Complementary Health Fund, a variety of physical and mental health services, and prison outreach.

Emergency Shelters
For a listing, phone 211 or visit: http://govs.ca/Directory.html

Vancouver Native Housing
708 housing units for Aboriginal individuals and families.

L'uma Native Housing Society
Provides affordable housing to Aboriginal families and individuals with low to moderate income (over 300 units).

Immunodeficiency Clinic (IDC), St. Paul’s Hospital
Access to medical specialists, pharmacists, psychiatrists, nurses, social workers, nutritionists, occupational therapists, psychologists and physiotherapists that specialize in HIV care.

Vancouver Native Health: Positive Outlook Program (POP)
Nursing care and outreach services, drug and alcohol counseling, social work services, medication therapy, daily breakfast and lunches, a weekly food bank, and a rent supplement program. Geared to First Nations people living with HIV/AIDS in the Downtown Eastside.

STOP HIV/AIDS Outreach Support
Outreach, short-term intensive case management, treatment and connection to care.

Spectrum Health
Primary care clinic with special interest in HIV care (1,500 HIV patients).

Downtown Community Health Centre
Primary care, addiction and mental health services, adult day programs, home care and support, and health education for people in the Downtown Eastside, Gastown and Strathcona areas.

Insite
A supervised injection facility that is safe and health-focused where people connect to health care and social services.
Vancouver Service System
Barriers and Gaps in Service

Lack of sufficient housing stock:
● “There’s a need for more housing and easier access to it.” (Adult living with HIV)

Stigma & market rental housing:
● “Market rental housing is definitely societal stigma…. our clients have come in and definitely felt discriminated and felt that eviction notices have been issued.” (Service provider)

Different spectrum of needs:
● “When we’re talking about housing we’re not just talking income, we’re talking pretty much the whole spectrum of different barriers that people are facing. Poverty, the health services, addiction services, mental health services.” (Service provider)

HIV competency for non-HIV-specific housing providers:
● “When you get … out of the Downtown Eastside … you can’t sort of presume that the housing provider (unless it’s HIV specific housing) has competence around HIV issues.” (Service provider)
It will take many voices to find a solution:
● “We have a chronic issue … but we keep on just reacting to the chronic issue rather than proactively tackling it. So there needs to be some political will and that comes more at a Provincial and Federal level and so that will needs to come.” (Service provider)

Recognition that people are multi-faceted:
● “We just need more housing, more help to get housing for people with HIV especially women with children and families.” (Adult living with HIV)
● “You know housing is just one piece. You know we may have Aboriginal people living with HIV that who were abused. They have substance abuse issues. There’s family connection issues, there’s residential school.” (Service provider)

Commitment to invest the resources:
● “A lot of that could probably be maybe solved by providing more adequate levels of staffing within the housing itself.” (Service provider)
Conclusions

- Service system maps, fact sheets and accompanying tables produced for 3 cities

- Participants provided complex information on programs, service needs and gaps

- Common needs:
  - Need for more supported housing, and more appropriate supported housing to meet the spectrum of support needs
  - Need for more HIV competency training for non-HIV-specific supported housing providers, other service providers and the general public
  - Need for other health and social support services to be in place so that individuals can successfully obtain and maintain housing
Conclusions

- Service system mapping is a community-friendly approach to communicating service systems, needs and gaps

- Maps and materials will be distributed to HIV housing, other HIV service providers, other housing providers, and people living with HIV

- Results may be used by agencies to promote system knowledge, referrals and collaboration, and system improvements

- Results will be used in the next phase of the study
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