



# HPS Roundtable: HPS Now and Moving Forward

National Conference on Ending Homelessness 2016  
November 3, 2016



# Session Outline

1. HPS Overview
2. Plenary           HPS Now: What's Working, What Can Be Strengthened?
3. Table Talks       HPS Moving Forward: 2019 Program Renewal



# HPS Overview

- Building on the 1999 National Homelessness Initiative, the Government of Canada introduced the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) on April 1, 2007.
- HPS is a community-based approach aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness in Canada.
- Most HPS funding is delivered through several funding streams:
  - Designated Communities: 61 communities, primarily major urban centres, identified as having a significant problem with homelessness;
  - Aboriginal Homelessness;
  - Rural and Remote Homelessness;
  - Innovative Solutions to Homelessness (ISH).



# HPS 2014-19: Housing First

- Budget 2013 announced a renewal of the HPS, beginning in 2014–2015, focused on a Housing First (HF) approach.
- HF involves moving individuals, focusing on those who are **chronically or episodically homeless**, from the streets or emergency shelters directly into permanent housing. Permanent **housing is complemented by the provision of services to assist clients to sustain their housing** and work towards recovery and reintegration into the community.
- The HF approach builds on the outcomes of the Mental Health Commission of Canada's (MHCC) *At Home/Chez Soi* demonstration research project, as well as outcomes in several other Canadian communities.



# Budget 2016

- Budget 2016 announced new spending through **Canada's Social Infrastructure Fund (SIF)**.
- **Phase I (2016–2018)** – SIF investments in the first two years are focused on improving social outcomes for those most in need.
  - For the HPS, this included a new, two-year increase of \$111.8 million (\$57.9 million in 2016–2017 and \$53.9 million in 2017–2018), building on the program's current funding.
  - This is the first increase in funding for the HPS since the program's inception in 1999.
- **The impact of Budget 2016** – through the funding increase, the federal government has doubled the funding to Aboriginal Homelessness and Rural and Remote Homelessness, increased the funding for Designated Communities, and set aside \$12.5 million for Innovative Solutions to Homelessness.



# National Housing Strategy

- Budget 2016 also announced that the Government of Canada will consult with provinces and territories (P/T), Indigenous and other communities, and key stakeholders to develop a **National Housing Strategy (NHS)**.
  - The NHS will cover the entire housing continuum, from supports to homeless populations, to shelters, to social/affordable housing and market housing. It also aims to address persistent social challenges, and foster shared accountability for the achievement of common goals and broader socio-economic public policy outcomes.
- The **NHS engagement process** was launched in June 2016, with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation as the lead, in collaboration with Employment and Social Development Canada and Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada with support from Infrastructure Canada. Other federal departments (e.g., Status of Women, Veterans Affairs) have also been involved in the process.



# NHS Engagement Activities

- On the **Let's Talk Housing website**:
  - Over 3500 individuals have completed the on line survey, regarding the vision, principles, outcomes and themes of the NHS;
  - Over 85 submissions have been made, with seven focused on homelessness.
- **13 joint CMHC and ESDC bilateral meetings have taken place with P/Ts.** Discussions have generally focused along the housing continuum from homelessness to market housing.
- **A three-day national expert roundtable event was held September 7-9, 2016** in Ottawa, with 16 sessions covering various specific housing issues, including a full-day discussion on homelessness that included 14 participants.
- **A National Stakeholder Meeting** was held Sept. 19<sup>th</sup> that included stakeholders from across the housing continuum, from homelessness to market housing, to validate what was heard.
- **Ongoing meetings with six national Indigenous organizations** have been held, many of whom are feeding in to the NHS through their own consultations on housing and homelessness.
- Additional expert roundtable events in Thunder Bay (Rural and Remote Indigenous Housing); Winnipeg (Urban Aboriginal Housing); and Whitehorse (Northern Housing).



# What We've Heard So Far

- Participants from the Expert Roundtable on Homelessness in September identified the following key components as essential for a NHS:
  - A **dedicated focus on homelessness**, that includes a focus towards **prevention**.
  - A **federal leadership role** that includes:
    - establishing an **Interagency Council on Homelessness** that is legislated and reports to the Prime Minister – this council would coordinate the relevant areas of the Government that play a role in homelessness (such as justice, health, housing, employment);
    - establishing a **rights-based national homelessness prevention framework**;
    - leading work towards establishing **well thought-out strategies focused on preventing and ending homelessness**, at every order of government – this includes looking at service integration and actively reducing the numbers of those experiencing homelessness.





# Moving Forward

- This input will be integrated with other feedback gathered through consultations, to support and validate the design, development and priorities in the areas of housing and homelessness for the NHS.
- Feedback gathered to date, including input from the roundtable discussions will be consolidated by CMHC in a “**What We Heard**” report, to be publically released on **November 22, 2016** (National Housing Day).
- This feedback will also broadly inform the renewal of federal homelessness programming post-2019, and may be used to focus future discussions on specific gaps or issues that were identified.



# Moving Forward

- Current HPS authorities and funding agreements expire on March 31, 2019. It is unlikely that the broad focus of the NHS engagement will cover the full scope of the detailed policy issues or future directions needed to inform the renewal of the HPS.
- The HPS will also undertake a more targeted **evidence-gathering** process. This will include an analysis of HPS program data and evidence (e.g., Point-in-Time Count and National Shelter Study that are being presented at this conference).
- The HPS will also begin targeted **engagement** to drill deeper on issues and begin to address any policy gaps with homelessness experts and stakeholders following the completion of the NHS engagement process, likely in January 2017.



# Plenary: What's working, what could be strengthened?

1. What progress has been made in implementing Housing First (HF) at the community level?
2. Are there examples of specific successes that could be used as best practices for other Canadian communities?
3. What particular challenges, barriers/bottlenecks, and /or gaps exist in the implementation of HF?
4. Are there ways that HPS could further support the implementation of HF and enable progress on the ground in advance of its program renewal in 2019?



# Table talks: HPS moving forward

1. What, if any, recommendations would you like to see considered in the 2019 HPS program renewal, for example:
  - a. policy approach
  - b. funding
  - c. options for program delivery
  - d. roles / coordination
2. Are HPS' current HF targets appropriate? How, if at all, would you change them?
3. How might the HPS be more effective?

