

To: Homes First Society Board of Directors
From: Patricia Mueller, Chief Executive Officer
Subject: HFS CEOs Partnerships Update
Date: January 25, 2022

Recommendation:

That this report be received for information.

Background:

Our past practice has been to review partnerships for the past year and provide an update and plans for the upcoming year. This report is an annual qualitative update of reports provided in previous years. Much of the information contained is virtually unchanged and is presented to provide continuity.

Comments:

As a provider of housing and shelters, Homes First Society has diverse connections with social sector, peer, and umbrella organizations, as well as contacts with individuals and private businesses. This diversity is reflective of the myriad reasons for community partnerships. As a result of our successful funding proposals for Follow-Up Supports in the Community Program, as well as the Addiction Support Program, we anticipate the development of further partnership opportunities.

With the advent of COVID, the City of Toronto has asked Homes First to open and operate a number of “Shelter-Hotels”. We currently run four: the Strathcona, Esplanade, Delta, and most recently, 22 Metropolitan, the relocation site for Strachan House. This newly built form for shelters, along with a complex client base (mainly from encampments) necessitated embedding high-level harm reduction services on site, along with primary mental health and medical supports. This has meant a considerable expansion in partnerships for these programs alone.

ST. ELIZABETH HEALTH CARE/HOSPICE TORONTO – A HOSPICE FOR THOSE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS PROGRAM: JOURNEY HOME HOSPICE:

As indicated in previous Board reports, Homes First approached representatives from St. Michael’s Hospital’s Inner City Health Program to suggest that Shuter or another Homes First property may be appropriate as a hospice unit for end-of-life homeless individuals. Inner City Health reviewed Homes First sites, in addition to other sites in the community, and selected Shuter.

This partnership provides a unique hospice model, one where individuals receive 24-hour healthcare support within the same building. It serves the most marginalized community with a welcoming, low barrier end-of-life option, where staff and volunteers are trained in harm reduction principles and in trauma informed approaches. This program is integrated with other programming within our supportive housing environment. This integration leverages the strengths of all and creates both synergies and efficiencies. The success of this partnership has led to the development of an expanded partnership that has led to a 14-bed hospice at Shuter and the possibility of palliative supports at some of our other sites.

PARKDALE-QUEEN WEST HARM REDUCTION:

Our partnership with Parkdale-Queen West Harm Reduction has expanded drastically through COVID 19 and our hotel programs. This partner support sites through a number of initiatives:

- iPHARE: The Integrated Harm Reduction Initiative. This project provides embedded supports within programs which help with outreach, overdose responding, referrals, case management, safe supply, and more. This initiative divides other community health centres into cohorts in effort to effectively support programs.
- Outreach- Parkdale-Queen West Harm Reduction: Also supports shelter sites through outreach, providing weekly visits to sites and working with clients in a similar capacity as iPHARE.
- Training: We recently signed a Memo of Understanding with Parkdale-Queen West Harm Reduction regarding ongoing training. This will provide increased opportunities for staff and our organization to learn directly from this partner on a regular (monthly) basis.

Additionally, we have partnered with Parkdale-Queen West Harm Reduction for our Harm Reduction in our west-end housing program, which aims to provide education to our staff and residents about the strategies and tools of Harm Reduction.

PARKDALE- QUEEN WEST COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE:

Queen West Parkdale Community Health Centre is a long-standing partner with Strachan House and provides on-site primary health care accessible to all Strachan residents on a monthly basis.

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUP:

This partnership mainly consists of the SHOP Project, an embedded peer led, mobile program. This project was initiated in 2021 and has successfully run for over a year at the Delta and Esplanade hotels. It is peer led, therefore clients are hired directly by The Neighbourhood Group and compensated hourly. The peers support with overdose responding, spotting, one-on-one support, and more.

CANADIAN CENTRE FOR REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT HEALTH CARE:

A recent partner for primary care, currently supporting the Lawrence Shelter and will also be at the Strachan relocation site at 22 Metropolitan Road in Scarborough. This organization is also addressing health equity challenges in Scarborough.

CANADIAN CENTRE FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE:

This agency has consistently provided excellent referrals of individuals that meet our housing profile and who are also torture survivors. It is interesting to note almost all referrals were once from South America but are now from Eastern Africa. This is a long-standing and excellent partnership but does not show any growth potential.

CENTRE FOR ADDICTION & MENTAL HEALTH (CAMH):

Pilot Place:

The 18 residents at Shuter continue to live successfully in their units. There has been an observable increase in the integration into both the Shuter and greater community demonstrated by the residents' increased presence, participation, and socializing activities.

Meegwetch:

There is a full complement of fifteen CAMH residents in this exclusive partnership with CAMH. Clients are integrating well into the Homes First community, as well as within the local community. The extension of our partnership has been finalized.

INNER CITY HEALTH ASSOCIATION:

ICHA, as this group is known, is tasked with providing primary care (doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners, etc.) at City-funded shelter sites throughout Toronto. They currently oversee such services at Bathurst-Lake Shore, Kennedy, Willowdale Welcome Centre, and the Esplanade, Strathcona, and Delta hotels.

POST SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS:

A formal partnership was developed to place social service students at various Homes First locations to complete their placement requirements. This opportunity provides valuable knowledge and experience to the students as well as provides Homes First with the opportunity to recruit new staff.

- Humber College
- George Brown College
- Centennial College
- Durham College
- Ryerson University
- triOS College

ST. MICHAELS ACT TEAM (FOCUS):

A partnership is in place to facilitate referrals to Homes First that allow for housing options for the most vulnerable individuals in the city: Individuals who have diagnosed complex mental health, physical health, and addiction needs. We are now housing FOCUS clients throughout our portfolio.

SCARBOROUGH HOUSING STABILIZATION PLANNING NETWORK:

Homes First continues as partnering agency with the Scarborough Housing Stabilization Planning Network. The network is a multi-agency planning table that seeks to build and support a coordinated and integrated system of services for homeless, at risk of homelessness, and under-housed populations in Scarborough. The network works to promote partnerships and collaborations across Scarborough to support service sector knowledge and skills development, improve service access for clients, and improve service efficiencies.

SCARBOROUGH QUADRANT NETWORK:

Homes First continues to be a member of the Scarborough Quadrant Network which is made up of community agencies in Scarborough such as Cota and Hong Fook NP Clinic. This network works together to address Shelter, Housing and Support Services in Scarborough.

SEATON HOUSE:

Currently, individuals are referred exclusively from Seaton House to become tenants at Jarvis House. The individuals referred are older, alcoholic males. This is a long-standing and excellent partnership. It does not provide us with any additional funding but does provide additional support services to these clients.

SOUTH RIVERDALE COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE:

Our partnership with South Riverdale Community Health Centre provides harm reduction training and outreach to increase access to our east-end residents in housing.

STREETS TO HOMES:

Our service partnership with Streets to Homes and Strachan House continues to be successful. With the high support needs unit facilitating transitions from the streets for some of the highest need individuals in the City who have historically refused support services. We have transitioned over 20 individuals from street to permanent homes at Strachan House.

TORONTO COMMUNITY HOUSING (TCH):

We have a formal relationship with TCH to manage three TCH-owned properties. Two of these properties, Brandon and Northcote, are strictly a property-management arrangement, the third, Jarvis House, differs in that TCHC pays us to manage the property and to provide housing supports to the tenants.

TORONTO NORTH SUPPORT SERVICES (TNSS) – MULTI-DISCIPLINARY ACCESS TO CARE AND HOUSING (MATCH):

Our partnership with Toronto North Support Services allows for the referral of clients who have mental illness, addiction, and/or a history of homelessness. These clients are housed with Homes First and will receive additional, long-term supports from the multi-disciplinary team. This partnership enables Homes First to accept more clients with high support needs to become successfully housed.

MDOT now has two branches- MDOUT OU which is shelters, and MDOT is hotels. Through these two branches, the following sites are receiving support: MDOT Hotel: Strathcona, Delta, and Esplanade; MDOT OU: Bathurst-Lake Shore and the Better Living Centre.

TRUSTCARE PHARMACY:

Recent partnership providing daily pharmaceutical support initially at our hotels but expanding as well into the congregate shelters. Working alongside primary care service providers in support of clients (i.e., medication administration, observation, and follow up). The supports include a

nurse working directly with clients during clinic hours who also assists with dropping off medication in the case of a site outbreak/isolation.

SHERBOURNE HEALTH:

This partnership provides supports specifically around Hep C treatment, support, and prevention- providing onsite support through their bus at the Esplanade and Delta Hotels. Their model is very client-centered, and nurse led.

THE WORKS:

Our partnership with The Works has allowed our organization to be an official distributor of Naloxone. Training was provided which allows us to train other community organizations, as well as coordinating and supervising distribution of naloxone. Harm reduction supplies are ordered directly through this partnership and delivered to our individual sites.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH SOCIAL ENTERPRISES:

Homes First has a long history of commitment to social enterprises and makes a conscious choice when the price is comparable and the quality and level of services is appropriate, to purchase services from organizations that have similar commitments.

A-Way Courier: Homes First has been using A-Way Courier as its main courier company for a number of years. A-Way Courier was founded by former psychiatric patients in 1987, specifically to provide jobs for survivors of mental health challenges, and today A-Way has more than 70 employees.

Fresh Start Cleaning Services: Homes First Society uses Fresh Start Cleaning Services for cleaning the common areas and the grounds' maintenance at almost all of our buildings. Founded in 1989 and run solely by psychiatric survivors, Fresh Start currently employs several of our residents.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS:

The Community Development Program was initiated through the vision of the Board of Directors. The initial work of this program was to effectively respond to the needs of several Homes First locations in terms of programming, outreach, and community engagement. In that process, we have developed a number of information partnerships with agencies and/or organizations.

TORONTO PRIDE:

Homes First continues to participate in Toronto Pride, but as with many things during the pandemic, activities have become virtual for the time-being.

SCARBOROUGH ADDICTION SERVICE PROVIDERS (SASP):

Scarborough Addiction Services is a formal network of addiction service providers in the Scarborough area, funded and supported by CAMH. Partner agencies include:

- Concurrent Disorders Support Services (composed of 36 Agencies, organized through Fred Victor)
- Coordinated Access for Addiction Services
- John Howard (SMART Program)

- TEGH (Scarborough Day Withdrawal Program)
- Canadian Centre for Women’s Education
- Salvation Army Homestead
- East Metro Youth Services
- Jean Tweed Society
- West Scarborough Neighbourhood Community Centre

The purpose of this network is to “fund and assist Scarborough agencies to create effective, appropriate, and accessible addiction services in order to address the addiction problems of Scarborough communities”.

INFORMAL PARTNERSHIPS:

Please see the following table to give you a sense of the variety of community relationships. These relationships provide referral conduits for potential, existing, and exiting residents as well as providing direct services to our residents. This list is not exhaustive.

Community Development	Applicant Referral	Community Colleagues	Funding	Information Sharing	Miscellaneous	Provides Referrals to Other Agencies	Security & Shift Coverage	Support Services	
							X		Adler
X					X				Agincourt Community Services (Harm Reduction Team)
							X		Alpha Resources
	X	X						X	Anishnawbe Health Toronto
	X								Arab Community Centre of Toronto
X									Arts Market
						X		X	A-Way Courier
X									Big On Bloor
	X							X	Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture
X									Canadian Centre for Women’s Education
	X							X	Canadian Mental Health Association
		X				X		X	CATCH
	X	X				X		X	Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
	X								Christie Refugee Welcome Centre
	X							X	Christie-Ossington Neighbourhood Centre
			X					X	City of Toronto
		X	X	X				X	City of Toronto Shelter, Support & Housing
		X						X	Community Care Access Centre (CCAC)

Community Development	Applicant Referral	Community Colleagues	Funding	Information Sharing	Miscellaneous	Provides Referrals to Other Agencies	Security & Shift Coverage	Support Services	
		X							Community Policing
	X							X	Community Resource Connections of Toronto
X									Concurrent Disorders Support Services
	X							X	Focus ACT Team
X				X					Community Collective Committee
X									Coordinated Access for Addiction Services
	X	X				X		X	Corner Drop-In
	X	X				X		X	COTA Health
	X								Covenant House
						X		X	Crossroads Clinic
							X		CSS Staffing
		X						X	Daily Bread
X									Dig-In
	X	X		X	X	X		X	Dixon Hall
							X		Dorvict
		X		X	X			X	Ecuhome
X									East Metro Youth Services
	X								East York Housing Help
	X	X						X	Evangel Hall
		X							Field-to-Table
	X								Florence Booth (Women's Shelter)
					X			X	Food Rescue
	X	X				X		X	Fred Victor Centre
							X		Frontline Staffing
	X	X						X	Gerstein on Bloor
	X	X							Good Shepherd Ministries
		X			X				Grace Church
								X	Health Bus
		X						X	Hostel Outreach Program
					X			X	Hospice Toronto
					X				House of Praise
				X					Housing & Homeless Services Network
		X			X			X	Humber College
				X					IAPA – Health and Safety Organization

Community Development	Applicant Referral	Community Colleagues	Funding	Information Sharing	Miscellaneous	Provides Referrals to Other Agencies	Security & Shift Coverage	Support Services	
	X							X	Impact ACT Team Toronto Western Hospital
					X			X	Inner City Health Association
	X								Jean Tweed Society
	X								John Howard Society
X		X							Liberty Village Cares
X									Mad Pride
	X	X		X					Mainstay Housing
X				X	X				Malvern Employment Services
								X	Marginalized Access Partnerships
	X								Matthew House Refugee Reception
					X				Maytree Foundation
								X	Meals on Wheels
	X	X						X	Mental Health & Justice Program
X				X	X				Metropolitan United Church Drop-In
								X	Miracle Foundation
								X	Miziwe Biik
	X							X	Native Women's Resource Centre
X					X			X	Next-Steps Employment Centre
								X	Niagara Health Centre
				X				X	Older Persons' Mental Health & Addictions Network of Ontario
		X		X					ONPHA
	X			X				X	Ontario Works
	X							X	Opportunity for Advancement
X		X		X				X	Parkdale-Queen West Harm Reduction
X		X		X				X	Parkdale-Queen West Community Health Centre
					X				Pizza Pizza
X									Pride Toronto
X	X			X				X	Prisoners' HIV/AIDS Support Action Network
	X	X						X	Progress Place
X		X							Project Comfort
							X		Quality
X				X				X	Queen West Harm Reduction
	X	X						X	Reconnect Mental Health Services

Community Development	Applicant Referral	Community Colleagues	Funding	Information Sharing	Miscellaneous	Provides Referrals to Other Agencies	Security & Shift Coverage	Support Services	
								X	Red Cross Drop In
	X								Red Door Family Shelter
X					X				Redpepper Spectacle Arts
	X	X						X	Regent Park Community Health Centre
				X					RENT
					X				Revival Time Tabernacle
	X							X	Saint Elizabeth Health Care
	X							X	Saint Stephen's Community Homes
					X				Saint Vincent de Paul
X	X	X						X	Salvation Army (various shelters and programs)
		X							Scarborough Church of God
					X	X		X	Scarborough Community for Healthy Living
X									Scadding Court Community Centre
X		X		X	X				Scarborough Addiction Service Providers
X		X		X	X			X	Scarborough Housing Help
X		X	X	X				X	Scarborough Housing Stabilization Planning Network
		X		X		X		X	Scarborough Quadrant Network
		X							Scott Mission
X	X	X		X				X	Seaton House
		X						X	Second Harvest
X	X	X		X				X	Sistering
	X					X		X	Sojourn House
X		X		X				X	South Riverdale Community Health Centre
X		X			X			X	Springboard
	X			X				X	St. Michael's Hospital
X									Street to Trail
	X	X						X	Streets to Homes – HPI/HPS
X									TEGH (Scarborough Day Withdrawal Program)
X		X						X	Therapeutic Paws of Canada
					X				The Period Purse
X		X		X					Toronto Alliance to End Homelessness
X				X					Toronto Drug Treatment Court

Community Development	Applicant Referral	Community Colleagues	Funding	Information Sharing	Miscellaneous	Provides Referrals to Other Agencies	Security & Shift Coverage	Support Services	
	X					X		X	Toronto North Support Services (TNSS) – Multi-Disciplinary Access to Care and Housing (MATCH)
X					X			X	Toronto Public Health
X		X			X				Toronto Police Services
		X		X					Toronto Service Resolution Committee
		X		X					Toronto Shelter Network
						X		X	University Health Network (UHN)
							X		Unitas
X	X			X		X			Volunteer Toronto
	X							X	West End ACT Team
		X		X				X	West Scarborough Neighbourhood Community Centre
								X	The Works