



Supporting organizations working to improve health outcomes and housing supports for
Calgarians experiencing chronic homelessness.

INTRODUCTION

Collaborative work allows communities to accomplish together what individual organizations cannot do alone. These highlights demonstrate just some of the incredible work that this community has accomplished and what work is currently being done. We look forward to providing you with a quarterly update to continue celebrating the work.

CSDC COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

The Collaborative Services Delivery Cluster (CSDC) project team held a community consultation on December 10. The event consisted of a presentation and world café where participants were invited to provide feedback based on their daily experience with clients and their information. The event was well attended by 39 individuals representing 26 different organizations. This consultation will be followed up by a report to be released in January 2020. Additional consultations with the Client Action Committee (CAC) and those with living experiences in homelessness will be completed in the next few months. Their perspectives and insights are fundamental to the future direction of this project. We look forward to more consultations in the future!

PERCEIVED NEEDS STUDY

In 2016 the Calgary Recovery Services Task Force (CRSTF) commissioned a research project called a 'perceived needs study', which aimed to "identify and assess health issues, support needs and to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of existing public systems". The goal was to utilize this information to develop recommendations to streamline and improve service delivery to those experiencing homelessness. From this research the needs of those experiencing homelessness were clearly articulated which allowed for the development of seven recommendations. The recommendations from the 2016 study resulted in the CRSTF Final Report & Recommendations and have been the guiding principles for the work of Collaborative for Health and Home (CHH) ever since. Nearly four years later, it is important to go back to those experiencing homelessness and hear about their concerns directly from them. With some years having passed and a lot of work being done, the timing of a second research project is critical as the results will inform future planning. We are incredibly excited to move forward on this research and gain some new insights for our sector!

WOMEN AND CHILDREN WORKING GROUP

The Women and Children Working Group (WCWG) is working diligently and methodically towards five different goals with the aim of supporting women's unique needs while experiencing homelessness. Improving information available to support women when choosing family planning options, collaborating with the single-sector to distribute and develop training for staff to help support pregnant women, as well as participate in a city-wide collaboration table to provide wrap-around supports during pregnancy are top priorities.

CURRENT PROJECTS

Through March 2020 CHH will continue to focus its efforts on the following Strategic Priorities:

- ⇒ Consistent and appropriate community health and housing supports upon discharge from hospitals or jail for chronically homeless Calgarians to reduce recidivism with emergency services. This work is being done in partnership with Alberta Health Services, Calgary Police Services, and community organizations.
- ⇒ Robust and efficient shared planning approaches between community health and housing services regarding physical and mental health concerns for chronically homeless Calgarians. The Collaborative Services Delivery Cluster (CSDC) group is working towards creating a system where clients can easily have their immediate needs met by multiple organizations simultaneously through easier information sharing.
- ⇒ System-wide coordinated responses for lifespan healthcare for women, including during pregnancy, experiencing chronic homelessness through peer or professional navigation. Building off the work of the Perinatal Substance Use Symposium, the Women and Children Working group is set to move forward on new strategies.
- ⇒ Sufficient, low barrier resources for harm reduction initiatives that assist chronically homeless Calgarians who use substances. There is a continued focus on supporting Supervised Consumption Services (SCS) and Managed Alcohol Programs (MAP) through information sharing and capacity development.
- ⇒ Indigenous cultural practices which are embedded into all aspects of programming for Indigenous peoples with complex issues related to addiction and intergenerational trauma. CHH will continue to support ASCHH in identifying structures for culturally informed approaches to client services.

CURRENT PROJECTS

MANAGED ALCOHOL SUPPORT

Most individuals experiencing homelessness consume alcohol as a means of coping with their homelessness; however a small subset of this population continue to consume in excess after being housed. Managed Alcohol Programs (MAP) is an evidence-based approach to supporting these individuals, however there is no one approach to MAP. In February, a community café will explore current practices to this unique harm reduction approach.

UPCOMING EVENT

WANT TO JOIN OUR PROJECTS?

CHH's work cannot happen without the time that our stakeholders generously put into the projects. If you want to learn more about any current projects or explore additional opportunities for collaboration, feel free to reach out to Quentin (quentins@calgaryhomeless.com) or Sara (saram@calgaryhomeless.com) at any time!

MOVING FORWARD