

Evidence Exchange Network's Ontario Housing First Regional Network Community of Interest
(EENet's OHFRN-CoI)

***Ontario Housing First Forum: Linking Research and Practice
Program and Agenda***



January 25, 2018

9am – 4pm (EST)

CAMH, 33 Russell St. Toronto, room 2029

The OHFRN-COI is intended to assist communities across Ontario to develop, evaluate, and improve Housing First (HF) programs based on the Pathways model tested, adapted, and shown to be effective in the At Home / Chez Soi Demonstration Project: <https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/at-home>. For more information, visit <http://eenet.ca/housing-first-community-of-interest/>

Welcome!

The Ontario Housing First Regional Network Community of Interest (OHFRN-Col) is excited to host the first Housing First (HF) forum for stakeholders from across Ontario to come together to share resources and experiences with implementing HF in their communities!

Forum objectives:

- ✓ Bring together stakeholders who are implementing HF to share knowledge of their programs, develop relationships and network;
- ✓ Link research to practice, and promote high quality implementation of the HF model; and,
- ✓ Link sectors involved, including mental health and housing, and other sectors.

Agenda:

Time	Item (and room location)	Presenters
9:00am – 9:30am	Welcome (2029)	Branka Agic Geoff Nelson Tim Aubry
9:30am -10:30am	Keynote presentation (2029)	Steve Lurie
10:40am – 11:55am	Morning Workshops: 1. Planning and implementing Housing First: Challenges and strategies (2029) 2. Indigenous Housing First (2062) 3. Housing First with youth (2022)	1. G. Nelson, K. Worton, A. Cheng 2. D. Passmore, Y. Maracle 3. A. Ward, J. Ecker, M. Wade
11:55 – 1:00pm	Lunch (2029)	
1:00pm – 2:15pm	Afternoon workshops: 4. Prevention of homelessness (2029) 5. Peer support in Housing First (2062) 6. Fidelity (2022)	4. E. Dej, J. Huys, O. Magré, K. Schwan 5. J. Bach 6. T. Aubry, G. Nelson
2:15pm – 2:30pm	Afternoon break	
2:30 – 3:45pm	Late afternoon workshops: 7. Landlord engagement (2029) 8. Family homelessness (2062) 9. Networking and Housing First knowledge mobilization (2022)	7. J.N. Rae, L. Medd, T. Aubry 8. J. Sylvestre, N Kerman-Dixon, A. Polillo 9. K.Worton, A. Pye, K. Goz, E. Toope, J. Zuk
3:45pm – 4:00pm	Future of the Col (2029) Wrapping up the day Evaluation	Geoff Nelson Tim Aubry

Keynote presentations:

Steve Lurie, CMHA Toronto

The presentation will review the funding environment for mental health services in Canada and Ontario. This will include a discussion of the proposal for 30,000 supportive housing units over 10 years submitted to Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) and implications for Housing First approaches.

Biography:

Steve Lurie is currently the Executive Director of the Canadian Mental Health Association Toronto Branch, a post he has held since 1979. Steve has written and lectured extensively on mental health policy issues. He was a principal author of the Graham Report, Building Community Support for People, and conducted the 1992 snapshot of community mental health programs for the Ontario Ministry of Health and the Minimum Data Set Pilot Project (1998), which established a common data set for the reporting of client characteristics and outcomes in community and hospital based mental health services. He served as guest editor of the Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health special issue, *Innovation in Community Mental Health: International Perspectives* and their recent special issue on Canada's Mental Health Strategy.

Since 2004 Steve has had a collaborative relationship with SCARF, a community mental health and research organization in Chennai, India. In 2007 Steve provided technical assistance to the development of a national mental health plan in Kyrgyzstan, through a project funded by the Soros Foundation. As well Steve and CMHA Toronto have hosted organizations from China, India, US, New Zealand, Australia, the UK and Japan. In 2008 Steve lectured in Japan about community mental health systems, hosted by the Matsubara Psychiatric Hospital.

In 2005 he provided technical assistance to the Senate Committee Report *Out of the Shadows At Last: Transforming Mental Health and Addiction Services in Canada.*

In August 2007 he was appointed to chair the Service Systems Advisory Committee for the newly established Mental Health Commission of Canada. He was awarded the Canadian Mental Health Association's CM Hincks award for national leadership in mental health and the President's Award for outstanding contributions, by Addictions and Mental Health Ontario and recently was named to the Order of Canada for his contributions as leader, scholar and advocate in 2016. In November 2017 he was honoured by CAMH as one of Canada's Difference Makers in mental health and addictions.

Steve has a Masters in Management (MM) from the McGill McConnell Voluntary Sector Leadership program (2002) and has a BA (1971) and MSW (1973) from the University of Toronto Faculty of Social Work where he is now an adjunct professor. **Contact info:** slurie@cmhato.org

Additional resources for participants: <http://www.cjcmh.com/doi/10.7870/cjcmh-2017-021>

Workshop descriptions

1. Planning and implementing Housing First: Challenges and strategies

In this session, we describe two stages of Housing First implementation: planning and program implementation. Drawing from findings of a research project on the expansion of Housing First in six Canadian communities, we review common challenges encountered in each stage of Housing First implementation and describe strategies to overcome these challenges. Experiences of the Homes to Health program in York Region are shared to illustrate how training, technical assistance, and fidelity assessment can help organizations enhance their capacity to undertake planning and advance program implementation.

Presenter biographies:

Geoff Nelson, Ph.D., is Emeritus Professor of Psychology at Wilfrid Laurier University. Geoff was a member of the national research team for the At Home/Chez Soi research on Housing First in Canada and co-led the qualitative and mixed methods research for this project. More recently, he led a 3-year research project, funded by CIHR, Partnerships for Health Systems Improvement, on the expansion of Housing First in 6 Canadian communities. Geoff is the Co-Founder and Chair of the Ontario Housing First Regional Network – Community of Practice. **Contact info:** gnelson@wlu.ca

S. Kathleen Worton, is a PhD candidate in the Community Psychology program at Wilfrid Laurier University and is current conducting research on peer-learning as a knowledge mobilization strategy for advancing Housing First and other strategies to end homelessness. **Contact info:** kworton@wlu.ca

Alex Chang is the Director of Client Services for Blue Door Shelters. He is part of the leadership team that manages Housing to Health, an HPS funded Housing First Collaborative in York Region. He also oversees the service delivery to at-risk and homeless men, families, and youth for Blue Door Shelters. **Contact info:** alex.c@bluedoorshelters.ca

2 Indigenous Housing First

Explore the realities of delivering the Housing First model from Indigenous perspective. De dwa da dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Access Centre has been home to the Homeward Bound: From Homelessness to Community program since its creation in 2015. This team utilizes the Housing First approach to work with the urban Indigenous community in Hamilton, Ontario. You will hear client stories, effective and innovative approaches, as well as quantitative measures.

Presenter biographies:

Dick Passmore is working as a change agent at the systems level in Hamilton, supporting the Navigation Services department. Prior to his last role as the first Team Lead with Homeward Bound, he worked in the Traditional Healing department, and was seconded to the Mental Health and Street Outreach Team, Public Health Department of the City of Hamilton. In this capacity, he gained experience working with the homeless urban Indigenous population; engaging them, and helping them to make positive steps toward a safer, more stable life. He is fulfilling his role as Oshkabaywis (helper) by making use of his connections within the Indigenous community as an ally, advocate and resource. Dick is also working as

an expert trainer in Housing First with the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (Training and Technical Assistance). **Contact info:** DPassmore@dahac.ca

Yvonne Maracle is Mohawk, Bear Clan and is a mother, grandmother, artist and community member who has been with the Homeward Bound: From Homelessness to Community Team from its first day. She has many years experience working in the homeless field and brings her life experience and compassion to the team. In her role as Cultural Worker, she has walked beside all of our clients, whether it is smudging their new apartment, delivering programming to the community, performing advocacy, or honouring those who have passed on. Her passion is evident in every aspect of her work, and those we serve appreciate and benefit from it. **Contact info:** ymaracle@dahac.ca

3. Housing First with youth

The Making the Shift (MtS) Demonstration Project seeks to establish a strong evidence base for the Housing First for Youth (HF4Y) program model (Gaetz, 2017) and homelessness prevention models in Canada. The HF4Y model is an adaptation of Housing First that aims to provide youth who are experiencing homelessness, or at risk of experiencing homelessness, with age-appropriate access to housing and supports. As part of MtS, this model is being tested in three Ontario sites (Hamilton, Toronto, Ottawa) with different subpopulations of youth. This presentation will review the HF4Y program implementation as well as the outcome research and evaluation approach.

Presenters biographies:

Dr. Ashley Ward is the Lead Researcher in the Making the Shift: A Youth Homelessness Social Innovation Lab at the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness in Toronto. Her research interests include homelessness, evidence-based practice in social services, and research and practice ethics. **Contact info:** akward@edu.yorku.ca

Dr. John Ecker is the Director of Research and Evaluation at the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness in Toronto. His research and evaluation interests include homelessness, housing, community integration, and LGBTQ2S studies. **Contact info:** jecker@edu.yorku.ca

Mike Wade is the A Way Home Making the Shift Project Administrator at Youth Services Bureau in Ottawa. He brings project management and practice expertise through several years of experience working in the Ottawa homelessness sector. **Contact info:** mwade@ysb.ca

4. Prevention of homelessness

In order to reduce and end homelessness we must shift from primarily a crisis response to providing accommodation and supports that move people out of homelessness as well as preventing homelessness in the first place. In this session we explore homelessness prevention and housing stabilization as key elements in our efforts to address homelessness. Looking at both the adult and youth sectors, the panel will provide learning on the conceptual and policy implications of shifting to homelessness prevention as well as examples of prevention efforts on the ground.

Presenters biographies:

Dr. Erin Dej, Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, Postdoctoral Fellow. Dr. Erin Dej is a SSHRC Postdoctoral Fellow with the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, York University where she conducts research on homelessness prevention and the representation of homelessness in charitable campaigns. She received her doctorate in Criminology from the University of Ottawa. She sits on the Research Committee for the Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa and is an active volunteers in Ottawa's homeless community. Dr. Dej has taught in the Department of Criminology at the University of Ottawa, as well as in the Department of Law and Legal Studies and at the Institute of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Carleton University. **Contact info:** erindej@edu.yorku.ca

Julia Huys is the Street Youth Legal Services (SYLS) Lawyer at Justice for Children and Youth. She provides on-site legal services through numerous partnerships with street-involved youth agencies for youth ages 16 to 24; this includes providing legal education workshops, summary advice and referrals, and direct legal representation at various tribunals and courts. Julia also engages in law reform efforts in Canada and has made submissions to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child regarding the rights of street children, as well as unaccompanied migrant youth. Julia sits on a number of advisory committees, including Covenant House's safe house for victims of sex trafficking which opened last year. **Contact info:** huysj@lao.on.ca

Omar Magré is a Street Outreach Programs Officer with the Shelter, Support and Housing Administration Division (City of Toronto). He has worked for the City of Toronto's SSHA Division in Operation Management, Project Management and, Frontline positions for the last 10 years. Omar graduated from the University of Toronto with degrees in Biology and Neuroscience - his post graduate research was in Cognitive Function and Memory. He also designed and instructed courses at U of T, Ryerson, and Seneca. Most recently, Omar led the design, implementation and operationalization of the Eviction Prevention In the Community (EPIC) Pilot Program. Omar is a native Torontonian and lives in the east end of the City with his family. **Contact info:** omar.magre@toronto.ca

Dr. Kaitlin Schwan is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, where her research focuses on knowledge mobilization and research impact. Kaitlin completed her PhD in Social Work at the University of Toronto, where her research focused on Canadian activism to address homelessness. She works on research teams addressing a range of social justice issues, including sex trafficking, eviction prevention, arts-based programming with youth experiencing homelessness, and youth homelessness prevention. She is passionate about making research matter, social change, and her cat. **Contact info:** kschwan@edu.yorku.ca

5. Peer support in Housing First

Reflections on the role of Peer Support and Peer Support Work in Housing for people with mental health issues. Against the backdrop of an emerging national Peer Support Work (PSW) initiative in the early 2010's, Jeremiah will discuss the role of Peer Support in housing for people with mental health issues, and specifically what this means for housing organizations/teams today. He will focus on the importance of seeing PSW as a discipline on an interdisciplinary team, outlining core values and

principles, approaches to practice, and specific skills. This will also include defining the role within the team, challenges of PSW in clinical settings, and approaches to the supervision of PSWs.

Presenter biography:

Jeremiah Bach was most recently a Project Supervisor with Tangled Art + Disability and Event Producer for the National Educational Association of Disabled Students. He was a Senior Manager with the Mood Disorders Association of Ontario from 2013-2014. Jeremiah has held two national positions with the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC), including Chair of a Peer Support Workers Communities of Practice (PSWCoP). He has worked in the mental health system/disability community for the past decade, including roles in community mental health, inpatient, and outpatient settings. He has contributed to the discipline of Peer Support Work through leading the development of a PSW Discipline Summary, the writing of educational materials at CAMH, and numerous workshops/training's for clinicians across Canada. **Contact info:** jeremiahbach@gmail.com

Additional resources for participants:

Peer Support Workers Communities of Practice Discipline Summary, At Home/Chez Soi Peer Support Workers Communities of Practice. Available at: www.mentalhealthcommission.ca

6. Fidelity

Program fidelity has emerged as an important area of focus for evidence-based interventions like Housing First programs. Previous studies have demonstrated that Housing First programs with higher levels of fidelity produce better outcomes (Davidson et al., 2014; Goering et al., 2015). With the scaling up of Housing First programs, an important issue involves ensuring that programs have high fidelity. The objective of the workshop is to introduce participants to the assessment of fidelity of Pathways Housing First programs. The session will include a description of the methods of conducting fidelity assessments of Pathways Housing First programs, a presentation of findings from fidelity assessments of different programs, and a discussion of the use of findings coming out of fidelity assessments to improve the delivery of Housing First. Workshop participants will have an opportunity to assess the fidelity of their own programs using an internal measure of program fidelity.

Presenter biography:

Tim Aubry, Ph.D., C.Psych. is a Full Professor in the School of Psychology and Senior Researcher at the Centre for Research on Educational and Community Services at the University of Ottawa. He is currently holder of the Faculty of Social Sciences Research Chair in Community Mental Health and Homelessness. Tim was a Member of the National Research Team and the Co-Lead of the Moncton site in At Home / Chez Soi Demonstration Project of the Mental Health Commission of Canada. In 2012, he received the Contribution to Evaluation in Canada award from the Canadian Evaluation Society. He is also a Fellow of the Canadian Psychological Association and the Society for Community Research and Action (Division 27 of the American Psychological Association). Tim teaches graduate courses at the University of Ottawa in community psychology and program evaluation. **Contact info:** Tim.Aubry@uOttawa.ca

Geoff Nelson (see workshop 1 for biography)

7. Landlord engagement

A defining feature of Housing First is the practice of supporting clients in a private-market rental housing unit of their choice. However, establishing and maintaining relationships with private-market landlords can be a daunting task for Housing First programs.

The Homelessness Partnering Strategy has produced a toolkit on the topic of landlord engagement in Housing First. The toolkit was based on findings from existing literature and from consultations in 5 Canadian communities with Housing First programs.

In this presentation, one of the authors of the toolkit will provide an overview of its contents, highlighting key recommendations and implications for practice.

Presenter biography:

Jennifer Rae is a recent PhD graduate in the School of Psychology and a Researcher at the Centre for Research on Education and Community Services at the University of Ottawa. She currently works as a Regional Evaluation Coordinator with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

Contact info: jrae010@uottawa.ca

Lisa Medd is the Housing Program Manager, CMHA Ottawa. Lisa is proud of CMHA Ottawa's long commitment to Housing First, the fidelity that her agency has demonstrated to the Pathways Housing First model and the Housing First research we've participated in. Lisa has worked with CMHA Ottawa for 17 years and with the Housing Program for just over 2 years. Lisa is newly an empty nester and a cat owner (they go together) and a beekeeper. **Contact info:** lmedd@cmhaottawa.ca

Tim Aubry (see workshop 6 for biography)

Additional resources for participants:

Visit the Community Workspace on Homelessness (workspaceonhomelessness.ca) to download a copy of *The Landlord Engagement Toolkit: A Guide to Working with Landlords in Housing First Programs*.

An "Ask Me Anything" session on the topic of landlord engagement in Housing First will also be hosted on the Community Workspace on Thursday, February 15th at 1pm.

8. Family homelessness

This presentation discusses findings from a mixed methods study of family homelessness in Ottawa, Ontario. The findings provide a profile of homeless families using the city's family homelessness shelter system, showing that a notable number of homeless families are newcomers to Canada. Findings also come from qualitative interviews with adult heads of families and youth residing in the family homeless shelters. Findings from these interviews point to the many challenges that arise from living in homeless shelters as well as the ways in which families are able to adapt and cope with these challenges.

Presenters biographies:

Dr. John Sylvestre is Vice-Dean, Research, in the Faculty of Social Sciences, a Senior Researcher at the Centre for Research on Educational and Community Services, and an Associate Professor in the School of Psychology at the University of Ottawa. He has over twenty years of experience in the evaluation of

community-based programs. His primary interests are in the areas of community mental health, homelessness, and housing. He is co-editor (along with Geoff Nelson and Tim Aubry) of *Housing, Communities and Citizenship for People with Serious Mental Illness* published by Oxford University Press (2017). **Contact info:** John.Sylvestre@uottawa.ca

Nick Kerman is a PhD Candidate in Clinical Psychology at the University of Ottawa and formerly worked at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health as a research analyst. He has published papers in a number of academic journals that focus on homelessness and housing, mental health, and support services. **Contact info:** nkerm094@uottawa.ca

Alexia Polillo is a doctoral candidate in experimental psychology at the University of Ottawa. She has been involved in small- and large- scale research projects in the area of homelessness, and worked on various program evaluations in Ottawa and Waterloo. Her research focuses on families experiencing homelessness who are new to Canada. **Contact info:** apoli018@uottawa.ca

9. Networking and Housing First knowledge mobilization

This session draws upon both research and practice to illustrate how communities can share knowledge to inform systems change and advance Housing First. Findings from a research study are presented to illustrate how communities in Alberta and Ontario have used a peer-learning approach to build capacity to facilitate systems change through continuous improvement and collaboration. Leaders from the City of Windsor and Waterloo Region highlight how connecting with other communities has influenced shifts in thinking and informed action to address service gaps and strengthen systems. Examples of systems changes undertaken in each community will be presented.

Presenters biographies:

S. Kathleen Worton (see workshop 1 for biography)

Angela Pye is a Manager in Housing Services at the Region of Waterloo. She has worked at the Region, a municipality located in Southwestern Ontario, since 2005. During this time, she has co-authored over 20 research reports and has led a number of high profile projects in the area of Housing Stability System redesign. Most recently, these projects have included implementing system-wide coordinated access with common assessment, family shelter diversion, development of a new housing-focused Emergency Shelter Framework, and development of a new team-based Housing First program called Portable Home-Based Support. Angela lives in Kitchener with her partner and their three sons who are between the ages of 5 and 7 years old. **Contact info:** APye@regionofwaterloo.ca

Kelly Goz is currently the Program Coordinator, Housing Administration and Development for the City of Windsor's Housing & Children's Services Department. Kelly has been employed with the City of Windsor since 2003. Throughout the course of her career Kelly has been a Housing Program Development Officer delivering Ontario Renovates and Homeownership Down Payment Assistance Programs under the Investment in Affordable Housing Program and has 10 years' experience as an Ontario Works caseworker. In her current role, Kelly's primary responsibilities include the implementation and ongoing delivery coordination of: the Windsor Essex 10 Year Housing and Homelessness Plan; the Windsor Essex Housing First initiative including the creation of Windsor Essex Housing Connections; the

implementation and lead for a collaborative initiative to establish lasting agency partnerships to deliver the components of the 10 Year Plan together with a variety of related housing and homelessness programs that includes a By Names Prioritized List, Rent Supplement and Housing Allowance programs.

Contact info: kgoz@citywindsor.ca

Edwina Toope is a Program Supervisor with Lutherwood Housing Services in Waterloo Region and is the Team lead for the Housing First Team in Cambridge Ontario. Edwina has a background in Sociology and Criminology having worked in Domestic Violence and Adult Mental Health, prior to focusing on Homelessness in 2005. Edwina has worked with both Families and Singles to provide Housing First Program implementation and support services. This includes centralized intake, family shelter diversion and rapid re-housing programs for homeless families, and Housing Specialist and Team Lead roles with single youth and adults. This work has informed larger system redesign across Waterloo region in working towards creating efficient and responsive systems and services to end chronic homelessness.

Edwina lives in Kitchener with her partner and two teenage children. **Contact info:**

etoope@lutherwood.ca

Joyce Zuk is the Executive Director of Family Services Windsor-Essex. She has worked in human service for the past 22 years. Throughout her career she has been an advocate for persons with disabilities and a champion of social justice issues, including homelessness, poverty, access and equality. In 2005, Joyce became the Executive Director of the Welcome Centre our community's only homeless shelter for women. Joyce took on this role in addition to her work at Family Services. Under Joyce's leadership, the Well-Come Centre was able to rebuild its organization and to enhance its services to women experiencing homeless in Essex County. **Contact info:** jzuk@fswe.ca

Visit <http://www.eenet.ca/initiative/housing-first-community-interest#about>

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