

NEEDS ANALYSIS OF  
**HOUSING SUPPORTS**  
IN THE  
**PRINCE COUNTY REGION  
OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND**

JANUARY 26, 2021



PREPARED FOR:



Canadian Mental  
Health Association  
Prince Edward Island

*in partnership  
with*



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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), in partnership with the Department of Social Development and Housing (SDH), engaged MRSB Consulting Services Inc. and AOR Solutions to undertake a needs analysis of housing supports in the Prince County region of Prince Edward Island.

Adequate housing is essential to one's sense of dignity, safety, inclusion and ability to contribute to our communities. Without appropriate housing, it is extremely difficult to get and maintain employment, address mental health or addiction issues, or escape family violence. The housing environment in Prince County is shifting due to population growth, demographic shifts, and an increase in tourism, making it difficult for some residents to maintain housing.

This report identifies affordable and adequate housing, emergency shelter, supportive housing, transportation, daytime support, addictions and mental health, coordination and communication, and data collection as gaps impacting homeless individuals in the Prince County region. The report outlines both short and long-term recommendations to address the regional need.

This report builds upon the Community Needs Assessment on Emergency Shelter that was completed in November 2019. Information for this report was gathered from various sources, including key informant interviews with regional service provider organizations (SPO), best practices review, and jurisdictional research on housing supports available in the region.

# 2.0 PROJECT BACKGROUND

## 2.1 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this Needs Analysis of Housing Supports in the Prince County Region of Prince Edward Island are:

1. To understand the Prince County Region of PEI and the needs of the region;
2. To understand the capacity of existing service providers and shelter providers to meet the needs of the Prince County Region;
3. To identify gaps in services and shelter;
4. To provide advice on potential solutions to address existing gaps; and
5. To identify support models and funding opportunities to address existing gaps.

## 2.2 KEY AUDIENCES

This needs analysis will be used to inform government and community partners on programs and services required to meet community needs in the Prince County region.

## 2.3 METHODOLOGY

Project methodology included background research, key informant interviews, and best practices interviews.

Beginning in June of 2020, background research was conducted to gather information on homelessness in Prince Edward Island and current best practices. This information was used to inform the development of key informant interview questions.

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Key informant interviews were conducted with community groups, service providers, and government representatives. The interviews were designed to identify current capacity, need, and gaps. Interviews were conducted with 14 different community groups, service providers, and government representatives between July 17 and August 19 of 2020.

Best practice interviews were conducted with the Saint John Human Development Council (SJHDC), the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH), and the Salvation Army. The SJHDC was chosen because it is implementing Coordinated Access in New Brunswick and is facing similar challenges with similar demographics. The Salvation Army was chosen because of their extensive experience providing supports to homeless people in Canada. The CAEH was chosen because of the extensive research they collect on homelessness in Canada. Best practice interviews were conducted between September 15 and September 24 of 2020.

A Steering Committee with representation from CMHA and SDH provided feedback to the consultants throughout the engagement.

## 2.4 LIMITATIONS

The availability and reliability of quantitative data is a limitation for this project. This report's gaps and recommendations rely heavily on the qualitative data gathered from the key informant interviews.

Data collection by homeless service and shelter providers is not a standardized process. Without standard practices it is difficult to compare and assess data.

The implementation of Coordinated Access, a streamlined system to help communities ensure equitable access to appropriate resources and prioritize the people most in need of services, will enhance the availability and reliability of quantitative data.

## 2.5 DEFINITIONS

The following definitions were provided by the the Department of Social Development and Housing.

<b>Homelessness</b>	Describes the situation of an individual, family or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it.
<b>Emergency Shelter</b>	Provides temporary accommodation and essential services for individuals experiencing homelessness. The length of stay should be short, ideally 7-10 days. Shelters provide essential services to the homeless and can play a key role in reducing homelessness as these services often focus efforts on engaging clients in the rehousing process.
<b>Short term Supportive Housing</b>	Refers to a supportive – yet temporary – type of accommodation that is meant to bridge the gap from homelessness to permanent housing by offering structure, supervision, support (for addictions and mental health, for instance), and life skills (case management). Clients are required to be actively engaged in their case management plan. These supports may be offered for a period of 1-12 months.

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### **Long Term Supportive Housing**

Combines rental or housing assistance with individualized, flexible, and voluntary support services (case management) for people with low to moderate needs related to specific vulnerabilities such as physical or mental health, developmental disabilities or substance use. Clients are required to be actively engaged in their case management plan. These supports may be offered for a period of 18-24 months.

### **Mobile Rent Vouchers (MRV)**

Mobile Rent Vouchers assist low-income Islanders to bridge the gap between what a qualified applicant can afford to pay and the actual market housing cost.

Applicants must be eligible for either the Seniors Housing Program or the Family Housing Program, and be currently renting their housing. Mobile rent vouchers are portable and can be transferred to other rental units if the applicant moves. The benefit can be issued either to the applicant or directly to the landlord, to best fit the applicant's needs.

### **Rent Supplements (RS)**

Rent supplements assist low-income Islanders to bridge the gap between what a qualified applicant can afford to pay and the actual market housing cost.

Applicants must be eligible for either the Seniors Housing Program or the Family Housing Program, and be renting their housing. RS are not portable in that they are attached to units with designated landlords; however, applicants can access a MRV if they move from the designated units. The agreed upon rent is issued directly to the landlord, and government collects 25% of gross household income directly from the applicant.

### **Coordinated Access**

A process through which individuals and families experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness, are provided access to housing and support services based on a standardized set of procedures for client intake, assessment of need, and matching and referral to housing.

### 3.0 DESCRIPTION OF PRINCE COUNTRY REGION

Prince County is located in western PEI. The 1,979 km<sup>2</sup> area comprises approximately one-third of the Island.

Prince County's population was estimated to be 46,387 as of July 1, 2019, up from 45,637 in 2018, an increase of 1.6% or 750 persons.<sup>1</sup>

Prince County had gains in international migration (+416), inter-provincial migration (+370) and intra-provincial migration (+9), while losses occurred from natural growth (-44). The population aged 0-14 in Prince County increased by 1.7 percent, the 15-65 age group increased by 0.7 percent, while the 65+ cohort increased by 4.3 percent.<sup>2</sup> The average age of Prince County residents is 43.7 compared to 42.7 for the rest of PEI, and the average age is projected to continue to climb. It is forecast that the number of Islanders over the age of 65 will increase to 25.1% by 2037.<sup>3</sup>

After years of a relatively stable population, there has been a significant increase in the population of Prince County beginning around 2016. From 2016 to 2020, the population of Prince County increased by approximately 6%. The population growth is impacting the availability of both homes for sale and units for rent.

According to the 2016 Census data, there are 13,290 single detached homes in Prince County and five apartment buildings with five or more storeys. The average household size is 2.4. The median total income of households in 2015 was \$58,196 for Prince County compared \$61,163 for PEI as a whole.<sup>4</sup>

According to the Housing Action Plan for Prince Edward Island, the key factors impacting housing trends on PEI are demographic shifts with an ageing population, population growth, increased gentrification, and an increase in tourism. The lack of availability of affordable housing is impacting the need for emergency shelters and supportive housing.

Key informants were asked what trends they have seen in Prince County that have impacted homeless individuals' needs in the past three to five years. According to key informants, these trends are: lack of affordable housing, mental health and addiction issues and a lack of treatment options, population growth, gentrification, lack of available jobs, and one area shelter service provider indicated they do not have enough time to work with individuals on the root issues causing homelessness because of stay limits at their facility.

The Canadian Mortgage and Housing (CMHC) collects data on housing statistics for the Summerside census subdivision but not for the Prince County region. The most recent data available is for October 2019. The Summerside vacancy rate increased slightly from 0.6% in 2018 to 0.7% in 2019. The average rent of an apartment in Summerside in October of 2019 was \$821. The average rent of

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<sup>1</sup> Prince Edward Island Statistics Bureau. *Prince Edward Island Population Report 2019*. Government Publication. Charlottetown: Department of Finance, 2020. Electronic Document.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Statistics Canada. "Prince County [Census division], Prince Edward Island." 17 November 2017. *Census Profil, 2016 Census*. Electronic Document. 18 September 2020.



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an apartment in Summerside increased by 23.6% from 2009 to 2019. Table 1 contains data on average Summerside rents for a 10-year period sorted by the number of bedrooms.<sup>5</sup>

Table 1: Average Summerside Rental Rates (2009-2019)

	<b>BACHELOR</b>	<b>1 BEDROOM</b>	<b>2 BEDROOMS</b>	<b>3 BEDROOMS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>2009 October</b>	405	488	645	767	664
<b>2010 October</b>	437	521	673	693	656
<b>2011 October</b>	469	485	678	707	665
<b>2012 October</b>	493	495	717	720	692
<b>2013 October</b>	524	515	735	740	712
<b>2014 October</b>	445	556	756	762	728
<b>2015 October</b>	454	592	773	774	744
<b>2016 October</b>	439	590	782	771	753
<b>2017 October</b>	487	607	810	783	772
<b>2018 October</b>	631	796	842	778	814
<b>2019 October</b>	605	719	860	800	821

### 3.1 EFFORTS TO ADDRESS HOUSING NEED

The province of Prince Edward Island supports many affordable housing units and supplements in the Prince County region.

There are currently 388 seniors units owned by the Prince Edward Island Housing Corporation (PEIHC) in the Prince County region. These units are offered at a rate of 25% rent geared to income (RGI), which means the rental rate charged to tenants is 25% of their gross monthly household income. There are 169 family units owned by the PEIHC in the Prince County region that are 25% RGI.

As of October 2020, there are 64 units in-progress in the Prince County region. The in-progress units will be offered to tenants at 25% RGI.

As of April 1, 2020, the PEI government supports 878 mobile rental vouchers across PEI and is in the process of implementing another 400 approved in the 2020-2021 budget. Approximately one-third of the MRV's are currently assigned to applicants in Prince County; however, it should be noted that since the MRV is portable, if the applicant moves, the MRV goes with them, so some movement to and from each area across the province occurs.

As of April 1, 2020, government supports 236 rent supplements across PEI (49 Prince County) and is in the process of implementing another 166 (49 in Prince County) with landlords who are currently constructing units.

<sup>5</sup> Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. *Housing Market Information Portal*. 7 2019 November. Electronic Map. 28 September 2020.

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Table 2: Prince County RGI Housing Units and Supplements

TYPE	STATUS	SUMMERSIDE	WEST PRINCE	REST OF PRINCE COUNTY	TOTAL
<b>PEIHC Seniors</b>	Open	186	58	144	<b>388</b>
<b>PEIHC Family</b>	Open	101	62	6	<b>169</b>
<b>Rent Supplements: Seniors</b>	Open	19	20	0	<b>39</b>
<b>Rent Supplements: Family</b>	Open	0	10	0	<b>10</b>
<b>PEIHC Seniors</b>	In-progress	32	0	0	<b>32</b>
<b>PEIHC Family</b>	In-progress	32	0	0	<b>32</b>
<b>Rent Supplements: Seniors</b>	In-progress	0	5	3	<b>8</b>
<b>Rent Supplements: Family</b>	In-progress	30	5	6	<b>41</b>
<b>Mobile Rental Vouchers</b>	-	213	55	31	<b>299</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	-	<b>613</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>1018</b>

*Of the 557 PEIHC Seniors and Family units currently available in Prince County, 26 of those are accessible.*

### 3.1.1 PROVINCIAL HOUSING NAVIGATOR

The Provincial Housing Navigator is a new position and is evolving to best meet the needs of Islanders with complex housing needs. The Provincial Housing Navigator:

- Supports clients who have emergency shelter needs (referred by the Emergency Housing Line)
- Collects information to assess a client's situation and develop a case plan, make referrals, and suggest steps for the client to take to secure appropriate housing
- Engages clients one-on-one to complete a housing assessment to determine eligibility for either social assistance or housing programs such as provincial housing units, rent supplements or mobile rent vouchers
- Assists clients with lease signing and establishing a positive rental history
- Provides case management support to clients who are not connected with a Service Provider Organization (SPO)
- Connects clients to appropriate SPO's to provide services including case management
- Follow-up with clients weekly, or as needed, to review progress and assess the situation

The Provincial Housing Navigator works with clients who face many challenges, including trying to find appropriate housing in a market with very low vacancy rates.

### 3.1.2 HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Housing assistance provides low-income Islanders with appropriate housing at a reduced cost. For qualified applicants, this might be renting a social housing unit or receiving a rent supplement that

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reduces the cost for rental market housing. The program is needs-based, with priority given to those assessed to be in the greatest need.

### 3.1.2.1 FAMILY HOUSING PROGRAM

The Family Housing Program provides quality rental housing units for Island families and individuals with low incomes, poor housing conditions or other exceptional circumstances that create a need for assistance and who may not otherwise be able to obtain adequate housing. Most families pay 25% of their income for rent.

Government-owned apartments are located in Alberton, Charlottetown, Georgetown, Montague, Mt. Stewart, O'Leary, Souris, Summerside and Tignish. Individuals can also receive a rent supplement or mobile rent voucher benefit with a private landlord in any community.

### 3.1.2.2 SENIORS HOUSING PROGRAM

Seniors facing difficulty affording their current cost of living can apply for the Seniors Housing Program if they are aged 60 and older or 55 and older and have a disability. The rent charged for seniors housing is 25% of income, or individuals/seniors can access a rent supplement or mobile rent voucher.

### 3.1.2.3 RENT SUPPLEMENTS

Rent supplements assist low-income Islanders in bridging the gap between what a qualified applicant can afford to pay, and the actual market housing cost.

Applicants must be eligible for either the Seniors Housing Program or the Family Housing Program and be renting their housing. RS are not portable in that they are attached to units with designated landlords; however, applicants can access a MRV if they move from the designated units. The agreed-upon rent is issued directly to the landlord, and government collects 25% of gross household income directly from the applicant.

### 3.1.2.4 MOBILE RENT VOUCHERS

Mobile rental vouchers assist low-income Islanders in bridging the gap between what a qualified applicant can afford to pay, and the actual market housing cost.

Applicants must be eligible for either the Seniors Housing Program or the Family Housing Program, and be currently renting their housing. Mobile rent vouchers are portable and can be transferred to other rental units if the applicant moves. The benefit can be issued either to the applicant or directly to the landlord, to best fit the applicant's needs.

## 3.1.3 SUPPORTS TO ENCOURAGE HOUSING PROJECTS

### 3.1.3.1 COMMUNITY HOUSING FUND

The Community Housing Fund is a partnership between the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) and the province of PEI. The purpose is to help create more affordable housing options for vulnerable populations, Islanders in assisted living, or those that require increased support. The Community Housing Fund has three categories:

#### **CAPACITY BUILDING AND RESEARCH**

Capacity building refers to increasing the skills, knowledge, tools or equipment required to meet the needs of a community. Community capacity building means strengthening the skills and

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competencies of people and communities as well as local grassroots movements in order to achieve their goals. This category of funding can be used to build community capacity and/or do research to support a proposed development. Maximum funding under this category is \$10,000 or 75% of project costs.

### **PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

Funding under this category can be used to hire external resources to assist with the planning process of a housing project. This could be in the areas of business, accounting, or another skillset that is not within the applicant organization. Maximum funding under this category is \$50,000 or 75% of project costs.

### **CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT**

Funding under this category is for the construction of a housing facility, including related services for engineering and architecture (as applicable.) An applicant must have other grants or financing in place to support the construction. Preference will be given to projects that are ready to break ground. Maximum funding under this category is 25% of project costs up to \$1,000,000.

#### **3.1.3.2 AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

The province of PEI provides forgivable loans of up to \$45,000 per unit to increase the number of affordable housing options in the province. The Affordable Housing Development Program is open to non-profit corporations, private entrepreneurs, development corporations, housing cooperatives, or municipalities.

New builds, buildings currently under construction, or renovations to existing buildings are eligible as long as such renovations add new affordable units to the market. Projects must be a minimum of four units and contribute to increasing accessible units to 20 percent of government-supported units. The loan forgiveness period will range from 15 to 25 years.

#### **3.1.3.3 CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION**

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation offers many different types of funding opportunities to develop and preserve affordable housing programs. Many programs, such as the Home Renovation Program and Family Housing Rent Supplement Program are made possible by the CMHC – Prince Edward Island Agreement for Investment in Affordable Housing.

The CMHC's Affordable Housing Centre and Multi-Unit Support Specialists work with communities, organizations, and private developers to bring affordable housing projects to life. CMHC provides seed funding for affordable housing projects, rental construction financing, and support for pre-fabricated housing.

## 4.0 PRINCE COUNTY HOUSING SUPPORTS

Table 3 contains all shelter options currently available in the Prince County Region. Individuals from the Prince County region can access shelter in other areas of Prince Edward Island. Section 4.5.1 contains information on available shelter outside of the Prince County region.

Table 3: Prince County Housing Supports

	Type of shelter	Number of beds	Available to	Average length of stay	% occupancy 2019-2020
<b>Chief Mary Bernard Women’s Shelter</b>	Emergency	5	Female identifying individuals and their children	34.5 days	-
<b>PEI Family Violence Prevention Services</b>	Short term Supportive	3	Female-identifying individuals fleeing violence	1 year	100%
<b>Canadian Mental Health Association</b>	Long term Supportive	31*	Adults with a primary diagnosis of mental illness	Over one year	100%
<b>Community Mental Health and Addictions</b>	Short term supportive	8	Men who have completed a detox program	120 days	95.5%
<b>Summerside Salvation Army Corps</b>	Emergency	2*	Victims of domestic violence, individuals displaced by disasters, individuals in need during times of inclement weather	-	-

\*The Prince Edward Island Division of the Canadian Mental Health Association offers 23 long-term supportive housing units and eight community-based rent supplements

\*\*The Summerside Salvation Army Corps provides emergency shelter at a motel in the Prince County region. The organization does not operate a brick-and-mortar shelter in Prince County.

### 4.1 SHELTER AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

#### 4.1.1 CHIEF MARY BERNARD WOMEN’S SHELTER

**The Chief Mary Bernard Women’s Shelter has five emergency shelter beds and allows two beds to be used for long-term shelter.**

**SHELTER**

- Operated by Lennox Island First Nation
- Located on Lennox Island, PEI
- Has 5 emergency shelter beds, two of these beds can be utilized for long-term shelter

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- 24/7 coverage, individuals can stay up to 6 weeks
- Serves both Indigenous and non-Indigenous female-identifying individuals and non-binary individuals and their children (girls up to 18 and boys up to 14) from across the province who are fleeing violence
- The average stay in 2019-2020 was 34.5 days (39 days in 2017, 33 days in 2018)
- From April 1, 2019, to August 31, 2020, the Chief Mary Bernard Women's Shelter sheltered 37 women and 11 children who were experiencing homelessness at the time of entering the shelter
  - 29 % of these women were Indigenous, and 61% were non-Indigenous
- The facility is frequently at capacity and is sometimes forced to turn away individuals seeking shelter

### SERVICE

- Provides one-on-one case management.
- Will work with clients on self-identified priorities, including literacy, life skills, employment skills, budgeting, mental health, addictions, self-help and self-esteem, and establishing healthy boundaries and relationships.
- Will provide transportation to get to shelter.
- Will provide transportation once a week to appointments.
- Provides up to a year of after-care service, largely consisting of advocacy or case management.

### 4.1.2 PEI FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION SERVICES

**The PEI Family Violence Prevention Services (FVPS) operates one short-term supportive housing unit in East Prince and two short-term supportive housing units in West Prince.**

#### SHELTER

The FVPS supportive housing unit is accessible to female-identifying, non-binary individuals and trans men and women who are fleeing violence. Individuals can stay in this unit for up to one year.

#### SERVICES

PEI Family Violence Prevention Services has an outreach office in Summerside. The outreach office provides long-term outreach and follow-up for clients, both those who have stayed in a FVPS shelter and those fleeing violence who have not accessed the shelter due to the impracticalities of distance.

Through the outreach office, FVPS offers the additional services of:

- One-on-one support work.
- Referrals to other services.
- Connections to community resources.
- Will assist in navigating services and attending meetings with lawyers, child protection services, income support services, housing support services, etc.

The average caseload of the Summerside outreach office is roughly 25-40 active cases, but it fluctuates based on referrals.

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### 4.1.3 PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND DIVISION OF THE CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

**The Prince Edward Island Division of the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) operates 23 long-term supportive housing units and provides eight community-based rent supplements in Prince County.**

#### **SHELTER**

Of the 23 long-term supportive housing units in Prince County housing units operated by CMHA, six units are in Alberton, and 17 units are in Summerside. These units are for adults with a primary diagnosis of mental illness, and all units are occupied by long-term tenants.

#### **SERVICE**

The PEI Division of CMHA provides the following services in the Prince County Region:

- The Clubhouse Program provides services and supports to individuals in recovery from mental illness. The Clubhouse Program is currently providing support to approximately 61 individuals in the Alberton area and approximately 140 individuals in the Summerside area. Program details include:
  - Psychosocial Rehabilitation through Work Order Day
  - Prevocational training
  - Employment services
  - Housing and supports
  - Wellness program
  - Social and recreational activities
- The Housing Outreach Program provides support to help individuals experiencing mental illness and/or addictions find and keep permanent housing in the community. The Housing Outreach Program is currently providing support to approximately 15 individuals in the Summerside area. The program is targeted towards adults age 18 years or older who:
  - Are current clients of Health PEI - Mental Health and Addictions or CMHA internal programs (Clubhouse Program or Housing First clients)
  - Are able to live independently
  - Are experiencing barriers to housing stability such as a primary diagnosis of mental health and/or substance use disorders
  - Are willing to plan for a transition to independent living within 6-24 months
  - Are willing to engage in case planning and home visits
  - Are able to pay their own rent or have access to Social Assistance or the AccessAbility Support Program
  - Meets the programs case management availability
- The West Prince Housing First Program assists individuals who are chronically, episodically, or in imminent danger of becoming homeless, to find housing and help with any supports which can assist the client in ensuring long-term housing success. The program is targeted to adults 18 years of age and older and seeks to:
  - Work with 20+ individuals who are chronically or episodically homeless
  - Assist 10-15 individuals who are imminently in danger of losing their housing
  - Intensively case manage an average of 15-20 individuals per month

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- House or re-house 10-15 individuals, including housing searches, packing and moving
- Provide crisis assistance when necessary
- Work on exit strategies and final assessments with clients who are exiting the program
- Follow up with exited clients when necessary
- Continue to work on landlord engagement in all communities
- Assist individuals with referrals to more appropriate agencies when they have housing issues, but do not meet the criteria for the West Prince Housing First Program
- The Summerside My Place Housing First Program assists individuals who are chronically, episodically, or in imminent danger of becoming homeless, to find housing and help with any supports which can assist the client in ensuring long-term housing success. The program is targeted to adults 18 years of age and older and seeks to:
  - Work with 8-12 individuals who are chronically or episodically homeless
  - Intensively case manage an average of 8-12 individuals per month
  - House or re-house 10-20 individuals, including housing searches, packing and moving
  - Provide crisis assistance when necessary and able
  - Work on exit strategies and final assessments with clients who are exiting the program
  - Follow up with exited clients when necessary
  - Continue to work on landlord engagement in all communities
  - Assist individuals with referrals to more appropriate agencies when they have housing issues but do not meet the criteria for the My Place Housing First Program in Summerside

### 4.1.4 ST. ELEANOR'S HOUSE (COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS)

**St. Eleanor's House offers eight beds to men with addiction issues that have been referred by Community Mental Health and Addictions.**

#### **SHELTER**

St. Eleanor's House, located in Summerside, is a short-term supportive housing unit for men and only accessible by referral from Community Mental Health and Addictions. St. Eleanor's House contains eight beds, the average stay is 120 days, and the House has been 95.5% full for the past year. The House provides a 24-hour supervised, therapeutic, safe, structured home-like environment to help men maintain a chemical-free lifestyle.

#### **SERVICE**

St. Eleanor's House provides the following services to individuals residents:

- Group therapy for two hours per day.
- One-on-one counselling.
- Referrals to other services.



**NEEDS ANALYSIS OF HOUSING SUPPORTS IN PRINCE COUNTY**

**4.1.5 SALVATION ARMY**

**SHELTER**

The Summerside Salvation Army Corps provides emergency shelter for up to two nights in a motel environment. The Salvation Army will provide emergency shelter to victims of domestic violence, individuals in need during periods of inclement weather, and displaced individuals due to disaster (e.g. fire, flood).

**SERVICE**

The Summerside Salvation Army Corps operates the only soup kitchen in Prince County. The Soup kitchen serves approximately 60 hot meals per day, five days per week. The Salvation Army's Community & Family Services is located in the same building as the soup kitchen.

The Summerside Salvation Army Corps operates a food bank that provides grocery boxes and emergency groceries. The food bank is open three days a week from 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm. The Salvation Army also operates a Christmas Hamper Program and a back-to-school backpack program in partnership with Operation Backpack.

**4.1.6 OTHER SHELTER PROVIDERS**

Individuals residing in Prince County can access emergency shelter anywhere in Prince Edward Island. All emergency shelter providers, besides the Chief Mary Bernard Women's Shelter, are located in Charlottetown. Only one of these shelters, the Bedford MacDonald House, was interviewed as part of this project. The key informant from the Bedford MacDonald House indicated that the number of stays increased from approximately 1,200 in 2019 to 4,000 in 2020.

	<b>Location</b>	<b>Type of shelter</b>	<b>Number of beds</b>	<b>Available to</b>
<b>Bedford MacDonald House</b>	Charlottetown	Emergency	12	Male identifying
<b>Deacon House</b>	Charlottetown	Emergency	6	Male identifying
<b>Blooming House</b>	Charlottetown	Emergency	8	Female identifying individuals
<b>Anderson House</b>	Charlottetown	Emergency	8	Female identifying individuals and their children who are fleeing violence

**4.2 SERVICE PROVIDERS**

**4.2.1 EAST PRINCE WOMEN'S INFORMATION CENTRE**

The East Prince Women's Information Centre (EPWIC) is a non-profit organization that provides services and community referrals for the women of Prince and Western Queen's Counties. The Centre is located in Summerside. The EPWIC provides:

## NEEDS ANALYSIS OF HOUSING SUPPORTS IN PRINCE COUNTY

- The Women's Employability & Empowerment Program
  - A 12-week program designed to enhance women's employment skills and offer current work experience
  - Eight weeks in the classroom and four weeks with an employer
  - Offered on an annual basis
  - Accepts 12 women for each cohort
- Other workshops on an ad hoc basis such as Cyber Safety for Youth, Gender Diversity Training, and Community Legal Information Support.
- The EPWIC does not offer case management support

### 4.2.2 LIFEHOUSE SHELTER

Lifeshouse Shelter is a proposed initiative of the Boys and Girls Club of Summerside with a steering committee of individuals from the area. The Lifeshouse Shelter group has proposed creating a shelter for women and families. The proposed shelter will possess eight units, two emergency shelter units and six supportive housing units. The term limits of the supportive housing units will be based on individual needs.

The proposed Lifeshouse Shelter will form partnerships with existing community groups to ensure clients can access a full continuum of support services. The proposed Lifeshouse Shelter will offer one-on-one case management supports and guide families based on individual needs. Proper case management support is an integral component of the proposed Lifeshouse Shelter.

Children staying at the Lifeshouse Shelter will have access to all Boys and Girls Club programming. The Boys and Girls Club provides children with transportation to and from school, a breakfast program, trauma-related care programs, and other programs such as Jays Care, which helps kids get involved with organized sports.

## 5.0 QUANTITATIVE DATA ON HOMELESSNESS IN PRINCE COUNTY

All key informant interviewees were asked if their organization collects data from individuals seeking temporary housing or other supports in the Prince County region. If the interviewees' organization collected data, interviewees were asked what type of data they collected and whether they could share the data with the interviewer. Quantitative data on housing was provided by the Chief Mary Bernard Women's Shelter, the Provincial Housing Navigator, and the Emergency Shelter Line.

### 5.1 EMERGENCY SHELTER LINE DATA

From August 2019 to March of 2020, the Emergency Shelter Line received 223 calls. Of these 223 calls, 157 individuals were identified as requiring support.

Of the 157 individuals requiring support, approximately 43 (31%) indicated Prince County as their county of origin. The county of origin indicates where the call originates. It does not necessarily mean that the caller is a resident of that county. Some calls placed to the Emergency Shelter Line are placed by friends, family, or support workers, on behalf of other individuals. The caller may be in a different county than the individual in need. At times, callers to the Emergency Shelter Line are outside their home county when they place the call.

Of the 43 individuals that indicated their county of origin as Prince County during this eight-month time period, 58% were male, and 42% were female. Twenty-three percent (23%) were aged 18-24, 44% were aged 25-59, 9% were aged 60+, and there was no age data provided for 23% of callers.

Based on data received from the Emergency Shelter Line, there was an average of just over five callers per month seeking support and indicated Prince County as their county of origin between August 2019 and March 2020. A caller seeking support does not necessarily require support in the form of emergency shelter.

Of the 43 individuals that indicated Prince County as their county of origin, approximately 27 indicated they required emergency shelter. Individuals calling the Emergency Shelter Line are able to indicate more than one reason for their call. Other reasons provided by the 43 individuals that indicated Prince County as their county of origin included planning for future shelter and general information.

The reasons for needing immediate shelter included evictions for relationship breakdown (9), other (7), behavioural reasons (6), evictions for non-payment (4), transient (4), unemployed (1), and couch surfing (1).

**According to the Emergency Shelter Line data, there was an average of just over three calls per month originating from the Prince County region requiring emergency shelter.**

Table 4: Emergency Shelter Line Data, Calls Originating from Prince County by Age and Gender

	Male	Female	Total
18-24	4	6	10
25-59	11	8	19
60+	4	0	4

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	Male	Female	Total
<b>Age not available</b>	6	4	<b>10</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>43</b>

### 5.2 PROVINCIAL HOUSING NAVIGATOR DATA

The data provided by the Provincial Housing Navigator is collected during the initial conversation with the client. Data specific to the Prince County region is not being collected at this time.

The Provincial Housing Navigator managed 84 clients between May and August of 2020. Of these 84 clients, 41 were assessed and determined to be eligible for seniors housing or family housing waiting lists, 24 were successfully placed in housing, and seven were temporarily housed. The Provincial Housing Navigator received 58 housing referrals from various community groups and made ten referrals to appropriate support services.

*Table 5: Provincial Housing Navigator Data*

	May	June	July	August	Total
<b>Clients being managed by HN</b>	16	22	16	30	<b>84</b>
<b>Number of assessments completed for provincial housing waitlist</b>	24	7	5	5	<b>41</b>
<b>Clients successfully placed in housing</b>	2	5	7	10	<b>24</b>
<b>Clients currently housed temporarily</b>	2	1	1	3	<b>7</b>
<b>Client referrals (received)</b>	24	13	8	13	<b>58</b>
<b>Client referrals (made)</b>	5	3	1	1	<b>10</b>

The primary issues identified by clients of the Provincial Housing Navigator are:

- Finding units that are affordable, accept pets, and are accessible
- Facing issues such as family violence, mental health, reno-victions, and relationship breakdowns

### 6.0 IDENTIFYING GAPS

Key informants identified gaps in addressing the needs of those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in eight key areas:

- Affordable and adequate housing
- Emergency shelter
- Supportive housing
- Transportation
- Daytime options
- Addictions and mental health
- Coordination and communication
- Data collection

#### 6.1 AFFORDABLE AND ADEQUATE HOUSING

Key Informants overwhelmingly identified a need for affordable, secure housing options in the Prince County region. It is difficult to find housing affordable housing that is secure, adequate, and meets the needs of families. According to CMHC housing is considered to be affordable when a household spends less than 30% of its pre-tax income on adequate shelter. Households that spend more than 30% of their income on shelter are deemed to be in core housing need.

Some key informants indicated that the amount of funding for shelter provided social assistance is not keeping pace with market rental rates. Key informants indicated that there is a rise of hidden homelessness in the Prince County region. The hidden homeless are people who access accommodation but have no immediate prospect of permanent or stable housing.

Qualified individuals can apply for a rent supplement or mobile rent voucher. These supports assist low income Islanders to bridge the gap between what a qualified applicant can afford to pay and the actual market housing cost.

#### 6.2 EMERGENCY SHELTER

There is one emergency women's shelter in the Prince County region and no emergency men's shelters. There are emergency shelters available to residents of Prince County that are located in Charlottetown. Many individuals from the Prince County region do not want to travel to emergency shelters outside of their geographic area where they may already have access to family, jobs, and available supports.

Individuals requiring emergency shelter have the option to be placed in hotels in the region. Some key informants cited that hotel environments can be unsafe, especially for families and individuals with addiction issues. Hotels can provide temporary shelter, but adequate supports are required to provide individuals with the opportunity to access services or address root problems causing homelessness.

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### 6.3 SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Supportive housing assists people by creating successful tenancies and healthier communities. Supportive housing serves individuals with varying health, personal challenges, and needs, by tailoring responses to help them gain and maintain housing.

There are two short-term supportive housing units available in Prince County, and they are only accessible to victims of family violence. Some key informants identified that increasing the availability of both short term and long term supportive housing with appropriate wraparound supports would have a positive impact on the Prince County region.

### 6.4 TRANSPORTATION

Key informants identified transportation as a critical barrier to accessing supports, jobs, and appropriate housing in the Prince County region. Prince County is a very rural area except for the City of Summerside, and there is no public transportation in the area.

The only shelter outside of Charlottetown is the Chief Mary Bernard Women's Shelter. Individuals staying at the Chief Mary Bernard Women's Shelter can only access transportation once per week to travel to appointments outside of Lennox Island.

Individuals that contact the Emergency Shelter Line are provided transportation to an emergency shelter via taxi.

Many homeless individuals requiring emergency or supportive shelter are required to relocate to Charlottetown, which can separate them from their family, jobs, and familiar supports.

It is challenging to address public transportation issues in an expansive rural area such as Prince County. The Province of PEI has instituted various initiatives to assist with transportation in rural PEI. Recently, the Province of PEI gifted a van to Salvation Army to assist with client transportation.

### 6.5 DAYTIME SUPPORT OPTIONS

Key informants identified a need for daytime support and programming for homeless individuals in Prince County similar to what is currently offered at the Community Outreach Centre in Charlottetown. The Community Outreach Centre offers financial supports, housing supports, cultural supports, and mental health and addictions supports.

### 6.6 ADDICTIONS AND MENTAL HEALTH

Key informants identified a lack of available addictions and mental health supports in the Prince County region.

Addictions and mental health intersect with homelessness in complex ways. Individuals with addiction and mental health issues are more likely to experience homelessness, and experiencing homelessness can lead to addiction and mental health issues.

Key informants indicated that available addictions and mental health available in Prince County are currently overwhelmed and cannot support individuals with immediate needs.

### 6.7 COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION

Key informants identified a lack of case management supports in the Prince County region. Key informants also indicated that available supports are complex and overwhelming for many individuals. Accessing available programs can be overwhelming, especially when individuals are required to travel to government offices and tell their story repeatedly to different people to access the help they need.

Key informants identified the need to bring case management to where people are and create a single access point for services.

Some key informants indicated that care and service providers are operating in silos, which makes it difficult to fully understand the needs and the best way to provide support for an individual.

### 6.8 DATA COLLECTION

Data collection on homelessness should be a standardized process through dedicated access points. Enhanced data collection and analysis would allow funding decisions to be made with quantitative data that accurately depicts homeless individuals' needs in PEI.

The implementation of Coordinated Access, a streamlined system to help communities ensure equitable access to appropriate resources and prioritize the people most in need of services, will allow for standardized data collection through dedicated access points.

Coordinated Access utilizes the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS), a comprehensive data collection and case management system designed to better understand homeless individuals' needs in specific geographic regions.

The John Howard Society, funded by the Government of Canada's Reaching Home initiative, is the community entity implementing the Coordinated Access Process in PEI. The Coordinated Access Governance Team met for the first time in September of 2020.

# 7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

## 7.1 SHORT TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

### 7.1.1 SECURE UNITS IN THE PRINCE COUNTY REGION TO USE FOR SHORT-TERM SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

The Province of PEI and the Salvation Army have partnered on a supportive housing pilot project in Charlottetown.

The pilot project moves eligible clients from emergency shelter into the subsidized market housing if they are able to live independently when supports are made available through a case management plan. Project staff continue to provide support to these clients in scattered locations. The support consists of regular, weekly check-ins to address any issues that may impact their housing and connecting clients to social supports and services within the community.

As the pilot project continues, project staff are working to clarify program components (e.g. eligibility criteria, referral and intake processes, triage and assessment, case management, evaluation). It is necessary to strengthen program components to determine which clients are ready for supportive housing and to evaluate the success of the program.

All supportive housing options offered through the pilot provide a range of non-clinical supports based on a person-centred, case management plan. Supports may include life skills, self-care, monitoring medication compliance, meeting tenancy expectations, mindfulness, and negotiating with property owners. Staff may also utilize warm transfers to health services for primary care, mental health, or substance abuse, and other relevant community and social supports. It is expected that increasing capacity, confidence, and competence, will contribute to stable housing, thereby interrupting the cycle of homelessness.

It is recommended that units throughout Prince County be secured to use for scattered-site supportive housing. Non-profits and SPO's could enter into service agreements to provide case management and non-clinical supports to individuals at scattered-site supportive housing locations.

The eligibility criteria for scattered-site supportive housing in Prince County should be adopted from the ongoing Charlottetown pilot project and adapted to the Prince County area.

### 7.1.2 CONTINUE TO WORK WITH SERVICE PROVIDERS AND SUPPORT THE IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION OF COORDINATED ACCESS AND HIFIS 4.0

A Coordinated Access System streamlines the process for people experiencing homelessness to access housing and support services needed to permanently end their homelessness. HIFIS 4.0 is an updated information technology system designed for seamless service delivery. It allows for common client information to be used by service providers to build off each others' plans without clients repeating their stories. HIFIS 4.0 enables service providers to participate in Coordinated Access by having a central inventory of the housing supply.

By standardizing the intake and assessment process, sharing information in real-time within a community, adopting uniform prioritization policies and coordinating referral processes, coordinated access systems connect people to the right housing and supports as efficiently as possible based on their preferences and level of need, ensuring communities get the most out of



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limited resources and can more rapidly and effectively prevent and end homelessness for those in greatest need.

Coordinated Access requires buy-in from all groups working with homeless individuals. Coordinated Access requires identifying clear access points and utilizing HIFIS 4.0 to capture data.

Implementing the Coordinated Access System will allow the province of Prince Edward Island to allocate available resources based on good data. The deadline for the implementation of Coordinated Access and HIFIS 4.0 in PEI is March 31, 2022. It is expected that the implementation of Coordinated Access and HIFIS 4.0 will drastically improve client service delivery on PEI.

To ensure the Coordinated Access system best meets the needs of Islanders, those involved with implementation should:

- Work to solicit proper buy-in from all groups providing shelter or support to homeless individuals
- Clearly identify who has responsibility for each client
- Ensure that all organizations receiving provincial support to participate in Coordinated Access and HIFIS 4.0
- Clearly identify Access Points
- Create a by-name list
- Create an online intake platform for the byname list that provides the necessary data points
- Utilize the by-name list process guide
- Utilize the data from the by-name list and Coordinated Access to make informed decisions on shelter and supports

### **7.1.3 CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE CONSTRUCTION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN PRINCE COUNTY**

In the Prince County region there are 388 RGI senior's units, 169 RGI family units, 64 RGI units in-progress, and access to Rent Supplements and Mobile Rent Vouchers. The Province of PEI should continue to support the construction of affordable housing units in the Prince County region.

The implementation of Coordinated Access will help to identify where new builds should take place. As these new builds are being constructed, Mobile Rent Vouchers should be promoted to bridge the gap for individuals in need of affordable housing. Other financial assistance methods including MRV's or rent supplements should be continued.

### **7.1.4 INCREASE AWARENESS OF AND CONNECTION TO HOUSING SUPPORTS**

There are many housing supports available in PEI, such as the rent supplement or Mobile Rent Voucher, Family Housing Program, and Seniors Housing Program. All front-line service operators should be made aware of current housing supports and how those supports are accessed. To enhance access to available supports, Housing Services should consider enhancing public access to Housing Officers who can assist with filing for available housing supports.

Available, easy to access supports, such as the Mobile Rent Voucher, should be actively promoted.

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### 7.1.5 ENHANCE THE WORKING CAPACITY OF THE PROVINCIAL HOUSING NAVIGATOR

The Provincial Housing Navigator is currently working in a 50% capacity role. As the Provincial Housing Navigator's role evolves and in light of recent challenges and an increased volume of clients, it is recommended that the Provincial Housing Navigator be employed at a 100% capacity.

### 7.1.6 INCREASE THE NUMBER OF HOTEL/MOTEL EMERGENCY SHELTERS IN THE PRINCE COUNTY AREA

There is a gap in short-term emergency shelter in the Prince Country region, especially for men. Every effort should be made to secure hotel/motel options in the Prince County Region when individuals require emergency shelter and when it is beneficial to stay in the region due to existing family supports and connections, social supports and connections, or employment commitments. Providing more options for hotel/motel emergency shelter in Prince County allows for more flexibility for both the Emergency Shelter Line and individuals in need of emergency shelter.

Individuals who are placed in a hotel/motel for emergency shelter should have access to community supports and be moved into short term supportive housing as soon as possible. If an individual requires transportation assistance, it should be provided to them.

## 7.2 LONG TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

### 7.2.1 INCREASE SUPPORTIVE HOUSING WITH APPROPRIATE WRAPAROUND SUPPORTS IN THE PRINCE COUNTY REGION

Key informants identified a clear need for emergency shelter and supportive housing supports in the Prince County region. However, key informants were unable to define which population is most in need of housing supports and how many units are required to best support the needs of homeless individuals in Prince County.

Key informants indicated there is a need for emergency shelter, especially for men. In addition to emergency shelter needs, key informants identified that providing adequate supports and supportive housing which leads to long-term housing would be of the greatest benefit to the area.

Long-term supports with intensive case management are needed to provide people with the support they need to get to the root of the issues they are facing that have led them to experience homelessness. This supportive housing with appropriate supports is necessary for both women and men, which might include: mental health and addiction services, income assistance, literacy and numeracy skills, life-skills, job skills, transportation supports and more. Key informants also clearly identified the need for daytime services such as Charlottetown's Community Outreach Centre.

To best support the needs of homeless individuals in the Prince County region, it is recommended that any decision on the type of shelter and number of units be delayed until accurate, quantitative data is made available by the Coordinated Access System and HIFIS 4.0.

If the data from Coordinated Access shows a clear need for emergency shelter and supportive housing for women and women with children in the Summerside area. In that case, it is recommended that the Province of Prince Edward Island partners with the Lifehouse Shelter group and the Boys & Girls Club of Summerside to offer these supports and services.

## NEEDS ANALYSIS OF HOUSING SUPPORTS IN PRINCE COUNTY

Until qualitative data from the Coordinated Access System is available, the Province of PEI should secure scattered-site units in the Prince County region to use for short-term supportive housing to meet immediate demand. These supportive housing units should be provided to individuals meeting yet-to-be-defined criteria and associated with case management supports.

# 8.0 IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

## 8.1 SUPPORT MODEL – SUPPORTIVE HOUSING SCATTERED SITES

It is recommended that the province of Prince Edward Island implement the short-term recommendation of 7.1.1 and offer to move Prince County residents experiencing homelessness into supportive housing.

A growing body of evidence demonstrates that this approach is more likely to result in long-term, stable housing.

Additional services, in the form of one-on-one case management, should be contracted to a local SPO. Visits from case managers should occur up to three times per week.

The SPO would acquire the scattered-site housing units, which could be dispersed among multiple buildings or properties in the Prince County region. A range of housing types from apartments to single-family homes should be considered. This model provides an excellent opportunity to integrate supportive housing units in the general community while maximizing available housing stock to achieve a range of housing types and unit sizes.

A selection criteria, including an assessment process, and involvement of local service providers would need to be developed to support this pilot project.

## 8.2 COSTING

### ASSUMPTIONS

According to the most recent data available from CMHC, the average rent of an apartment in Summerside as of October 2019 is \$821.<sup>6</sup>

A damage deposit equal to one month's rent will be required for each unit.

Clients will receive one hour of case management three times per week for one hour at a time. It is assumed that the cost per hour for case management services is \$20, or \$60 per week.

The average cost of electricity in Prince Edward Island so far in 2020 is \$0.168 per kWh, or \$168 per month, assuming an average monthly usage of 1,000 kWh. It is assumed that all units will be heated by electricity.<sup>7</sup>

A transportation budget of \$50 per week will be provided to each client.

A contingency fund of \$25 per week is included in the calculation to cover unexpected costs, such as snow clearing or damage.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Urban, Ryan. "Energy Prices in Canada 2020." 14 February 2020. *Energy Hub*. Electronic Document. 2 October 2020.

## NEEDS ANALYSIS OF HOUSING SUPPORTS IN PRINCE COUNTY

Table 6: Approximate Per Client Monthly Cost for Scattered Site Supportive Housing in Prince County

Item	Cost (per month)
Rent	\$ 821
Damage deposit	69
Heat	168
Electricity	60
Case management	240
Contingency (e.g. damage, unexpected expenses)	20
Transportation	25
<b>TOTAL PER MONTH PER CLIENT COST</b>	<b>\$ 1,403</b>

The annual per client cost of the scattered-site supportive housing model will be \$16,836. If scattered-site supportive housing is offered to ten clients over 12 months, the approximate cost will be \$168,360.

### 8.3 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

#### **SOCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Clients placed in scattered locations may be eligible for Social Assistance. The funding provided through social assistance could be diverted to cover a portion of the rental cost.

#### **COMMUNITY CAPACITY AND INNOVATION FUNDING STREAM**

Offered through the Government of Canada's Reaching Home strategy, the Rural and Remote Communities Funding Stream provides project funding communities outside the Designated Communities and Territorial Homelessness streams. Eligible projects help to prevent and reduce homelessness in the community. The projects should have broad community support and applicants are encouraged to develop partnerships in the community to maximize the impact of federal funding. Projects selected for funding must not create a dependence on, or expectation for ongoing funding.

#### **COMMUNITY CAPACITY AND INNOVATION FUNDING STREAM**

Offered through the Government of Canada's Reaching Home strategy, the Community Capacity and Innovation Funding Stream supports communities with the implementation of coordinated access.

## APPENDIX A: BIBLIOGRAPHY

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## APPENDIX B: INTERVIEWEES

### KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Andy Lou Somers	East Prince Women's Information Center
Ashley Gillis	Department of Social Development and Housing
Chief Dave Poirier	Summerside Police Services
Danielle Annand	Chief Mary Bernard Memorial Women's Shelter
Darlene MacDonald	Salvation Army
Eddie Rossiter	Christian Outreach Council
Gordie Whitlock	Generation XX
Lee Anne Farrar	Anderson House/PEI Family Violence Prevention Services
Les Wagner	Canadian Mental Health Association
Laurie Ann McCardle	John Howard Society
Lorna Hutt	Community Mental Health and Addictions West
Major Willis Drover	Salvation Army Summerside
Margie Fowler and Susan DesRoches	Boys and Girls Club Summerside
Marvin Clow	Department of Social Development and Housing
Sgt. Neil Logan	East Prince and West Prince RCMP
Shelley Cole	Department of Social Development and Housing
Tracy Craig	St. Eleanor's House
Michael Redmond	Bedford MacDonald House/Emergency Shelter Referral Line

### BEST PRACTICE INTERVIEWS

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Charlotte Dingwall	Salvation Army
Jody Yurkowsky Pace	Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness
Michael MacKenzie, Cathy Boyce, Chris Hopkins	Saint John Human Development Council

## APPENDIX C: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW SUMMARY INFORMATION

The following information is summarized data from the key informant interview process.

Key informants were asked what their organizations involvement is in housing services and the needs of homeless individuals in the Prince County region. See Appendix A for further information on interviewees and their organizations.

Key informants that provide housing in the Prince County region were asked the main issues facing individuals currently staying or wishing to stay at their facility. The main issues facing individuals according to Prince County shelter providers were:

- Issues facing homeless individuals are often complex – it is difficult to pinpoint specific issues because each case is unique and requires a holistic approach
- High prices of housing in the area
- Fleeing family violence
- Addiction
- Mental health issues
- Transportation issues (transportation to and from appointments, work, etc.)
- Isolation and its impact on disconnecting individuals from their support systems

Key informants that provide housing were asked the average length of stay at their facilities, how they define full occupancy, and how many days their organization is at full occupancy. Information on occupancy and stay lengths is contained the table below.

	<b>Type of shelter</b>	<b>Number of beds</b>	<b>Available to</b>	<b>Average length of stay</b>	<b>% occupancy 2019-2020</b>
<b>Chief Mary Bernard Women's Shelter</b>	Emergency	5	Female identifying individuals and their children	34.5 days	-
<b>PEI Family Violence Prevention Services</b>	Short term supportive	3	Female-identifying individuals fleeing violence	1 year	100%
<b>Canadian Mental Health Association</b>	Long term supportive	31	Adults with a primary diagnosis of mental illness	Over one year (long-term)	100%
<b>Community Mental Health and Addictions</b>	Short term supportive	8	Men who have successfully completed a detox program	120 days	95.5%

Key informants were asked to describe and provide information on additional supports and services (other than temporary housing) that their organization provides to individuals in the Prince County



region. Key informants described the following supports and services (other than temporary housing):

- Various workshops (e.g. Women's Employability Program)
- One-on-one case management which includes using a strength-based case management form to assess individual needs
- One-on-one case management, primarily dealing with family violence and court proceedings
- Clubhouse Program – recovery-focused rehabilitation supports for individuals who have experienced mental illness
- Educating individuals at risk of homelessness on available programs
- Refer individuals to appropriate supports and services (e.g. Provincial Housing Navigator)
- Individuals granted access to St. Eleanor's House receive one-on-one counselling and two hours of group therapy per day
- Several churches in the area offer Alcoholics Anonymous and spiritual counselling

Key informants were asked to identify supports and services not offered in the area but that they have identified a need for.

- Lack of emergency shelter in the area (especially for men)
- Lack of supportive housing in the area
- No place for individuals experiencing homelessness to go during the day
- Demand for addiction supports is higher than supply (long waitlists)
- Demand for mental health supports is higher than supply (long waitlists)
- Lack of supports to assist people with things like utility hookups and damage deposits
- Lack of access to methadone treatment in some areas
- Lack of data on homelessness in the area

Key informants were asked to concisely describe case management supports their organization offers in the Prince County region.

- One-on-one case management is offered to individuals staying at the Chief Mary Bernard Women's Shelter and St. Eleanor's House
- PEI Family Violence Prevention Services offers on-on-one confidential case management
- No other interviewees described formal case management
- Some interviewees indicated there was a lack of available case management in the Prince County area

Key informants that offer case management services were asked if individuals in their target population are accessing case management services. Key informants that offer case management indicated that individuals in their target populations are making use of case management supports. However, in most cases, case management is not available for individuals outside of a shelter environment.

Key informants were asked if their organization provides supports and services for those at risk of homelessness. In response to this question, key informants indicated that:

- They usually do not hear from someone until they are homeless/have immediate need

- They will try to connect them to a social worker but oftentimes the system is not quick enough and people fall through the cracks
- Some key informants were limited in what they could do for individuals at risk of homelessness because of program limitations or because assisting individuals at risk of homelessness was not within their mandate
- One key informant indicated that diversion questions are utilized (e.g. is there anywhere else you can stay tonight) to try to keep individuals out of emergency shelter because once an individual is placed in emergency shelter it is difficult to “get out of the system”
- One key informant indicated that many individuals they work with are at risk of homelessness because of a lack of supply of affordable housing
- One key informant attempts to mediate with landlords in order to avoid evictions

Key informants were asked if their organization collects data from individuals seeking temporary housing (or at risk of homelessness) or other supports in the Prince County region.

- One organization provided a list of key data points such as county of origin, occupancy levels, reasons for shelter, etc.
- Three key informants were unable to share their data
- One key informant provided a tally of referrals and a few other metrics
- One key informant provided a rough estimate of the age and country of origin of individuals
- Two key informants expressed concern over data that is currently being collected and stressed the fact that good data is needed to make good decisions on how best to help homeless individuals in Prince County
- One key informant indicated that HIFIS will be a huge benefit for homeless individuals in PEI as it will improve case management and use data to show where targeted investments should be made

Key informants were asked if the needs of homeless people in the Prince County region are currently being met. In response to this question, key informants indicated that:

- Several key informants indicated that the needs of homeless people in the region are not being met because there is a lack of emergency and supportive shelter in the area. However, when asked which populations were most in need or what shelter supports are necessary, key informants did not provide concise answers
- Low availability of housing and high price of housing exasperate already difficult situations
- There is a lack of secure housing in the area
- There are not a lot of “calls” coming from rural areas but oftentimes individuals from rural areas needed to be transported to Charlottetown
- Several key informants indicated that there is a lot of hidden homelessness and individuals living in less than ideal/precarious situations in the Prince County region
- One key informant indicated that the policies of some shelters (e.g. cannot be actively using drugs or alcohol) make it difficult for some in-need individuals

Key informants were asked to describe the main barriers facing homeless people in the Prince County region. In response to this question, key informants indicated that:

- There is a lack of treatment options and access to treatment options for individuals with addictions issues
- There is a lack of treatment options and access to treatment options for individuals with mental health issues
- Lack of available and affordable housing
- Lack of public transportation
- Lack of supportive housing
- Lack of emergency shelter
- Lack of affordable housing supply
- The region could benefit from having someone in a “connector” roll helps individuals find housing and connects them to available supports

Key informants were asked if the needs of homeless individuals in the Prince County region differ from the rest of PEI. Most key informants indicated that the needs of homeless individuals in the Prince County region are similar to the needs of homeless individuals in the rest of Prince Edward Island. Some key respondents indicated there are more pronounced differences between Prince County and Queens County because there is a lack of emergency and supportive housing in Prince County, a lack of public transportation in Prince County, a lack of daytime supports (e.g. Community Outreach Centre in Charlottetown) and less access to mental health and addictions supports in Prince County.

Key informants were asked what gaps in housing supports and case management supports exist in the Prince County region. Key informants indicated that the main gaps in the region were in emergency shelter (specifically for men), supportive housing, affordable housing, access to mental health and addictions supports, and an overall difficulty in coordinating with other shelter and service providers to best serve the needs of individuals with complex needs.

Key informants were asked if gaps in housing supports and case management services differ by population. In response to this question, key informants indicated that:

- It is difficult to find affordable one-bedroom rental units
- It is difficult to find three and four-bedroom rental units for families
- There is a lack of support for men, “men are often forgotten about”
- It is difficult to find housing for youth
- There are many seniors in precarious housing situations

Key informants were how best can the needs of homeless individuals in the Prince County region be met. In response to this question, key informants indicated that the best way to meet the needs of homeless individuals in the Prince County region would be to:

- Create emergency shelter for both men and women
- Create supportive housing for both men and women
- Enhance access to mental health and addictions supports
- Create a position for a youth advocate
- Create daytime programming for homeless individuals and individuals at risk of homelessness

- Implement Coordinated Access and HIFIS 4 to collect data and best meet the needs of homeless individuals
- Identify the root causes of homelessness
- Enhance collaboration between government and community organizations to raise the level of support available