



Homeward Trust

Systems Planning Framework



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Introduction



An integrated and multifaceted approach is essential in the complex landscape of housing stability and homelessness prevention. Addressing the needs of individuals and families at risk of homelessness requires not only immediate interventions but also long-term strategies that span across prevention, support, and community integration.

This Systems Planning Framework document comprehensively overviews the various components, strategies, and interventions contributing to ending homelessness. From early interventions to diverse housing options, from financial literacy support to rent assistance, the Framework recognizes the nuanced and interconnected nature of housing stability. It draws on various program types, sub-types, and even sub-sub-types to present a coherent, inclusive, and context-specific approach to housing and support. The content herein offers detailed definitions and examples tailored to reflect practices relevant to regions such as Edmonton, with the ultimate goal of creating a Housing Plan that meets the unique needs and circumstances of each individual and family.

The Systems Planning Framework puts forth a comprehensive yet nuanced approach to addressing homelessness centred around three vital concepts:

- **Inflow** refers to interventions aimed at prevention by reducing entries into homelessness. This includes robust diversion tactics, early identification of housing instability, and coordinated access to support services before a crisis occurs.
- **Outflow** represents strategies to facilitate successful exits from temporary housing programs into stable, permanent housing. Providing long-term affordable housing options and capacity-building supportive services is essential for sustainable transitions.
- **Optimization** underpins the need to continually refine and enhance system coordination, existing services, resource allocation and integration across sectors. Based on regular evaluation, this optimization ensures strategic responses to this complex challenge.

Collectively addressing Inflow, Outflow and Optimization in a targeted yet collaborative manner is crucial in reducing both the prevalence and duration of homelessness in our communities. Aligned efforts that leverage the strengths of health, justice, social service and affordable housing sectors can create effective, ethical interventions spanning crisis prevention, housing stability, and self-sufficiency.

Inflow, Outflow and Optimization concepts will serve as valuable anchors guiding the remainder of this document. The subsequent sections elucidate how aligned efforts and tailored interventions across these areas can translate shared intentions across sectors into responsive plans and decisive actions. With concerted efforts centred on these pillars, we can foster communities where everyone has a place to call home.

The subsequent sections will delve into these elements, shedding light on a systems approach that strongly emphasizes affordability, support, prevention, and inclusivity within the homelessness response ecosystem. By understanding and leveraging these components, this document aims to empower stakeholders to collaboratively foster housing stability, reduce homelessness, and build resilient communities.

Systems Integration Context

Efforts across healthcare, justice, social services and other systems must align to optimize prevention and crisis response. Improved inflow strategies leverage cross-sectoral collaboration on early interventions and diversion programs to reduce entries into homelessness. Likewise, coordinated case management and transitional support enhance outflow by empowering those exiting homelessness with the tools needed for independent living.

Each of these systems plays a role in the complex issue of homelessness, and any misalignment, failure, or unintended consequences within these systems can contribute to the problem. These broader systems interconnect with homelessness and why an integrated approach is essential.

Homelessness is a multifaceted issue that interacts with numerous systems, including justice, law enforcement, child care, housing, and more. Effective Systems Planning must recognize these complexities and strive for a holistic approach that integrates various systems.

Systems Planning in the context of homelessness cannot be viewed in isolation. Homelessness manifests ecosystem failures in various interconnected systems, such as healthcare, education, housing, employment, and social welfare.

By aligning efforts across these areas, we can create a coordinated and compassionate response that addresses the immediate needs and underlying causes of homelessness. Whether it's reforming laws that inadvertently contribute to homelessness or creating supportive pathways from incarceration to stable housing, these interconnected systems all play vital roles. Collaborative efforts in these domains can lead to more sustainable, humane solutions to homelessness, reflecting a society that genuinely cares for all its members.

System	Impact on Homelessness	Role in Homelessness Efforts
Health	Lack of access to healthcare, mainly primary care services and subsequent access to specialized practitioners (e.g. mental health and addictions clinicians) can lead to a spiral into homelessness.	Coordinated healthcare services can address underlying health issues that contribute to homelessness. Ensuring access to essential healthcare can be a preventive measure against

	<p>Chronic health conditions without proper care can lead to financial strain, job loss, and eventually homelessness.</p>	<p>housing instability.</p>
Education	<p>Lack of education or vocational training can limit employment opportunities, leading to financial instability and the risk of homelessness.</p> <p>Children experiencing homelessness may face barriers to education, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and instability.</p>	<p>Investment in education and vocational training can provide pathways to stable employment and housing.</p> <p>Specialized support for children in homeless situations can break the cycle of poverty.</p>
Employment & Economic Systems	<p>Unemployment or underemployment often leads to financial instability, increasing the risk of homelessness.</p> <p>Economic policies may inadvertently create barriers to affordable housing.</p>	<p>Job assistance programs, vocational training, and supportive employment can help those at risk maintain stable housing.</p> <p>Economic policies must be reviewed to ensure they do not inadvertently increase homelessness.</p>
Social Welfare System	<p>Gaps or failures in social safety nets can leave individuals or families without the support they need, leading to homelessness.</p> <p>Stigmatization or complex bureaucracy may prevent people from accessing the support they are entitled to.</p>	<p>Social welfare programs must be designed with a holistic understanding of the needs of those at risk of homelessness.</p> <p>Streamlining access and reducing stigmatization can ensure support reaches those most need it.</p>
Justice	<p>Incarceration can lead to a loss of housing, employment, and social support, contributing to homelessness upon release.</p> <p>Criminal records may pose barriers to employment and housing, perpetuating homelessness.</p>	<p>Programs that support reentry into society can prevent homelessness among formerly incarcerated individuals.</p> <p>Laws and policies must be reviewed to ensure they do not inadvertently lead to housing instability.</p>
Police & Law Enforcement	<p>Interactions with law enforcement can be traumatic or exacerbate existing issues, impacting a person's ability to exit homelessness.</p> <p>Policies that criminalize homelessness (such as anti-panhandling laws) can create barriers to accessing support.</p>	<p>Training and collaboration between law enforcement and social services can create a more compassionate response to homelessness.</p> <p>Revisiting laws that criminalize homelessness can promote more humane and effective solutions</p>

<p>Child Care</p>	<p>Lack of affordable child care can create financial strain, leading to housing instability for families. Homelessness can disrupt a child's access to stable child care, impacting development and education.</p>	<p>Accessible and affordable child care can support working families in maintaining stable housing. Specialized childcare support for families experiencing homelessness can promote stability and development.</p>
<p>Housing</p>	<p>Lack of affordable housing options is a direct contributor to homelessness. Policies that limit access to housing based on income, disability, or other factors can exacerbate homelessness.</p>	<p>Investment in affordable housing and policies promoting housing access can reduce homelessness directly. Collaboration between housing authorities and homeless support services can create tailored housing solutions.</p>

A Whole-of-Systems Approach

A "whole of community" or "whole of systems" approach represents a holistic and integrated way of addressing complex issues like homelessness. Rather than focusing on isolated interventions or specific domains, this approach emphasizes collaboration, coordination, and shared responsibility across various sectors and levels of society.

Collaboration Across Sectors



Government Agencies: Different government departments, such as housing, healthcare, justice, and social welfare, must work in tandem to address the diverse needs of those experiencing homelessness. Coordination at the policy and implementation levels ensures consistency and efficiency.



Non-Profit and Community Organizations: These bodies bring specialized knowledge and localized insights. Their collaboration with other sectors can lead to tailored interventions that resonate with the specific community's needs and cultural sensitivities.



Private Sector: Engaging businesses can lead to innovative solutions, funding opportunities, and community buy-in. The private sector is crucial in comprehensive solutions, whether through corporate social responsibility initiatives or public-private partnerships.



Citizens and Grassroots Movements: Community members provide insights into the local context and can advocate for policies and solutions that reflect the community's unique needs and values.



Healthcare: Healthcare providers across the entire spectrum of services (from primary care to institutionalized care) must recognize poverty and homelessness as more than social determinants of health that impact healthcare outcomes. Recognizing that comprehensive health services will contribute to an individual's ability to avoid or resolve their homelessness expands the positive impact of healthcare beyond mortality and morbidity relating to disease.



Justice: Law enforcement and other correctional services need to be aware of the impact of criminalizing poverty on perpetuating the cycle of homelessness. Community Safety and Well-being should not be oppositional to the efforts of individuals attempting to break the cycle of poverty and homelessness.



Recovery Oriented System of Care: Alberta's Recovery Oriented System of Care (ROSC) is aligned with housing first principles in providing long-term solutions to homelessness. The components of this system framework apply to all individuals at risk of homelessness, and a dedicated treatment stream targeted to address substance misuse is an essential contributor to stable housing.

Coordination and Shared Responsibility	Impact on Homelessness
<p>Shared Goals and Values: Establishing a common understanding of the issue and aligning on overarching goals ensures that all players work towards the same outcomes.</p> <p>Integrated Planning and Implementation: Joint planning and coordinated implementation ensure that resources are used efficiently and interventions are complementary, not contradictory.</p> <p>Data Sharing and Communication: Transparent communication and data sharing across sectors enable real-time learning and adjustments, enhancing the effectiveness of interventions.</p>	<p>Comprehensive Solutions: By drawing on the expertise and resources of various sectors, this approach leads to multi-dimensional solutions that address both immediate needs and underlying causes.</p> <p>Sustainability: Shared ownership and continuous collaboration foster sustainable strategies that adapt to changing community needs and dynamics.</p> <p>Community Empowerment: Involving the community in decision-making empowers residents and fosters a sense of collective responsibility.</p>

Integration Mechanisms

Addressing homelessness requires aligning and collaborating with various sectors and systems, each with unique complexities. Creating a functional mechanism to facilitate this collaboration is essential to harness the collective potential of different entities and translate it into actionable solutions.

Complexity of Collaborating Across Systems



Competing Priorities: Different systems may have conflicting goals and interests, making alignment challenging. A dedicated mechanism can help prioritize overarching objectives while maintaining individual system goals.



Cultural Differences: Organizations across sectors may have varying organizational cultures, values, and working methods. A well-designed mechanism must foster an environment where these differences are acknowledged and leveraged rather than becoming barriers.



Resource Allocation: The distribution of resources may not be uniform across systems, leading to disparities and tension. An effective mechanism should ensure fair allocation and optimal utilization of resources.



Objective Alignment: Aligning objectives across systems with diverse missions and visions requires careful planning and compromise. The mechanism must facilitate this alignment to achieve common goals.



Tension Management: Inherent tensions between sectors, such as the private sector's profit motives and the social welfare goals of non-profits, must be managed through thoughtful diplomacy and negotiation.

Components of an Effective Mechanism



Clear Accountability Structure: A well-defined governance structure sets roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes. It fosters accountability and provides a framework for resolving disputes.



Aligned Mission: Recognizing that although different sectors and partners have unique priorities and specializations, there is a shared understanding and alignment that the outcome of preventing and ending homelessness benefits all systems, and thus, collaboration and shared resources are to the benefit of the entire community.



Shared Vision and Strategy: Collaboratively developing and agreeing on a shared vision ensures that all parties work towards the same ends, reducing conflicts and fostering unity.



Communication Platforms: Effective communication channels enable transparency, build trust, and ensure all parties are informed and engaged.



Flexible Framework: Recognizing that each system is dynamic, the mechanism should allow flexibility and adaptability to changing needs, priorities, and insights.



Monitoring and Evaluation Tools: Regular monitoring and evaluation ensure the collaboration is on track and allows for necessary adjustments and improvements.

Role of the Systems Planning Framework

The Systems Planning Framework is crucial for constructing integration mechanisms within the housing stability and homelessness prevention landscape. It provides a comprehensive roadmap that guides the alignment, coordination, and collaboration of various systems and stakeholders. Here's how the Framework functions as the basis for building integration mechanisms:

Facilitating a Shared Understanding

The Framework's detailed overview of various components, strategies, and interventions encourages a shared understanding among stakeholders. Defining standard terms, concepts, and practices bridges the gap between different sectors and enables a more cohesive approach. This shared understanding is essential for building collaborative relationships and facilitating seamless integration.

Aligning Objectives and Strategies

The Framework helps align diverse objectives and strategies across sectors through its comprehensive and context-specific presentation. It offers a clear direction that guides all stakeholders, ensuring that individual efforts contribute to the collective goal of ending homelessness. This alignment is a foundation for collaboration, allowing disparate entities to work together toward joint ends.

Enabling Coordination and Collaboration

The Framework emphasizes the interconnected nature of housing stability and lays a pathway for coordinated efforts. By highlighting the relationship between different elements, it provides a blueprint for how various interventions can be effectively integrated and coordinated. This helps stakeholders identify points of connection and opportunities for collaboration, fostering a more integrated and responsive system.

Providing a Flexible and Adaptable Model

Recognizing the dynamic nature of homelessness and housing stability, the Framework offers a flexible model tailored to specific regional contexts. It allows customization to meet individual communities' unique needs and circumstances, ensuring that integration mechanisms are relevant and practical.

Enhancing Monitoring and Evaluation

By presenting a coherent approach, the Framework also supports the development of robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. It provides a baseline for assessing progress, effectiveness, and impact. By defining what success looks like and outlining how it can be achieved, the Framework enables ongoing improvements and adaptability, ensuring that integration mechanisms remain effective over time.

Fostering Cross-Sector Engagement

The Framework's inclusive approach encourages engagement across sectors, including justice, police, child care, housing, and more. Recognizing the role of these various systems and how they interact with homelessness lays the groundwork for building cross-sector integration mechanisms and creating a comprehensive response.

The Systems Planning Framework is pivotal in building integration mechanisms to address homelessness. It's a document and a living guide that empowers stakeholders to work together cohesively and synergistically, reflecting the complexities and nuances of homelessness prevention and response.

By leveraging the principles and structures outlined in the Framework, communities can build integration mechanisms that are both robust and responsive, translating theoretical understanding into practical solutions for ending homelessness.

Foundational Concepts

The Systems Planning Framework presents a comprehensive approach to addressing homelessness through three core concepts: Inflow, Optimization, and Outflow. These concepts are fundamental in the fight against homelessness and essential to any holistic system intending to provide prevention and solutions.

The three foundational concepts of inflow, outflow and optimization underscore the importance of a holistic and integrated system to meet the needs of those at risk of or experiencing homelessness. Well-designed interventions spanning prevention, diversion, housing stability and capacity-building collectively ensure that individuals receive timely and appropriate aid. Fine-tuned collaboration across sectors enhances the efficiency and impact of these measures.

By understanding the dynamics that lead to homelessness (Inflow), enhancing the effectiveness of interventions (Optimization), and facilitating stable housing transitions (Outflow), this three-fold approach forms a robust system. Such a system is essential to creating resilient communities where homelessness is managed, actively reduced, and prevented. These elements collectively ensure that the unique and complex needs of those at risk of or experiencing homelessness are met with empathy, efficiency, and effectiveness.



Homelessness Prevention & Response Ecosystem



Inflow

Inflow refers to the strategies and interventions designed to prevent or minimize the number of individuals or families entering homelessness. It is a foundational part of any system that aims to address homelessness at its roots.

Role in Homelessness:

By implementing early interventions and diversion programs, inflow strategies focus on preventing homelessness before it occurs, addressing underlying causes such as financial instability or family conflict. The aim here is to divert individuals and families from entering the homeless system by identifying alternate housing options and providing support like family mediation, financial assistance, or connection to social services. This proactive approach reduces the strain on homeless shelters and services and minimizes the traumatic experience of becoming homeless.

Inflow strategies play a vital role in preventing or minimizing the number of individuals or families entering homelessness. By leveraging the synergies between Health, Education, Employment & Economic, Social Support, Justice, Police & Law Enforcement, Child Care, and Housing systems, a multi-faceted approach to prevention and diversion can be achieved. This integrated effort recognizes that homelessness often manifests various ecosystem failures or unintended consequences across these systems. Thus, a collaborative and coordinated effort is essential in creating a robust and resilient community that actively works to prevent homelessness.



Optimization

Optimization is about enhancing the efficiency, effectiveness, or performance of the homeless-serving system's systems, programs, or services. It's essential to ensure that the resources are utilized most effectively.

Role in Homelessness:

Optimization ensures that services are delivered in the most cost-effective and impactful manner by evaluating and adjusting strategies, catering to the unique needs of individuals and families at risk.

Optimization involves tailoring interventions and services to meet diverse needs, often by creating specialized services that augment existing services in the homeless-serving system. This

ensures that individuals receive the appropriate level and type of support. This targeted approach maximizes success rates in preventing or reducing homelessness.

From a whole-of-systems standpoint, **Optimization** is vital in enhancing the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the systems, programs, and services to prevent and alleviate homelessness. By recognizing the unique needs and circumstances of those at risk of or experiencing homelessness, the Optimization of systems results in specialized program design that often integrates different service streams (for example, integration of health or financial systems within more conventional social service), and this results in either particular program design or in supportive programming that serves to catalyze the successes of the homeless-serving sector at large.



Outflow

Outflow focuses on facilitating exits from homelessness into stable, permanent housing. Ensuring that individuals or families experiencing homelessness can move toward stability and self-sufficiency is critical.

Role in Homelessness:

Housing Stability: Outflow strategies encompass various housing models and support services tailored to individual needs, ensuring a smooth transition from homelessness to stable housing.

Comprehensive Support: This component integrates interventions and services like the development of basic skills, job training, financial literacy, and coordination of health services, creating a supportive environment that not only provides housing but helps individuals maintain it.

Outflow strategies are essential in ensuring that individuals and families experiencing homelessness can successfully transition into stable, permanent housing by providing tailored supports and interventions that are right-sized to a person's level of need. Program interventions focusing on outflow often design programs that encompass various systems, including Health, Education, Employment & Economic Systems, Social Welfare, Justice, Police & Law Enforcement, Child Care, and Housing; this multifaceted approach recognizes the complex and interconnected nature of housing stability and requires a comprehensive, integrated effort to build resilient communities where homelessness is actively resolved. It acknowledges the need for tailored support that addresses individual needs, enhancing the overall effectiveness of the homelessness response ecosystem.

Inflow, Optimization, and Outflow form a cohesive framework that addresses homelessness from prevention to resolution. By understanding the dynamics that lead to homelessness (Inflow), enhancing the effectiveness of interventions (Optimization), and facilitating stable housing transitions (Outflow),

this three-fold approach forms a robust system. Such a system is essential to creating resilient communities where homelessness is managed, actively reduced, and prevented. These elements collectively ensure that the unique and complex needs of those at risk of or experiencing homelessness are met with empathy, efficiency, and effectiveness.

System	Inflow	Outflow	Optimization
Health	<p>Prevention of Health-Related Homelessness: Offering appropriate medical care, including mental health support and addiction services, to prevent homelessness stemming from health crises.</p> <p>Early Intervention for At-Risk Individuals: Providing coaching and support to individuals showing early signs of health issues that, left unchecked, might lead to poor health and housing instability.</p> <p>Collaboration with Other Services: Working with other support systems to ensure a holistic approach to health-related housing concerns.</p>	<p>Ongoing Medical Support: Connecting each individual to appropriate medical supports and a primary care medical home to coordinate ongoing healthcare needs.</p> <p>Recovery Programs: Offering tailored recovery and occupational therapy supports to help individuals transition from homelessness to independent living.</p>	<p>Tailoring Healthcare Services: Customizing medical and mental health services to meet the unique needs of individuals experiencing homelessness.</p> <p>Coordinating Care: Facilitating collaboration between healthcare providers and other support services to ensure integrated and comprehensive care.</p>
Education	<p>Awareness and Skill Building: Educating individuals and communities about homelessness prevention, personal finance, and life skills to foster resilience.</p> <p>Targeted Support for At-Risk Populations: Implementing educational programs for those at higher risk of homelessness, such as youth and low-income families.</p> <p>Collaborative Efforts with Social Services: Aligning educational initiatives with social welfare programs to</p>	<p>Skill Development for Employment: Facilitating vocational training and education to equip individuals with the skills needed to gain and retain employment, promoting housing stability.</p> <p>Life Skills Education: Teaching essential life skills, such as budgeting and self-care, to support the transition to independent living.</p>	<p>Educational Opportunities for Homeless Populations: Providing specialized academic programs that cater to the needs of individuals in transitional housing.</p> <p>Collaboration with Support Services: Ensuring educational institutions are aligned with other supportive services for a cohesive approach to homelessness prevention and intervention.</p>

	create a cohesive prevention strategy.		
Employment & Economic Systems	<p>Employment Opportunities: Providing job training, placement, and support to ensure stable employment, thus reducing the risk of homelessness.</p> <p>Financial Support and Literacy: Offering financial literacy training and support to help individuals and families manage their finances effectively.</p> <p>Economic Policies: Implementing policies that promote economic stability and growth, indirectly preventing homelessness by fostering a robust economic environment.</p>	<p>Job Placement and Support: Collaborating with employers to create opportunities for previously homeless individuals, ensuring a smooth transition to the workforce.</p> <p>Financial Counseling and Assistance: Providing financial planning, budgeting, and assistance to enable stable living conditions.</p>	<p>Workforce Development: Creating targeted employment programs that prepare individuals experiencing homelessness for the workforce.</p> <p>Economic Policy Alignment: Aligning economic policies with homelessness strategies to ensure support for affordable housing and job opportunities.</p>
Social Assistance	<p>Essential Needs Assistance: In supplying food, clothing, and other essential needs to prevent immediate homelessness. Connecting individuals to appropriate social service supports and benefits so that they can engage with the housing process.</p> <p>Targeted Interventions for Vulnerable Populations: Creating tailored programs for those most at risk, such as individuals with disabilities, the elderly, or those in poverty.</p> <p>Collaboration with Health and Employment Systems: Coordinating with other support systems to create a comprehensive safety net.</p>	<p>Sustained Support Programs: Extending ongoing social welfare benefits ensures that individuals and families transitioning from homelessness receive the necessary support.</p> <p>Coordination with Housing Programs: Collaborating with housing agencies to provide a smooth transition to permanent housing.</p>	<p>Benefits Coordination: Ensuring seamless delivery of social welfare benefits to those at risk of or experiencing homelessness.</p> <p>Policy Integration: Integrating policies and programs to enhance support for those needing housing assistance.</p>

<p>Justice</p>	<p>Fair Legal Practices: Ensuring that legal systems do not disproportionately lead individuals into homelessness through excessive fines or discriminatory practices.</p> <p>Diversion Programs: Implementing diversion programs that prevent individuals from entering the criminal justice system, a common pathway into homelessness.</p> <p>Legal Support for At-Risk Populations: Offering legal aid and support for those facing housing instability.</p>	<p>Legal Aid and Support: Assisting with legal issues that may hinder obtaining or maintaining housing, such as previous criminal records or tenant disputes.</p> <p>Reintegration Programs & Discharge Planning: Developing programs to support the reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals into society, reducing their risk of returning to homelessness.</p>	<p>Legal Support Alignment: Coordinating legal support with other services to ensure a holistic approach to homelessness intervention.</p> <p>Diversion Programs: Implementing diversion programs that integrate with other support systems to reduce the risk of homelessness among those involved with the justice system.</p>
<p>Police & Law Enforcement</p>	<p>Community Policing: Building community trust and offering support in collaboration with other social services to prevent homelessness.</p> <p>Crisis Intervention: Training in crisis intervention to assist individuals at the brink of homelessness, diverting them to appropriate support services.</p>	<p>Community Reintegration Support: Collaborating with other community services to support the reintegration of previously homeless individuals, ensuring a supportive environment.</p> <p>Protection of Rights: Upholding the legal rights and protections of those transitioning from homelessness, fostering a sense of safety and community belonging.</p>	<p>Crisis Intervention Training: Training officers in crisis intervention to handle cases involving homelessness empathetically.</p> <p>Community Policing Strategies: Implementing community policing strategies that align with homelessness prevention and intervention efforts.</p>
<p>Child Care</p>	<p>Financial Burden Reduction: Providing affordable child care services to reduce the financial strain on families, preventing housing instability.</p> <p>Support for Single Parents and Vulnerable Families: Targeted support to those most at risk</p>	<p>Affordable Child Care: Offering affordable child care options to support working parents, easing their transition to stable housing and employment.</p> <p>Support for Families:</p>	<p>Child Care for Homeless Families: Providing specialized child care services that cater to the needs of homeless families.</p> <p>Integration with Family Support Services: Ensuring child care services are</p>

	of homelessness due to child care responsibilities.	Providing specialized support and services for families transitioning from homelessness, ensuring their children’s needs are met.	aligned with other family support programs, contributing to the overall stability of families.
Housing	<p>Affordable Housing Initiatives: Creating and sustaining affordable housing options to prevent homelessness among low-income individuals and families.</p> <p>Rent Assistance and Housing Policies: Implementing rent assistance programs and housing policies that prioritize the prevention of homelessness.</p> <p>Collaboration with Other Systems: Working with other support systems to provide comprehensive housing support tailored to individual needs.</p>	<p>Provision of Stable Housing: Facilitating access to affordable, stable housing that meets the individual needs of those exiting homelessness.</p> <p>Housing First Initiatives: Implementing Housing First models that prioritize getting individuals into stable housing, with ongoing support as needed.</p> <p>Integration with Supportive Services: Coordinating with supportive services such as mental health care, employment assistance, and addiction support to ensure holistic care.</p>	<p>Housing Strategies Alignment: Aligning housing programs with other support services to ensure a comprehensive approach to housing stability.</p> <p>Affordable Housing Policy Coordination: Coordinating policies across various agencies to enhance the availability and affordability of housing.</p>

The Systems Planner Organization

The need for a specialized systems planner organization to address homelessness arises from the complex and multifaceted nature of the issue. This organization plays a unique and critical role in distinguishing it from other entities within various systems such as health, education, justice, and housing. Here's an exploration of why the systems planner organization is indispensable and what sets them apart:

The role of the Systems Planner Organization within the context of homelessness can be likened to a quarterback in a football game, orchestrating the plays and strategies without direct authority over the

other players. In this framework, the systems planner's role extends to Inflow, Outflow, and Optimization calibration.

Through a blend of data expertise, relationship building, strategic funding allocation, and a deep understanding of the interconnected systems, the SPO ensures that strategies are aligned, interventions are tailored, and resources are optimally utilized. This calibration function is essential in creating a cohesive, effective, and empathetic approach to ending homelessness, acting as a unifying force that brings various components and systems together for a common goal.

Calibration in Inflow

Inflow involves strategies and interventions to prevent or minimize homelessness, the systems planner organization acts as a calibrator by

- **Aligning Strategies:** Ensuring that prevention and diversion strategies across various systems like health, education, and social welfare are harmonized to produce consistent results.
- **Data Utilization:** Leveraging data and planning expertise to identify trends, risk factors, and early signs of housing instability, enabling more precise interventions.
- **Collaboration and Relationship Building:** Facilitating collaboration among various systems, leveraging relationships to foster a cohesive approach, and addressing underlying causes of homelessness.

Calibration in Outflow

The Outflow focus is on facilitating exits from homelessness into stable housing; the systems planner organization's calibration role includes:

- **Coordinating Support Services:** Ensuring that housing models, support services, and interventions are aligned to the unique needs of individuals and families, creating a smooth transition into stable living.
- **Monitoring and Adjusting:** Utilizing data systems to monitor the success of Outflow strategies and making necessary adjustments to align with best practices and individual needs.
- **Resource Allocation:** Using available funding to facilitate targeted support, ensuring that resources are directed where they are most needed.

Calibration in Optimization

Optimization centers on enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the system; the calibration role of the systems planner organization encompasses:

- **Tailoring Interventions:** Adjusting programs and services to meet diverse needs, thereby maximizing success rates in preventing or reducing homelessness.

- **Performance Evaluation:** Regularly assess and fine-tune the performance of various services and strategies, ensuring they are delivered most effectively.
- **Cross-System Integration:** Aligning and integrating various systems such as justice, police, child care, and housing to provide a coordinated response to homelessness.

SPO Value-Add



Comprehensive Understanding

Unlike individual systems that may focus on specific aspects of homelessness, the systems planner organization has a broad understanding of the entire ecosystem. They recognize the interconnected nature of different systems and how they contribute to or alleviate homelessness.



Data and Systems Planning Expertise

This organization specializes in data analysis and systems planning, enabling them to identify trends and risk factors and leverage data-driven insights. They can diagnose system failures or inefficiencies that might be less visible to those embedded within a specific sector.



Cross-System Collaboration

The systems planner organization acts as a bridge between various systems, facilitating collaboration and integration. They can negotiate and navigate the competing priorities, different cultures, resources, and objectives that may exist across systems, fostering a more cohesive approach.



Flexibility and Adaptability

Without direct authority but equipped with strategic funding and relationships, SPOs can have the flexibility to adapt strategies and calibrate interventions across Inflow, Outflow, and Optimization. This distinct position enables us to act responsively and innovatively.



Neutral and Unbiased Position

As an entity not aligned with any specific system or sector, the systems planner organization can maintain a neutral and unbiased position. This impartiality enables them to make decisions and recommendations in the best interest of ending homelessness without being swayed by individual system biases.



Relationship Building and Networking

The role involves building and maintaining relationships with various stakeholders across different systems. This network enables us to bring together diverse perspectives and facilitate collaboration and alignment, something individual systems might struggle with due to competing interests.

The systems planner organization's distinct role stems from a comprehensive understanding, data and planning expertise, and the ability to foster collaboration, flexibility, neutrality, and extensive networking. Being uniquely positioned to orchestrate a coherent and integrated approach to ending homelessness, bridging gaps, aligning strategies, and ensuring that the complex needs of those at risk are met with empathy and efficiency. Lacking this focus, efforts to combat homelessness might remain fragmented and less effective, lacking the holistic perspective and coordination only a dedicated systems planner can provide.

SPO Capabilities & Accountability

The Systems Planner Organization's core capabilities in data analysis, strategic planning, relationship management, and funding and accountabilities in outcome measurement, quality assurance, and financial stewardship make it an essential entity in the homelessness landscape.

Responsibilities encompass inclusive planning, calibration, cross-system collaboration, and advocacy, reflecting a comprehensive and integrative approach. Through these capabilities, accountabilities, and responsibilities, the SPO functions as a linchpin, guiding and unifying efforts to build resilient communities where homelessness is actively reduced and prevented.

Core Capabilities	Accountabilities	Responsibilities
<p>Data Analysis and Insight Generation:</p> <p>Analyzing data from various systems to identify trends, gaps, and opportunities.</p> <p>Generating insights that guide decision-making and strategic planning.</p> <p>Strategic Planning and Coordination:</p> <p>Designing and implementing a</p>	<p>Outcome Measurement and Reporting:</p> <p>Tracking and evaluating the success of interventions. Reporting progress to stakeholders, ensuring transparency and accountability.</p> <p>Quality Assurance and Compliance:</p> <p>Ensure strategies and interventions adhere to</p>	<p>Inclusive and Context-Specific Planning:</p> <p>Tailoring strategies to meet different regions and populations' unique needs and circumstances.</p> <p>Ensuring an inclusive approach that considers diverse perspectives and needs.</p> <p>Calibration across Inflow, Outflow, and Optimization:</p> <p>Playing a balancing role in adjusting</p>

<p>systems planning framework.</p> <p>Coordinating efforts across various health, justice, housing, and education sectors.</p> <p>Relationship Management:</p> <p>Building and maintaining relationships with diverse stakeholders.</p> <p>Facilitating collaboration and alignment across different systems.</p> <p>Funding Allocation and Oversight:</p> <p>Managing and allocating funds to support interventions and strategies.</p> <p>Monitoring the effective utilization of resources.</p>	<p>relevant regulations, standards, and best practices. Maintaining quality control and compliance within the planning framework.</p> <p>Financial Stewardship:</p> <p>Ensuring prudent management of funds and resources. Holding parties accountable for the responsible use of allocated funds.</p>	<p>and aligning interventions across these critical areas. Ensuring a coherent and integrated approach to homelessness prevention and resolution.</p> <p>Facilitating Cross-System Collaboration:</p> <p>Actively working to overcome barriers between different systems. Encouraging cooperation, communication, and mutual understanding. Advocacy and Awareness:</p> <p>Promoting awareness of homelessness issues. Advocating for policies, support, and interventions that align to end homelessness.</p>
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Dual Role As CBO & CE

Homeward Trust's role as a Systems Planner Organization extends further due to their legal and contractual obligations as the Community Entity for Infrastructure Canada's Reaching Home program and as a Community-Based Organization for the Government of Alberta. These designations place Homeward Trust in a unique position of influence and responsibility within the homelessness prevention ecosystem, granting them specific powers and obligations.

Community Entity for Infrastructure Canada - Reaching Home:

Reaching Home is a national strategy to prevent and reduce homelessness across Canada. As the Community Entity for this initiative, Homeward Trust has the following key responsibilities:

Program Implementation and Oversight:

- Designing and managing community-based projects and interventions aligned with the Reaching Home objectives.
- Overseeing the proper execution of programs and ensuring compliance with national guidelines and goals.

Funding Allocation and Management:

- Distributing federal funds to local projects and services.
- Ensuring financial accountability and the effective utilization of allocated resources.

Community Engagement and Collaboration:

- Fostering local collaboration by engaging various stakeholders, including nonprofits, government bodies, and private sectors.
- Facilitating community-based solutions and strategies to address homelessness.

Reporting and Evaluation:

- Regularly monitor and assess the performance of funded initiatives.
- Providing transparent reporting to Infrastructure Canada on the progress and impact of the Reaching Home initiative in the local community.

Community-Based Organization for the Government of Alberta:

As a Community-Based Organization working with the Government of Alberta, Homeward Trust engages in a more region-specific approach to homelessness. This role includes

Policy Alignment and Integration:

- Collaborating with provincial authorities to align local interventions with Alberta's homelessness reduction goals and strategies.
- Integrating local insights and experiences into broader provincial policy development.

Service Coordination and Delivery:

- Coordinating and providing services tailored to the unique needs of the Alberta community.
- Managing and evaluating programs to ensure their efficiency and effectiveness in meeting local needs.

Advocacy and Support:

- Advocating for provincial policies and support that resonate with the community's specific challenges and opportunities.

Acting as a bridge between local needs and provincial policy-making. Homeward Trust's dual role as the Community Entity for Infrastructure Canada's Reaching Home program and a Community-Based Organization for the Government of Alberta enhances their influence, accountability, and capacity in the fight against homelessness. These legal and contractual obligations empower Homeward Trust to act at national and provincial levels, driving community-specific strategies while aligning with broader governmental goals. Their multidimensional role underscores the complexity and significance of Homeward Trust's contributions to building a coordinated, effective, and compassionate response to homelessness.

Program Classification

In the effort to refine the understanding of various interventions within the homelessness prevention and response ecosystem, particularly for Edmonton, there is a need to describe these interventions consistently and coherently. Creating an ontology that is region-specific yet translatable across different systems and regions is essential. This ontology is a foundational tool to standardize terminology, classifications, and definitions, facilitating better communication, collaboration, and effectiveness.

In this context, an ontology functions like a dictionary of definitions, categorizing various interventions and strategies in a structured, consistent manner. It's not just about creating a glossary but defining concepts, relationships, and rules that provide a common understanding across various stakeholders and systems.

Developing an ontology for homelessness interventions in Edmonton is a strategic move towards a more coordinated, clear, and responsive approach to homelessness prevention. It standardizes the language and understanding across various systems and stakeholders by serving as a dictionary of definitions. This facilitates better collaboration and ensures the interventions are tailored to the local context while being adaptable across regions. Such a consistent framework is pivotal in advancing the collective effort to end homelessness, reflecting the complexity and interconnectedness of the challenge.

Homeward Trust adheres to the [Compass Ontology](#) developed by HelpSeeker Technologies and the University of Toronto, an open-source resource. An ontology is a formal representation of knowledge within a domain, typically including

*Types of entities that exist in the domain,
Properties of those entities,
Relationships between the entities,
Rules and axioms that govern the domain*

The Compass Ontology is novel in its development being specific to the social sector.

Benefits of Shared Conceptual Framework & Definitions



Enhanced Collaboration and Communication: By providing consistent terminology and definitions, an ontology helps different stakeholders speak the same language, facilitating better collaboration and communication.



Interoperability Across Systems and Regions: Although tailored to Edmonton's unique context, the ontology can be designed to allow translation between different systems and regions. This flexibility ensures that strategies and insights can be shared and adapted.



Improved Decision-Making and Planning: A well-defined ontology aids in clearer understanding and categorizing interventions, assisting planners, policymakers, and practitioners in making informed and targeted decisions.



Alignment with Local Needs and Perspectives: By creating an ontology that makes sense for Edmonton, it ensures that local nuances, culture, and specific challenges are reflected in the terminology and categorizations. This alignment with the local context enhances the relevance and effectiveness of interventions.

Implementation Considerations



Stakeholder Engagement: Involving various stakeholders in the development of the ontology ensures that it reflects diverse perspectives and needs.



Flexibility and Adaptability: While consistency is key, the ontology should be designed with the flexibility to evolve and adapt to changing contexts and insights.



Integration with Existing Systems: Consideration must be given to how the ontology integrates with existing systems and practices, ensuring a smooth transition and uptake.

Ontology Concepts

Types of Entities:

Formal classifications of key elements in homelessness prevention and response such as different housing models (e.g. permanent supportive housing, transitional housing), interventions (e.g. coordinated access, diversion programs), health/social services (e.g. mental health treatment, case management), and financial assistance.

Properties of Entities:

Attributes that characterize entities like eligibility criteria for housing programs, program duration limits, level of support provided, health conditions addressed by a service, restrictions on financial assistance, etc.

Relationships:

Conceptual links between entities that define how they are associated or interact, such as a "housing support service satisfies the housing stability need" or "this training program enables improved employability."

Key Entities

Based on how these terms are typically used in the context of homelessness interventions, here are definitions differentiating programs, services and system components:

Program: An organized set of coordinated activities and resources offered on a regular basis by an agency to achieve intended aims regarding homelessness for a target population. It has more structure than one-off services with an emphasis on continuity.

Service: A specific assistance, support, resource or intervention offered to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness - either as a one-time activity or on an ongoing basis. The scope of a service is narrower than an entire program.

Examples differentiating the two terms:

Addiction Recovery Program
Housing Counseling Service

System Component:

Constituent elements that collectively make up the overall ecosystem of homelessness prevention and response within a region, encompassing various programs, services, providers and sectors. System components align to contribute to the functioning of the whole.

Examples of system components:

Affordable Housing Inventory
Coordinated Entry System
Healthcare Providers
Community-based Organizations

So in essence:

A program delivers organized bundles of activities and resources
A service offers specific assistance and interventions
System components interact to enable delivery of programs and services
The focus differs, but the three concepts are interdependent in addressing homelessness.

Key dimensions of Entities (Programs, Services & System Component).

Duration of support: The intended length of time an individual or family can access the program or housing option, ranging from:

- Temporary (less than 3 months typically)
- Transitional (up to 24 months typically)
- Long Term (more than 2 years, no pre-defined limit)

Level of support: The intensity and availability of individualized services and staffing provided, including:

- Low Support (access to occasional case manager check-ins and referrals)
- Moderate Support (regular meetings with case managers, some on-site programming/services)
- High Support (24/7 staff availability, wide range of in-house services and healthcare)

Level of independence: Refers to the degree of self-sufficiency expected of tenants regarding managing everyday living tasks independently without staff interventions, including:

- Independent (ability to manage food, cleaning, budgeting autonomously)
- Semi-Independent (may need occasional guidance with tasks)
- Support-Requiring (needs direct assistance with household activities)

Target population: The primary intended beneficiary group the housing/support program aims to serve, such as:

- Singles adults
- Families with children
- Youth/Young adults
- People with physical disabilities
- People dealing with addiction/recovery needs

Access model: The approach or system used to connect individuals to the housing/programs available, which could be:

- Centralized/Coordinated (common application, eligibility, and referral mechanism)
- Transitional (for those leaving controlled institutional settings)
- Emergency/Temporary (focused on providing crisis stabilization options)

System Components

Rationale For Classification

Various system components can be oriented to primarily impact Inflow, Outflow, or Optimize the overall functioning of the homelessness intervention system. It's important to explicitly determine classifications of system components within an inflow/outflow/optimization framework and acknowledge the fluidity of these assignments for a few reasons:

- 1. Guides Investment Prioritization:** Articulating intended positioning sensitize leaders to target funding into capability gaps preventing balanced system development. It steers strategic roadmaps, avoiding siloed investments leaning into one vector disproportionately without scaffolding along other dimensions.
- 2. Concentrates Innovation Efforts:** Calling out archetypal roles that have already contributed in a particular plane aids in establishing improvement priorities. Declaring strengths provides a license for teams to ideate on less evident opportunities to pilot advances elsewhere once the archetypal status is granted. This catalyzes innovation momentum.
- 3. Commits Progress Tracking:** Documenting intent and classifications provides fixed goalposts of where the solution must progress. This enables tracking maturity advances within and across prevention, stabilization and efficiency capabilities as the underserved move towards permanent, stable housing via transitional pathways.
- 4. Alerts on Risk Factors:** Modelling components as primarily geared today towards inflow vs outflow of homelessness provides leading indicators on potential risk exposures over cranking efforts in one plane can generate. For example, overinvesting in affordable housing stock without corresponding support services risks tenancy failures. But balanced approaches de-risk at scale implementations.
- 5. Allows Customization:** No two communities share identical homelessness catalysts. Making design choices transparent aids the localization of strategic responses, selecting optimal assembly of approaches - such as affordable housing incentives vs temporary shelter access expansion - based on context.

It is important to clarify why components have the potential to serve all three functions of managing inflow, enabling outflow, and optimizing system operations in the context of addressing homelessness:

- 6. Dynamic Nature of System Maturation:** As the homelessness response system evolves in sophistication, capacities get enhanced allowing components to stretch across functions. For example, once an adequate, affordable housing supply is available, it can divert inflows in addition to its current outflow role.
- 7. Interdependency of Goals:** Reducing inflow, enabling outflow, and optimization have interlinked causal relationships. Enhancing one supports the progress of others indirectly. For example, optimized data systems that currently coordinate care can also flag risk factors that proactively minimize inflow with analytical maturity.
- 8. Resource Flexibility:** In a resource-constrained environment, components adapt as required to play multiple roles temporarily based on urgency. For instance, recovery housing may fill a temporary accommodation role for inflow diversion besides preparing individuals for outflow.

- 9. Scaling Enables Function Expansion:** As interventions are sufficiently funded, tested, standardized, and expanded, they accumulate additional functions while retaining their primary capability. Temporary shelters can take on transitional housing duties when scaled adequately.

In essence, the situational adaptability, goal interrelationships and scalar transformation capacities innate to complex sociotechnical systems like homeless response enable components to take on dynamic roles as supplemental or expanded functionalities. This aligns with the cumulative manner in which systemic maturity manifests across prevention, recovery and coordination capabilities.

Component Classification

Inflow-Oriented Components

Components like Homelessness Prevention, Diversion, Transitional Housing, Affordable Housing, and Encampment Responses directly target system Inflow. By preventing housing displacements, resolving crises early, temporarily accommodating those unstable, expanding long-term affordable housing, and addressing unsheltered homelessness, these measures minimize entries and funnelling into chronic homelessness.

These efforts focused on prevention seek to foster an environment where fewer individuals fall into homelessness in the first place:

- **Affordable Housing:** Increasing availability of subsidized and low-barrier housing enhances access to permanent solutions.
- **Early Intervention Services:** Proactive assistance to resolve housing crises before displacement occurs.
- **Temporary Accommodation:** Short-term shelters or housing that act as a stopgap when crises cannot be averted, preventing entry into homelessness or unsheltered situations.

Outflow-Oriented Components

Components like Housing First, Supportive Housing, and related assistance programs focus directly on enabling system Outflow. By prioritizing rapid placement into permanent housing with ongoing subsidies and case management, they empower exits out of homelessness. This orientation establishes housing stability first.

These strategies facilitate dignified exits from homelessness into stable housing:

- **Housing First Models:** Rapid placement-focused models support smooth transitions into permanent subsidized housing.

- **Supportive Housing:** Graduated supportive programming builds self-sufficiency for citizens with varying needs to transition out successfully.
- **Rent Supplements:** Public-private partnerships bridge affordability barriers for at-risk community members to access housing.

Optimization-Oriented Components

Cross-cutting components like Clinical support, Rent Assistance, Employment Aid, Life Skills Training, Case Management, and Data Integration indirectly optimize system functioning by addressing barriers, filling gaps, smoothing transitions, enhancing coordination and enabling ground-level providers. These supports glue together a fragmented system.

These efforts align resources & actors for responsive solutions:

- **Integrated Data Systems:** Shared client data enables service providers to coordinate planning and delivery.
- **Streamlined Access and Referrals:** Simplified assessment procedures and centralized placements match citizens experiencing homelessness to appropriate housing faster.
- **Health Supports:** Physical and mental health services as needed enable sustained housing stability.
- **Ongoing Case Management:** Consistent guidance throughout transition periods for normalized living.

While individual components may have secondary impacts, orientation toward Inflow, Outflow or Optimization determines their primary focus within the homelessness ecosystem. Well-balanced investments across these vectors can allow for responsive systems producing the desired outcomes – minimized inflows combined with maximized outflows until homelessness is definitively ended through optimized supports. This alignment ensures constructive impacts on the overall system performance.

The key is to orient interventions to match priorities while enabling synergies with other supports. A system anchored in this manner can nimbly adapt based on inflow and outflow trends to continue effectively serving those experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

System Component	System Impact	Program Types
Affordable Housing	<p>Inflow: By increasing the stock of affordable, subsidized housing, this strategy directly targets the prevention of homelessness by minimizing the displacement from unaffordable housing, a primary route into homelessness. Enhancing the supply of affordable housing addresses a critical bottleneck that contributes to the inflow of individuals and families into homelessness.</p> <p>Outflow: Besides preventing inflow into homelessness, increasing the affordable housing stock also serves as a long-term housing solution for those looking to exit homelessness. This dual role underscores the importance of affordable housing as both a preventive measure and a crucial component of the pathway out of homelessness.</p>	<p>Non-Market Housing: Encompasses a variety of housing options not subject to market forces, focusing instead on affordability and community benefits. These can range from rental housing to shared equity models, designed to provide stable, affordable housing solutions outside conventional market dynamics.</p> <p>Social Housing: Government-owned, operated, or subsidized housing for low-income individuals and families. This type of housing typically offers below-market rents and may include additional support services, targeting those most in need.</p> <p>Public Housing: Units owned and managed by public housing authorities, providing affordable rents to targeted groups such as low-income families, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Public housing represents a cornerstone of government-led efforts to supply affordable housing options.</p> <p>Nonprofit Housing: Housing units owned and managed by nonprofit organizations are offered at below-market rates. These often come with supportive services, embodying a model that pairs affordability with additional support to ensure tenant stability and well-being.</p> <p>RGI (Rent-Geared-to-Income) Housing: A program where tenants pay rent amounts based on income, making housing affordable for low-income individuals and families. This system ensures that housing costs are proportional to income, with subsidies used to cover the gap between tenant payments and the actual cost of housing.</p>
Financial Supports	<p>Inflow: Involves interventions explicitly designed to prevent formal entries into the homeless management system through early identification of vulnerabilities, resolving housing crises before displacement or providing temporary accommodations while arranging stabilized options. This addresses risks preemptively rather than after entry.</p> <p>Outflow: Directly enables transitions from temporary accommodations to permanent or self-sufficient housing situations. This includes rent supplements reducing</p>	<p>Temporary Financial Assistance: Short-term monetary support provided to individuals or families facing an emergent crisis episode leading to imminent risk of housing loss. By absorbing shortfalls, it mitigates entries into homelessness.</p> <p>Income Support: Sustained income safety nets such as social assistance, disability payments or universal basic income supplement long-term affordability for underprivileged groups. They increase the capacity to retain permanent housing continually.</p> <p>Rent Supplements: Ongoing subsidies or voucher programs that fill affordability gaps in rents to enable transitions from temporary stabilization into permanent housing solutions for those exiting homelessness.</p> <p>Supported Referrals: An upstream intervention intended to reduce inflow into chronic homelessness by providing housing support and financial assistance to those with barriers to accessing housing. It</p>

	<p>affordability barriers, Housing First models providing permanent supported housing, and transitional programs imparting independent living skills. When outflow capabilities become robust enough, it inherently means a reduced burden on the rest of the care continuum. This indirectly creates latitude to optimize care journeys for those already displaced.</p>	<p>involves a one-time financial payment covers start-up costs like security deposits, rent, and follow-up support.</p> <p>Rent Assistance Programs: Rental assistance is available in Edmonton via the Government of Alberta's longer-term Rent Assistance Benefit (usually delivered through Housing Management bodies) or a short-term Temporary Rent Assistance Benefit.</p> <p>Rent Arrears Management: Programs that aim to prevent eviction by managing rent arrears, including negotiating with landlords, setting up payment plans, or providing financial assistance.</p>
<p>Early Intervention Services</p>	<p>Inflow: Early Intervention Services play a crucial role in diverting and deflecting potential inflow into the homelessness management system. By identifying and addressing housing crises before they result in displacement, these services work to minimize the number of individuals and families entering shelters, transitional programs, or facing chronic homelessness. The proactive nature of these interventions allows for the early resolution of problems that could otherwise escalate into homelessness.</p> <p>Optimization: Beyond preventing inflow, Early Intervention Services contribute to optimizing the overall homelessness management system. By reducing the burden on emergency and downstream services, these interventions allow for smoother functioning of the system as a whole. Avoiding acute caseloads through early intervention indirectly enhances the resource utilization of agencies involved in homelessness management, leading to a more efficient and effective service delivery.</p>	<p>Financial Literacy & Budgeting: Programs that focus on teaching effective financial management skills to individuals at risk of homelessness. By empowering people with the knowledge to manage their finances, these services aim to prevent the financial instability that can lead to homelessness.</p> <p>Employment Assistance and Job Training: Services that assist individuals in acquiring skills and finding employment. By providing job training and employment assistance, these programs help people secure stable income sources, a key factor in preventing homelessness.</p> <p>Repatriation Services: Particularly relevant for youth and families, repatriation services work to safely return individuals to their homes or a stable living situation. This can be an important component of preventing homelessness among these populations.</p> <p>Family Mediation: Professional mediation services to resolve family conflicts that could lead to homelessness. This could involve negotiating alternative living arrangements or addressing other underlying issues that put families at risk of displacement.</p> <p>Legal Assistance and Advocacy Programs: Help navigate legal challenges affecting housing stability, such as eviction defence or accessing public benefits.</p> <p>Life Skills Development Programs: Develop essential life skills for independent living, enhancing self-sufficiency and confidence, foundational for stable housing.</p> <p>Housing Counseling: Offering advice on housing rights, landlord-tenant mediation, and affordable housing assistance.</p> <p>Landlord Mediation: Offering mediation services for individuals and families in conflict with landlords or others with whom they share housing to avoid potential homelessness.</p> <p>Housing Navigation and Placement Programs: Essential for assisting individuals in accessing stable</p>

		<p>housing, understanding housing agreements, and securing financial assistance when necessary.</p>
<p>Emergency Accommodations</p>	<p>Inflow:Emergency accommodations act as an essential intervention to provide immediate supports for shelter and basic needs, and provide a physical location and entry point to access services. Individuals diverted from shelters may decrease inflow into chronic homelessness. Although these accommodations do not address the root causes of homelessness, they serve an important function in preventing the immediate risk of unsheltered homelessness.</p> <p>Outflow: Though shelters as services do not provide outflow directly, outflow service providers (e.g. housing workers, housing teams) may be able to locate and provide services to individuals utilizing shelter services.</p>	<p>Emergency Shelter: Immediate, short-term shelter provided to homeless individuals and families. These are designed to offer a safe place to stay while longer-term solutions are sought. Shelters in Alberta are typically funded through the Government of Alberta, and fall into several types</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emergency Shelter: conventional emergency shelter offering shelter, food, basic hygiene services. Shelters ideally remain open 24/7 and provide a range of services in a shelter hub model. Spaces should be rapidly turned over and available to new individuals on a regular basis. - Continuous Stay Shelter: a subtype of shelter that requires an intake process and allows individuals to maintain their place in the shelter for a pre-determined period of time. Less accessible and often including an intake process, the higher entry barrier is balanced by a more stable environment and continuity for individuals accessing shelter. - Overflow Shelter: additional spaces may be opened up in periods of higher demand, such as extreme weather events or in response to natural disaster, temporary overflow shelters provide the sector with additional capacity. These spaces typically may not have the variety or availability of supportive services.
<p>Transitional Accommodations</p>	<p>Inflow: Transitional accommodations act as an essential intervention when early preventive measures are unsuccessful. By providing interim shelter, they prevent individuals from ending up unsheltered or in emergency shelters, which can be a precursor to long-term homelessness. Although these accommodations do not address the root causes of homelessness, they serve an important function in preventing the immediate risk of unsheltered homelessness.</p> <p>Outflow: Beyond serving as a buffer against inflow into homelessness, temporary accommodations play a pivotal role in the outflow process by providing short-term stabilization. This allows individuals the time and support needed to</p>	<p>Transitional/Long-Term Shelters: While classed as Emergency Shelters and funded by the Government of Alberta, these shelters permit longer term occupancy and dedicated spaces where individuals may stay for extended time periods.</p> <p>Recovery Housing: These are supportive communal living environments for individuals recovering from addiction. They offer a peer community, access to counseling, and activities that promote sobriety and recovery, acting as a supportive step towards reintegration into society.</p> <p>Halfway Houses: Residential facilities that support individuals transitioning from institutional care (such as jails or prisons) back into the community. They provide a supportive environment that includes counseling and skills training to aid in the transition to independent living.</p> <p>Bridge Housing: This temporary housing solution bridges the gap between homelessness and permanent housing, particularly for those ready to move into permanent housing but waiting for availability. It acts as a temporary solution until permanent housing can be secured.</p> <p>Short-Term Supportive Housing: These programs offer temporary housing along with supportive</p>

	<p>transition into more supportive or permanent housing solutions. Temporary accommodations thus serve as a bridge, facilitating the transition from homelessness to a more stable living situation.</p>	<p>services aimed at helping individuals or families stabilize and transition to permanent housing. The stay in these programs is typically limited, often up to two years, providing a critical support mechanism in the transition process.</p>
<p>Health Supports</p>	<p>Optimization: While health services do not directly optimize the functioning of the homelessness response system, they address a major underlying barrier to obtaining and sustaining housing stability.</p> <p>Inflow: Physical and mental healthcare provide support for issues like addiction or trauma that often perpetuate cycles of housing displacement. By mitigating these barriers that inhibit optimization, comprehensive health supports indirectly enable the system to function more effectively.</p> <p>Outflow: Addressing health barriers enables successfully sustaining tenancies in permanent housing. Though currently classified under optimization for filling support gaps, health is indispensable for long-term exits from homelessness.</p>	<p>Addiction Treatment Programs: These programs provide a range of services tailored to individuals dealing with substance abuse, including detoxification, harm reduction services, substance replacement therapy, individual and group counseling, and support groups. They focus on both the physical aspects of addiction and the underlying psychological factors, offering a holistic approach to recovery. Service delivery can range from virtually delivered care options, drop in or mobile supports, to dedicated residential treatment facilities.</p> <p>Integrated Care Clinics: Clinics that offer co-located primary care and mental health services to address the complex health needs of homeless individuals. Services include regular health check-ups, mental health assessments, treatment for chronic conditions, psychiatric medication management, and therapy sessions. This integrated approach ensures that physical and mental health issues are treated concurrently, improving overall health outcomes.</p> <p>Mobile Health Units: Mobile clinics that bring healthcare services directly to where homeless populations reside, providing easier access to primary care, wound care, vaccinations, and mental health screenings. These units are crucial in reaching underserved individuals who might otherwise forego necessary medical attention.</p> <p>Mental Health Treatment Helps individuals manage mental health conditions that can interfere with daily functioning and independence. Access to therapy and psychiatric support is vital for stability and housing retention.</p> <p>Counseling: Emotional and psychological support for addressing trauma, relationship challenges, and other personal issues essential for overall well-being and successful community integration.</p> <p>Primary Health Care: Primary health care services ensure individuals maintain overall health and can engage fully with housing and social services. Optimal delivery of primary health care provides continuity of care and a source of stability for individuals at risk or experiencing homelessness.</p>
<p>Service Access & Coordination</p>	<p>Optimization: Simplified common assessment procedures and centralized coordination of client placements and</p>	<p>Coordinated Access: CA plays an optimization role by simplifying client access, coordinating providers, and guiding strategic resource planning - indirectly catalyzing improvement across inflow prevention, outflow housing, and optimizing support programs.</p>

	<p>referrals optimize the matching of individuals to appropriate interventions based on need. Removing duplicated intake efforts and convoluted referral routes results in responsible stewardship of capacity and reduced wait times.</p> <p>Inflow: Simplified access routes minimize lag for those needing crisis housing before displacement. Simplified intake eligibility checks to facilitate faster access to temporary shelters, diverting inflows from the street.</p>	<p>Situation Tables: In essence, though not a frontline service itself directly, Situation Tables optimize systems integration, surface redundancies for reform and promptly coordinate investments required to prevent crisis-driven inflows into homelessness amongst communities displaying complex needs cutting across multiple providers' responsibilities.</p> <p>Crisis Response Coordination: Organizing a quick response to homelessness crises or encampments to provide immediate assistance and connection to housing and support services.</p> <p>Encampment Response Coordination: A specific form of crisis response that focuses on managing and responding to encampments of homeless individuals, often involving outreach workers to provide housing and support services</p> <p>Service Hubs: Centralized locations where individuals can access various services from multiple providers in one place. These hubs offer housing assistance, job training programs, legal aid, health care, and more, with case managers available to help clients navigate the services, streamline the process of getting help, and ensure that all of an individual's needs are addressed comprehensively.</p> <p>Integrated Data Systems: Integrated data fills information gaps that impede serving those experiencing homelessness efficiently and continuously. This indirectly optimizes overall functioning.</p>
<p>Housing First Models</p>	<p>Outflow: Housing First models embrace providing rapid access to permanent housing without barriers as a key intervention for addressing homelessness. They directly enable sustained exits out of temporary shelters or transitional programs into tenancy by emphasizing early placement into stable, long-term subsidized housing and appropriate supports.</p> <p>Inflow: Rapid placement impacts inflow prevention by ensuring those facing housing instability receive appropriate long-term housing and support to avoid relapses into homelessness. While focused on the outflow, once adopted at scale, their availability could divert inflows from needing to access crisis shelters within an optimized homeless response ecosystem.</p>	<p>Assertive Community Treatment: A proactive case management approach with a low client-to-staff ratio, focusing on engagement and problem-solving. It often involves a multidisciplinary team providing comprehensive services to clients with complex needs. This approach is more proactive and seeks to engage those who may be difficult to maintain in services and is targeted at individuals with confirmed psychiatric diagnoses who may best benefit from integrated healthcare support of this program stream</p> <p>Intensive Case Management: A type of case management providing higher support levels to those with complex needs. This approach typically includes small caseloads, frequent client contact, and a comprehensive, holistic way to address client needs. More intensive services may include more frequent meetings and higher coordination with other service providers. The typical length of the program is 12 months.</p> <p>Critical Time Intervention: Homeward Trust-funded programs in this stream include Rapid Re-Housing and Youth Housing First programming. A time-limited intervention designed to offer highly individualized and intensive support during transition or crisis periods. It's often used when moving from homelessness to housing or transitioning from institutional settings to community living. Some programs, like the Youth Housing First Programs, are informed by this approach but may not strictly adhere to the CTI framework. The typical length of the program is 6 months.</p> <p>Youth Housing First: An adaptation of the Housing First approach tailored for youth</p>

		<p>experiencing homelessness. Like Housing First, Youth Housing First emphasizes rapid access to permanent housing without preconditions.</p> <p>Rapid Re-Housing: A housing intervention model that focuses on quickly moving individuals and families experiencing homelessness into permanent, affordable housing through tailored subsidies and support services. The approach avoids extended stays in temporary shelters or transitional facilities and enables quick access to permanent affordable housing paired with timely living support. Over time supports are right-sized and reduced progressively as self-sufficiency increases and housing stability solidifies.</p>
<p>Supportive Housing</p>	<p>Outflow: Supportive Housing provides housing and supportive services indefinitely for those experiencing homelessness, especially those with complex needs. The primary focus of Supportive Housing is to provide embedded support workers to work alongside individuals to maintain their tenancy. By having in-house staff coupled with building control in a congregate setting, services are able to be regularly scheduled, rapport and relationships established with tenants, and risk factors such as guest management are able to be appropriately addressed.</p> <p>Optimization: Graduated skills programming helps optimize individual outcomes beyond facilitating housing access and improving self-agency and resilience. While transitional and oriented currently towards outflow, the interventions build personal capacities beyond housing that indirectly benefit the overall system.</p>	<p>Supportive Housing 1: A basic level of supportive housing with stable housing, availability of regular case management services, and supportive programming. In-house staff is typically available only during weekday daytime hours, with emergency on-call services. Any care needs should be scheduled, and tenants should be relatively stable. Tenants should be able to independently manage household tasks (e.g., food preparation, cleaning, budget management, etc.)</p> <p>Supportive Housing 2: A more intensive level of supportive housing, possibly including more frequent check-ins and additional services or tailored to individuals with more complex needs. Staff may be available 7 days a week, including overnights, with building controls and on-call services available at all times. Care needs should be scheduled with limited expectations of urgent/crisis needs. Tenants should be able to independently manage household tasks (e.g., food preparation, cleaning, budget management, etc.)</p> <p>Supportive Housing 3: A high-intensity supportive housing, possibly including 24/7 support and in-reached medical services, is designed for individuals with the most complex needs. This may include clientele with unscheduled/unplanned needs and requirements for de-escalation and crisis management. Tenants may require prompting or support with household tasks (e.g. food preparation, cleaning, budget management, etc.)</p> <p>Supportive Housing 3 (SLALA (Supportive Living)): A subtype of Supportive Housing 3 that offers embedded healthcare support. This level of care is under Supportive Living legislation, and thus tenants in these programs are required to be fully engaged with service providers and meet conditions of program. This may include mandatory participation in meal programming, social and supportive programming, medication management, and more. Tenants would likely receive direct support in household tasks and limited assistance with Activities of Daily Living.</p> <p>Family Supportive Housing: Housing designed for families experiencing homelessness, including services like parenting support and child care.</p> <p>Assisted Living: Supportive housing typically for seniors or people with disabilities, providing housing and services necessary for independent and safe living, such as assistance with daily living activities.</p>

		This is considered a healthcare intervention, and Alberta Health Services' transition services team facilitates placement in these programs, not via Coordinated Access.
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