

# Housing First Program Models

A study of four HF programs in ON and AB

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# Introduction

## The Programs

2 based on the HF program model:

- Pathways to Housing - Edmonton
- Pathways to Housing - Calgary

2 based on HF philosophy:

Home Base,  
Calgary  
Houselink, Toronto

## Program Auspices

Three are a component of a community health program:

- Pathways Edmonton – part of the Boyle McCauley Health Center
- The Alex Pathways, Calgary – part of the Alex Health Center
- HomeBase Calgary – part of the Alex Health Center

## Alberta

Pathways programs in Calgary and Edmonton target the persistently homeless who have a diagnosis of a major mental illness and have co-occurring addictions. Both have ACT teams to deal with client issues.

HomeBase – targets the persistently homeless who do not have a major mental illness (diagnosed).

# Overview

## Alberta

Housing Funding channeled through Homeward Trust in Edmonton and the Calgary Homeless Foundation in Calgary

Programs in existence 4 – 5 years (established before the MHCC HF study)

## Alberta housing units

Scatter-site

Rental supplements to private landlords

No congregate facilities

Rental leases are either directly with the landlord or with the program as the leaseholder (varies by program)

## Houselink-a different model

Independent non-profit organization

Established in 1976. Currently in existence for over 37 years

Funding is directly through provincial housing contracts

Owns some of its own buildings and has some rent-subsidized units in the private sector

# Houselink

## Houselink

Full consumer integration in program organization AND governance

Based on a philosophy of housing as a RIGHT

Operates all aspects of the agency with a recovery model

Consumer/member rights of freedom of choice is fully integrated in all aspects of the operation.

## Program differences

Alberta programs operate from a professional service delivery model – the professionals establish, organize and provide the services

Houselink operates from a consumer-driven service model – client/members are integral to program philosophy, mission and operations

## Differences

Alberta programs attempt to follow the Pathways to Housing Service model – and the two Pathways programs have high fidelity to this model

HomeBase follows the Pathways model but has encountered significant challenges in housing retention – 123 re-housing episodes last year.

# Conclusion

**Pathways program model has 38 different fidelity items, all of them structural (how services are organized)**

Additional considerations: organizing principles and philosophy

Program philosophy has a stated recovery orientation

Recovery oriented activities are available to all members

Program monitors and evaluates client/member satisfaction with services

Program has a policy of hiring client/members into appropriate staff positions

**Community-orientation: building an intentional community**

Program monitors the organizational climate of the organization

Program membership is not dependent on housing status – client/members are not required to be living in housing supported by the program.

Client/members can become affiliated with the program prior to, in lieu of or subsequent to any housing tenancy available through the program.

**Questions Arising**

Is frequent re-housing due to differences in client profiles?

Are private landlord rental arrangements critical elements (as contrasted with organization-owned units)

Is the concept of intentional community an important component for this client sector?

Are there clients who do not succeed in a HF philosophy oriented program? Can we identify client characteristics?