

Winnipeg Site Implementation Final Report – Key Messages



Report prepared by

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July 26th, 2011

Key Messages

This report documents the implementation of the Mental Health Commission of Canada's At Home/Chez Soi project in Winnipeg. It reports on the viewpoints and perspectives of the site's stakeholders concerning the fidelity of the Site to its original plans; formative issues related to successes and challenges; stakeholder relationships; the involvement of participants; issues related to Site resources; and the influences and consequences of the local Site context in terms of adaptations made to Winnipeg Site and the resources upon which it has drawn. The report is the result of a series of interviews and focus groups facilitated by researchers at the Institute of Urban Studies at the University of Winnipeg.

The report begins with an assessment of the homelessness situation in Winnipeg prior to the implementation of the study, as well as a discussion regarding the nature of the study's participants. The report then considers project theory from the perspectives of service philosophy, processes, staff requirements and outcomes. The major components of housing and the three service arms are seen by most to be of equal value, in the sense that one part cannot work without the other.

The primary theme emerging from the interviews and focus groups is of the importance of relationships and communication. While there is much that are positive with both, there are some issues. Service teams are unsure if they're getting the information that the research teams need, yet without detailed information from Research there have been problems in housing participants. There are good and mutually rewarding relationships in place with many of external organizations, and relationships with community groups have improved.

The cultural component that the service arms have adopted has been very important for the Winnipeg site. Positive social outcomes for participants and within the community are evident, and much of these successes is owed to the excellent staff and many instances of supportive working relationships. At the same time, there are some structural issues and internal communication problems that could be addressed.

The major cross-cutting themes emerging from the project are that relationships are essential; that the Site has adapted well to its local context; that communication between Service Arms and research could be improved; that there have been some significant delays; and that stronger informational and communication connections could be made. The authors recommend however that some form of intermediary capacity to better connect the disparate components of the Site is needed.