



LONDON FOR ALL

A ROADMAP TO END POVERTY



Homelessness Prevention & Housing

4.4 Implement strategies that assist in housing women at risk of or experiencing homelessness

Street Level Women at Risk (SLWAR) uses a Housing Stability approach to assist women who are experiencing homelessness and involved in street level sex work to secure permanent housing with supports. SLWAR is a collaboration of 24 organizations working to provide housing and supports to street-level sex workers.

Women who have lived through the experience of street level sex work continue to inform the model and practice through the Women's Advisory Group. London's Community Plan Regarding Street Level Women at Risk focuses on addressing the housing, exit strategies, health and well-being of women who are involved in street-involved sex work, and/or trading sex for food, drugs or a place to stay. The Community Plan is grounded in the lived experience of street-involved women, and feedback from London service providers.

A "Housing First" approach is the underlying approach of the Plan. A "Housing First" approach shifts the priority to move individuals and families quickly into a home with the supports needed to support their stability.

Homes4Women London was a two-year pilot project to provide housing for women in London who are experiencing homelessness. This pilot project took place between 2015 – 2017. Homes4Women was funded by the London Community Foundation. The program delivery partners were Women's Community House, Canadian Mental Health Association – Middlesex: My Sister's Place, and the Healthzone Nurse Practitioner Led Clinic. Program evaluation funded by Women's Community College: Women's Xchange. Extended knowledge translation support provided by the Centre for Research on Health Equity and Social Inclusion (CRHESI).

Through a series of concurrent research initiatives and evaluation analysis, the pilot project yielded:

- 1) meaningful knowledge for better understanding and addressing the barriers that women specifically face in accessing adequate housing, and
- 2) raised important issues for implementing Housing First strategy with a gendered lens.

CMHA began a new supportive housing program in July 2017. A partnership was formed to take on 29 units in a building plus one for a staff office. The program provides affordable housing for women experiencing homelessness, trauma, mental health, addictions, etc. CMHA operates a long-term low-support shared home specific to women and a Housing Stability Worker in the housing first program dedicated to working with women.

Anova provides short-term accommodation for women along with other supports, such as counselling, meals, recreation and emergency transportation. Second Stage Housing is a rent-geared-to-income 25-unit apartment complex in South London offering housing to women and children who require safe, medium security housing.

Atlohsa Family Healing Services

Zhaawanong Women's Shelter provides 24-hour emergency shelter for Indigenous women and their children who are at risk of violence and/or homelessness.

St. George Street Transitional Housing is an 11-unit apartment building that houses women and their children to support their transition to safe and secure housing.

St. George Street transitional housing units provide shelter for up to one year in a safe, supportive communal living environment. Atlohsa staff members are on site Monday-Friday to provide counseling, referrals and support, as well as facilitate women's and children's circles. This location is also used for monthly moon ceremonies.

While Atlohsa does not provide long-term housing, staff can help with providing information and necessary applications for Native housing. This includes but is not limited to agencies such as Ontario Aboriginal Housing services, and locations like the Four Feathers Housing Cooperative and the Native Inter-Tribal Housing Cooperative.

Rotholme Family Shelter primarily accommodates families (two parent and single parent families, both male and female led). There is accommodation for approximately

twenty families. The length of stay varies from one day up to thirty days. Twenty-four-hour emergency admission is provided for families who are homeless or in personal crisis and in need of temporary emergency accommodation.

Rotholme Family Shelter has the Prevention of Homelessness Among Families (PHAF) program where the focus is connecting with families to keep them housed or find them housing so they can avoid coming into shelter. And, if they need to come into emergency shelter, workers help to get families out of shelter and into their own housing as quickly as possible, while helping them maintain long-term housing through housing stability.

The London Homeless Coalition (LHC)

The London Homeless Coalition (LHC) exists to advise, shape and coordinate community responses to homelessness, and related needs to the London area.

The LHC is an open network of individuals interested in the issue of homelessness in London, Ontario. Anyone may attend and participate in Homeless Coalition meetings.

The Coalition is led by a Steering Committee, which is an annually elected body, to which anyone can self-nominate.

The London Homeless Coalition has 5 priority focus areas including:

Women's Homelessness and Housing – to include the following actions:

- Gender-based analysis of homelessness
- Identify hidden factors related to women's homelessness
- Diversify safe and affordable housing options for single women and women who are parenting and caregivers