

Housing First and Homelessness Prevention

Exploring the Housing First Program and Government Policies that Support It: A Symposium

September 18 and 19, 2017

Richelieu Park, Ottawa, ON

Overview

Homelessness has challenged society for countless generations. In Canada, many agencies, governments, and citizens have committed their time and efforts to intervene in homelessness and create solutions to alleviate the suffering of homeless people. Housing First has come to the fore. It is a model which places people in homes without any preconditions. The philosophy of this model dictates that the mental health and addiction issues which destabilize many homeless people stabilize once a person has a stable home of their own. And, when supported properly, previously homeless people see their condition improve even that much more rapidly.

However, despite the overwhelming evidence and political support for Housing First, seeing it to fruition is slow. Our municipalities still rely heavily on emergency shelters to provide services to people that are chronically or episodically homeless, offering support programs through short-term residential programs. Cities often cite a lack affordable housing options in which to place people in Housing First apartments, despite the fact that they often pay more to emergency shelters on a monthly basis than they would to rent individual apartments. Another reason is that funding formulas and policies still favour outdated ways of attending to the needs of the homeless population and need fine-tuning to adapt to funding Housing First directly.

Join us September 18th and 19th to talk about a better way forward for reducing poverty, preventing homelessness, and promoting Housing First.

September 18, 2017

Dinner with Keynote Speaker, Art Eggleton (6pm to 9pm)

Senator Art Eggleton, the founder and organizer of the All-Party Anti-Poverty Caucus, will speak about poverty and income inequality as it relates to homelessness.

September 19, 2017

The symposium will be held from 8:45am to 4:30pm. A light lunch will be served at 12pm.

Panels:

1. **Housing First Policies (9:15am to 10:30am)**

Panelists: TBD, Moderator: Mathieu Fleury

2. **Homelessness Prevention (10:45am to 12pm)**

Panelists: Dr. Erin Dej (York University), Dr. John Sylvestre (University of Ottawa), Armine Yalnizyan, Moderator: Kevin Page

3. **Evidence for Housing First (1pm to 2:15pm)**

Panelists: Dr. Tim Aubry (University of Ottawa), Dr. Eric Latimer (McGill University), Dr. Geoff Nelson (Wilfrid Laurier University), Moderator: Claudette Bradshaw

4. **Housing First in Practice (2:30pm to 3:45pm)**

Panelists: Dr. Tim Simboli (Ottawa CMHA), Jamie Rogers (Medicine Hat Community Housing Society), David Gibson (Sandy Hill Community Health Centre), Moderator: TBD

For full speaker bios and more information, please see www.housingfirstottawa.com.
You can also follow the symposium on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/HFSymposiumYOW>.

Tickets are available for the September 19th symposium alone, with or without lunch provided. A limited number of VIP tickets are also available, which includes both the September 19th symposium with lunch and an invitation to Senator Art Eggleton's keynote dinner on September 18th.

Please RSVP to housingfirstsymposiumottawa@gmail.com. Please include any dietary restrictions.