

PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Guelph & Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination / February 2020



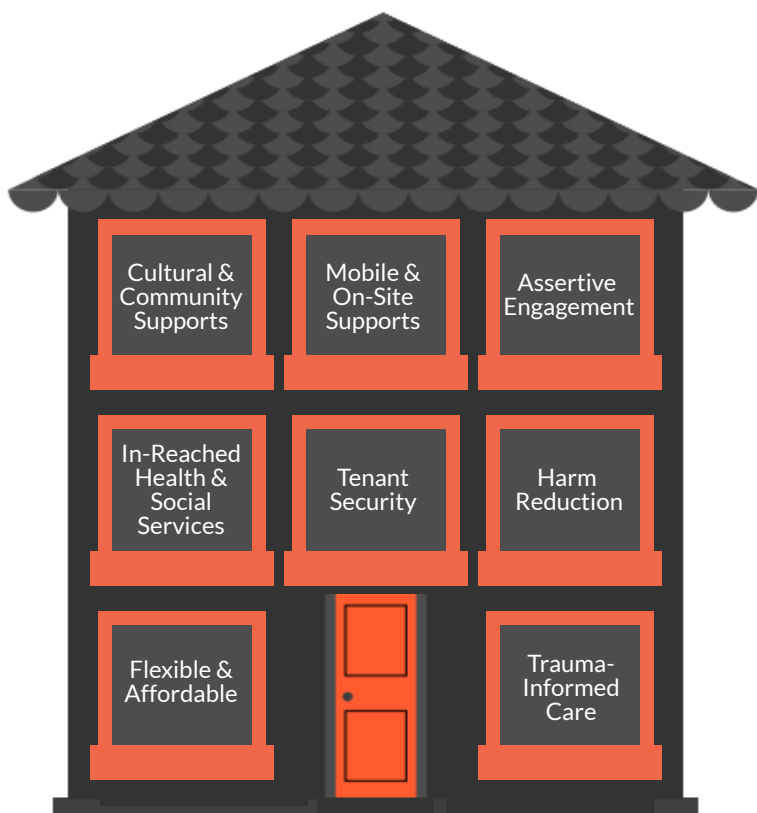
DEFINING PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) is an evidence-based and cost-effective solution for people who are chronically homeless and/or highly vulnerable because of long-term disabilities, such as: mental illnesses, developmental disabilities, physical disabilities, substance use disorders, and chronic health conditions.

PSH can be further understood by considering each component:

- **Permanent** - Leases are held by tenants without limits on length of stay. PSH is not intended to be transitional or temporary.
- **Supportive** - PSH links rental assistance, such as a rent supplement, with access to individualized, flexible and voluntary supports to address needs and maintain housing stability. Supports are typically provided by on-site staff and can be accessed 24 hours/7 days a week.
- **Housing** - PSH usually includes independent units with common spaces that are in one home or building. PSH units could also be scattered-site units depending on the acuity level of the individual and availability of the supports (provided either through home visits or in a community-based setting).

KEY COMPONENTS OF THE PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING MODEL:



Adapted from a graphic developed by Homeward Trust Edmonton to illustrate the key components of the permanent supportive housing model.

DEFINING HOUSING FIRST

Housing First is an approach to quickly and successfully connect individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry, such as sobriety, treatment or service participation requirements. Supportive services are offered to maximize housing stability and prevent returns to homelessness as opposed to addressing predetermined treatment goals prior to permanent housing entry.

Core Features of Housing First in the Context of Permanent Supportive Housing Models:

- Few to no programmatic prerequisites to permanent housing entry
- Low barrier admission policies
- Rapid and streamlined entry into housing
- Supportive services are voluntary but can and should be used to persistently engage tenants to ensure housing stability
- Tenants have full rights, responsibilities, and legal protections
- Practices and policies to prevent lease violations and evictions
- Applicable in a variety of housing models

ESTABLISHING SITE SELECTION CRITERIA:

- **Scale:** Size of a project should be based on housing need and capacity to develop and manage
- **Housing type & construction:** A model may be scattered-site or congregate-site and a project may involve new construction or rehabilitation
- **Acquisition or lease costs:** The parameters of possible funding sources may impact options
- **Zoning considerations:** It is important to identify zoning restrictions to inform site search
- **Location:** Location is critical. The following factors must be evaluated: public transportation, employment opportunities, neighbourhood amenities, community-based services, day care, public schools and related programs, security
- **Community acceptance:** In planning for new projects, there are significant issues that can create community acceptance problems that should be considered



THE GUELPH-WELLINGTON BY-NAME LIST



DEFINING BY-NAME LIST

A By-Name List is a real-time list of all people experiencing homelessness in your community. It includes a robust set of data points that support coordinated access and prioritization at a household level and an understanding of homeless inflow and outflow at a system level. This real-time actionable data supports triage to services, system performance evaluation, and advocacy.

ESTABLISHING ELIGIBILITY FOR PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING:

Eligibility for PSH considers both an individual's financial and support needs. The model and intensity of supports provided reflect tenant population and their corresponding needs. Individuals experiencing homelessness who have been assessed as high-acuity have a high depth of need and should be considered eligible for PSH. Below is a snapshot of homelessness, including high-acuity individuals who were on the By-Name List in November 2019.



122 individuals experiencing homelessness

94% chronic

Someone is chronic if they have been homeless for 6 cumulative months or more in the past year.

68% high-acuity

Someone is high-acuity if they have been assessed as having a high depth of need by the common assessment tool.

64% chronic & high-acuity



43% of high-acuity individuals reported having trouble finding and maintaining housing because of mental health.



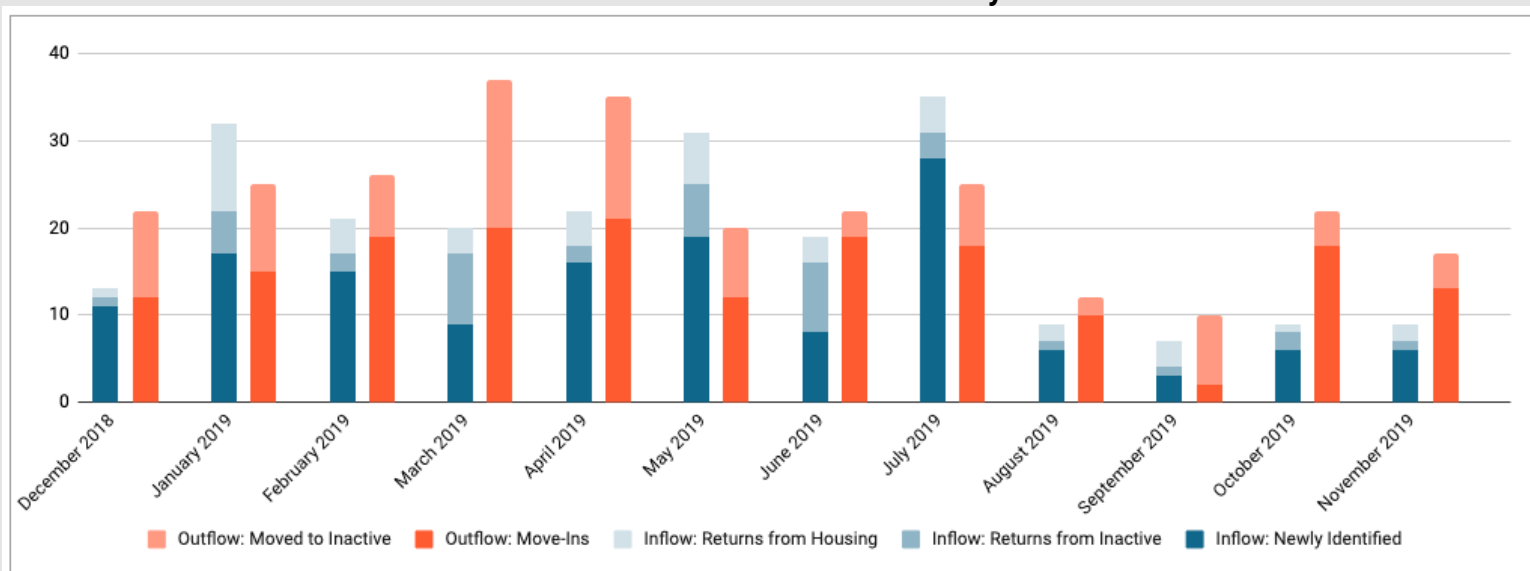
41% of high-acuity individuals reported having trouble finding and maintaining housing because of substance use.



42% of high-acuity individuals reported having trouble finding and maintaining housing because of **both** mental health and substance use.

As seen in the below chart, homeless inflow and outflow can fluctuate on a monthly basis. This variability combined with individual choice can impact demand for different types of housing, including PSH. For this reason, setting a definitive number for how many people require PSH is not recommended.

Inflow & Outflow of All Individuals on the By-Name List



Sources are available upon request. This fact sheet is complimentary to a forthcoming Poverty Task Force report on permanent supportive housing.

