



# A WAY HOME

A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY TO ADDRESS  
HOMELESSNESS IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

# UN CHEMIN VERS CHEZ SOI

UNE STRATÉGIE GLOBALE POUR LUTTER CONTRE  
L'ITINÉRANCE AUX TERRITOIRES DU NORD-OUEST

Le présent document contient la traduction française du sommaire et  
du message du première ministre et du ministre.



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# Premier's Message

The experience of homelessness is an issue of great importance to all communities. I would like to thank the people of the Northwest Territories (NWT), my colleagues, fellow leaders, and community partners for ensuring the development of a Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) strategy to address homelessness remained a high priority for this Legislative Assembly.

Homelessness is a complex challenge with multiple factors that impact each person differently and there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Many organizations provide supports to people who are at risk of experiencing homelessness, experiencing homelessness, or who are chronically without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing or the immediate means of acquiring it. The GNWT is committed to demonstrating leadership on addressing homelessness by helping to coordinate our multiple perspectives and approaches.

The 2019 review conducted by NorthWays Consulting and Impact Economics improved our understanding of the assets that NWT communities have and the needs that we need to address. A 2022 assessment of GNWT service integration offered valuable recommendations on how the GNWT could better coordinate resources and truly put people first in our social policies and program and service delivery. I also want to acknowledge the Standing Committee on Social Development's recently released report focused on homelessness prevention. Working together effectively can help us maximize the supports in communities and identify ways to change to better meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness.

We are faced with challenging fiscal realities and economic uncertainty. Creativity, commitment, and willingness to cooperate and collaborate can help alleviate these issues and better support community members who are experiencing homelessness. Homelessness is a shared problem that requires multiple solutions to properly address. Supports can take a variety of forms including improved integration of services, a focus on the root causes of homelessness, the policy issues that contribute to both homelessness and the difficulties people face in remaining housed. I believe that solutions exist. They need to be developed and implemented by communities, housing advocates, NGOs, private industry, all orders of government and other stakeholders. In addressing factors that have resulted in an individual or family experiencing homelessness, we can help more northerners avoid the experience of homelessness.

## **The Honourable Caroline Cochrane, Premier of the Northwest Territories**

This Strategy sets out key areas of action to help NWT residents find and maintain housing stability. We gratefully acknowledge the input provided on the draft Strategy. We look forward to taking new and more collaborative action that reflects shared solutions to address homelessness for the people of the NWT.

## **The Honourable Paulie Chinna, Minister Responsible for Homelessness**

# Message de la première ministre

L'expérience de l'itinérance est une question d'une grande importance pour toutes nos collectivités. J'aimerais remercier la population des Territoires du Nord-Ouest (TNO), mes collègues, les dirigeants, et nos partenaires communautaires, d'avoir veillé à ce que l'élaboration d'une stratégie du gouvernement des Territoires du Nord-Ouest (GTNO) pour lutter contre l'itinérance demeure une priorité de premier plan pour cette Assemblée législative.

L'itinérance est un problème complexe et multifactoriel qui touche chaque personne différemment, et auquel il n'existe pas de solution unique. De nombreuses organisations apportent un soutien aux personnes qui risquent de devenir itinérantes, qui sont itinérantes ou qui sont chroniquement privées d'un logement stable, sûr, permanent et approprié ou des moyens immédiats d'en obtenir un. Le GTNO s'est engagé à faire preuve de leadership dans la lutte contre l'itinérance en travaillant à coordonner nos multiples perspectives et approches.

L'étude menée en 2019 par Northways Consulting et Impact Economics a permis de mieux comprendre les atouts dont disposent nos collectivités et les besoins auxquels nous devons répondre. Une évaluation de l'intégration des services du GTNO réalisée en 2022 a permis de formuler des recommandations précieuses sur la manière dont il pourrait mieux coordonner les ressources et donner la priorité aux personnes dans ses politiques sociales et dans la prestation de ses programmes et de ses services. J'aimerais également saluer le rapport sur la prévention de l'itinérance, récemment publié par le Comité permanent des affaires sociales. Une collaboration efficace peut nous aider à maximiser les mesures de soutien dans nos communautés et à établir les changements qui s'imposent pour mieux répondre aux besoins des personnes itinérantes.

Nous sommes confrontés à une situation financière difficile et à l'incertitude économique. La créativité, l'engagement et la volonté de coopérer et de collaborer peuvent contribuer à atténuer ces problèmes et à mieux soutenir les membres de notre communauté qui sont mal logés. L'itinérance est un problème commun qui nécessite des solutions multiples pour être traité correctement. Les mesures de soutien peuvent prendre diverses formes, notamment une meilleure intégration des services, une concentration sur les causes profondes de l'itinérance, sur les politiques actuellement en place qui contribuent à l'itinérance et sur les difficultés auxquelles les personnes sont confrontées pour rester dans un logement. Je pense qu'il existe des solutions. Elles doivent être développées et mises en œuvre par la communauté dans son ensemble, les défenseurs du logement, les ONG, le secteur privé, tous les niveaux de gouvernement et les intervenants. En nous attaquant aux facteurs qui ont conduit une personne ou une famille à devenir itinérante, nous pouvons aider un plus grand nombre de Ténos à éviter de se retrouver dans cette situation.

## **L'honorable Caroline Cochrane, Première ministre**

Cette stratégie définit les principaux champs d'action pour aider les Ténos à trouver un logement stable. Nous saluons les efforts qui ont été fournis lors de son ébauche. Le GTNO est impatient de mettre en œuvre des mesures qui reflètent les solutions conjointement établies pour aider les Ténos à lutter contre l'itinérance.

Madame Paulie Chinna, Ministre responsable de l'itinérance

# Executive Summary

In Canada, homelessness is defined as the situation of an individual, family or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing or the immediate prospect means and ability of acquiring it. (Gaetz et al., 2012) There are four main categories of homelessness: unsheltered, emergency sheltered, provisionally accommodated and at risk of homelessness (Gaetz et al., 2012). This Strategy puts forward solutions to address each of these categories and prevent homelessness wherever possible. Indigenous people are overrepresented among Canadians and NWT residents experiencing homelessness. This Strategy was developed with sensitivity toward the definition of Indigenous homelessness; an experience more fully described through a composite lens of Indigenous worldviews to include individuals, families and even communities who are isolated from their relationships to the land, water, place, family, kin, each other, animals, cultures, languages, and identities (Thistle, 2017).

Measures to prevent individuals and families from becoming homeless are woven throughout the objectives, recognizing that many individuals and families who would not identify as homeless are in precarious living situations and would benefit from the solutions described throughout this Strategy.

In the NWT significant root causes of homelessness include the impacts of colonialism, trauma, the lack of affordable housing, addictions and substance use, poverty, inequality, unemployment, and lack of access to education and healthcare (Hernandez, 2015). Multifaceted, person-centred approaches, sustained effort, and collaboration among governments, non-profits, and the private sector are all required to make meaningful progress in addressing the root causes of individuals or families being without a stable, safe, or appropriate place to call home.

This draft Strategy proposes nine areas of action categorized under four themes:

## Community-Driven Solutions

- Establish functional zero homelessness goals for all communities;
- Support community partnerships and build capacity;

## Needs-Based Services

- Improve access to mental wellness and addictions recovery services;
- Ensure shelter services have appropriate resources that accurately reflect the program and service needs of their users;

## Shelter and Housing

- Increase transitional housing and supportive housing placement options;
- Increase the stock of accessible housing;

## Governance and Accountability

- Establish a whole of government approach with a unit focused on integrated service delivery and addressing homelessness;
- Strengthen policy and program efforts to address and prevent homelessness;
- Improve methods of collecting, sharing and analyzing information and data.

This Strategy should be considered a living document. The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) will seek input from Indigenous governments, community partners, community governments, internal and external stakeholders and the general public throughout the implementation of the Strategy.

# Sommaire

Au Canada, l'itinérance est définie comme la situation d'une personne, d'une famille ou d'une communauté qui ne dispose pas d'un logement stable, sûr, permanent et approprié, ou qui n'a pas les moyens immédiats et la capacité d'en obtenir un (Gaetz et coll., 2017). L'itinérance se décline en quatre grandes catégories : les personnes sans abri, les personnes logées d'urgence, les personnes logées temporairement, et les personnes à risque (Gaetz et coll., 2017). La stratégie propose des solutions pour chacune de ces catégories, de façon à prévenir autant que possible l'itinérance. Parmi les Canadiens et les habitants des TNO en situation d'itinérance, les populations autochtones sont surreprésentées. Par conséquent, cette stratégie a été élaborée en tenant compte de la définition de l'itinérance autochtone, une expérience mieux décrite par une vision globale du monde autochtone qui inclut les personnes, les familles et même les collectivités qui sont coupées de leurs relations avec la terre, l'eau, le lieu, la famille, les proches, les autres, les animaux, les cultures, les langues et les identités (selon Jesse Thistle, 2017).

Les mesures visant à empêcher les personnes et les familles de devenir itinérantes sont omniprésentes dans les objectifs, étant donné que de nombreuses personnes et familles qui ne s'identifieraient pas comme itinérantes se trouvent dans des situations de vie précaires et bénéficieraient des solutions décrites dans cette stratégie.

Aux TNO, les causes profondes de l'itinérance comprennent notamment les conséquences du colonialisme, les traumatismes, le manque de logements abordables, les dépendances et la toxicomanie, la pauvreté, l'inégalité, le chômage et le manque d'accès à l'éducation et aux soins de santé (Hernandez, 2015). Des approches multidimensionnelles et centrées sur la personne, des efforts soutenus et une collaboration entre les gouvernements, les organisations à but non lucratif et le secteur privé sont tous nécessaires pour réaliser des progrès significatifs dans la lutte contre les causes profondes de l'itinérance, et pour aider les personnes ou les familles qui n'ont pas d'endroit stable, sûr ou adapté où se sentir chez elles.

Ce projet de stratégie propose neuf champs d'action, répartis en quatre thèmes :

## Solutions axées sur les collectivités

- Établir des objectifs fonctionnels qui visent « l'itinérance zéro » pour toutes les collectivités.
- Soutenir les partenariats communautaires et renforcer les capacités en la matière.

## Prestation de services adaptés aux besoins

- Améliorer l'accès aux services de santé mentale et de traitement des dépendances.
- Veiller à ce que les services d'hébergement disposent de ressources appropriées qui reflètent fidèlement les besoins de leurs utilisateurs en matière de programmes et de services.

## Refuges et logements

- Augmenter les possibilités de logement de transition et de logement supervisé.
- Augmenter le nombre de logements accessibles.

## Gouvernance et responsabilité

- Établir une approche pangouvernementale dotée d'une unité axée sur la prestation de services intégrés et la lutte contre l'itinérance.
- Renforcer les efforts en matière de politiques et de programmes visant à lutter contre l'itinérance et à la prévenir.
- Améliorer les méthodes de collecte, de partage et d'analyse des informations et des données.

Cette stratégie doit être considérée comme un document évolutif. Tout au long de la mise en œuvre de la stratégie, le GTNO sollicitera les commentaires des gouvernements autochtones, des partenaires communautaires, des administrations communautaires, des intervenants internes et externes et du grand public.

# Introduction

In Canada, homelessness is defined as the situation of an individual, family or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing or the immediate prospect means and ability of acquiring it. (Gaetz et al., 2012) There are four main categories of homelessness: unsheltered, emergency sheltered, provisionally accommodated and at risk of homelessness (Gaetz et al., 2012). This Strategy puts forward solutions to address each of these categories and prevent homelessness wherever possible. Many individuals and families who might not identify as “homeless” are in precarious living situations and would benefit from the solutions described in this Strategy. Homelessness includes those who are chronically couch-surfing or sleeping rough, as homelessness often presents itself in the Northwest Territories (NWT). Homelessness may be a result of a person’s experience of societal barriers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual or family’s financial, mental, cognitive, behaviour or physical challenges and/or racism and discrimination (Gaetz et al., 2012; GNWT, 2005).

Indigenous people are overrepresented among Canadians and NWT residents experiencing homelessness. This Strategy was developed with sensitivity toward the definition of Indigenous homelessness; an experience more fully described through a composite lens of Indigenous worldviews to include individuals, families and even communities who are isolated from their relationships to the land, water, place, family, kin, each other, animals, cultures, languages, and identities (Thistle, 2017).

Data is limited on the number of precariously housed and unhoused people, especially data specific to the NWT, but rates of homelessness in Canada have risen since the 1980’s. As of December 2020, at least 25,000 people nationwide experienced homelessness in a shelter or outdoors on any given night across 61 measured Canadian communities, marking a 14 percent increase over a count conducted in 2016. (Flynn et al., 2015). Homelessness has myriad root causes. In the NWT significant root causes of homelessness include the impacts of colonialism, residential schools, trauma, the lack of affordable housing, addictions and substance use, poverty, inequality, unemployment, and lack of access to education and healthcare (Hernandez, 2015). Social programs and services intended to address these issues are often fragmented across GNWT departments. In communities without emergency shelters, individuals frequently resort to couch-surfing and overcrowding is common (Turner Strategies, 2017). Across the NWT, housing, even for those with the means of acquiring it, is limited. In many instances, individuals and families not only need a place to live, but a suite of wraparound services to help them stabilize their living situation (Housing NWT, 2017). Improving access to and use of mental health and addictions supports; transitional and supported living facilities may also help individuals and families at risk of losing their homes to avoid becoming homeless if appropriate interventions occur.

The supports and interventions identified in this Strategy alone are not sufficient to end homelessness and homelessness will never be eradicated completely. Multifaceted, person-centred approaches, sustained effort, and collaboration among governments, non-profits, and the private sector are all required to make meaningful progress in addressing the root causes of individuals or families being without a stable, safe, or appropriate place to call home.

This Strategy is meant to set direction, inform planning and introduce the shift in organizational culture



toward person-centred services in the GNWT rather than define all programs, services or demographics. The GNWT will continue to engage community governments, non-profits, Indigenous governments, researchers and academics, and the broader public as we take action to address the complex challenges that contribute to homelessness. The actions identified in the Strategy should be tracked and results evaluated as we move forward. This Strategy will be subject to periodic review.

## Current Homelessness Programs and Resources

The following list of programs and services are currently available to help address homelessness. This list is not exhaustive and may not reflect all services or may include services that are not specific to homelessness. The GNWT allocated approximately \$9.5 million toward shelter services in 2022-23. This funding included:

- **Homelessness Assistance Fund** provides one-time emergency financial assistance to clients who are homeless, or at risk of experiencing homelessness or have an opportunity to access stable housing.
- Funding to NGOs for the following Homelessness Programs:
  - 4 **Northern Pathways to Housing Program** in Behchokò, Aklavik, Fort Simpson, and Fort Good Hope
  - 2 Rapid Rehousing –Yellowknife
  - 7 Emergency Overnight Shelters
- **Northern Pathways to Housing** continues as a pilot project that provides supports for emergency housing and transitional housing.
- The **Shelter Enhancement Fund** provides financing to organizations administering shelter projects, for the purpose of supporting capital repairs or equipment purchases. The fund provides organizations up to \$100,000 per year, in the form of a forgivable loan.
- **Small Community Homelessness Fund** is intended to provide NGOs, Community Governments and Indigenous Governments outside of Yellowknife with funding for projects that address shelter and support needs for individuals who are experiencing homelessness.
- **Transitional Housing Supports:** The Department of Justice administers a contract for two beds at the Bailey House in Yellowknife for male clients and a contract was finalized with the Yellowknife Women’s Society for one bed for female clients. A second contract is in place for two beds at the Bailey House in Yellowknife to provide transitional housing supports for male therapeutic community clients, offender temporary absences from correctional facilities and/or the provision of short-term support.
- **Yellowknife Integrated Service Delivery Demonstration Site:** The Department of Justice provides Integrated Case Management to approximately 370 clients in Yellowknife, of which 199 (or 54 percent) have experienced or are experiencing homelessness.
- **Annual Support for Yellowknife, Hay River and Inuvik Shelters:** the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA) and Hay River Health and Social Services Authority provide \$75,000 in funding to each shelter.

- **Home Base Emergency Youth Shelter, Home Base Youth Housing, Home Base Specialized Support:** NTHSSA provides separate funding to community partners operating each of these programs.
- **Salvation Army Transitional Housing (Bailey House):** the NTHSSA provides funding to the Salvation Army to supplement the continued operation of this facility and program.
- **YWCA Lynn’s Place:** provides stability and services for women and children in Yellowknife. NTHSSA provides funding to the YWCA to supplement the continued operation of this facility and program.
- **Funding for the Managed Alcohol Program:** The Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA) provides funding to support managed alcohol at Spruce Bough in Yellowknife.

The 2019 NorthWays Consulting and Impact Economics Review of GNWT Homelessness Resources Report identified four categories of programs and services:

- Emergency and warming (referred to throughout the Strategy as “shelters”).
- Transitional housing, supported and independent living programs.
- Addictions programs.
- Day Programs.

### Emergency Shelters

- Yellowknife Day Shelter
- Yellowknife Sobering Centre
- Home Base Yellowknife
- Men’s Emergency Shelter/Productive Choice Program, Yellowknife Salvation Army, Yellowknife
- Emergency Housing for Families, YWCA NWT, Yellowknife
- Women’s Centre, Yellowknife Women’s Society, Yellowknife
- Inuvik Emergency Homeless Shelters, Housing Northwest Territories, Inuvik
- Hay River Day/Overnight Shelter, Hay River Committee for Persons with Disabilities
- Dehcho Warming Shelter, Dehcho Society for Wellness and Sustainable Development, Fort Simpson

### Family Violence Shelters

- Alison McAteer Family Violence Shelter, YWCA NWT, Yellowknife
- Hay River Family Support Centre Family Violence Shelter, Hay River Family Support Centre, Hay River
- Sutherland House Family Violence Shelter, Fort Smith
- Inuvik Transition House Society, Family Violence Shelter, Transition House Society, Inuvik
- Aimayunga Women and Emergency Foster Care Shelter, Tuktoyaktuk

## Transitional Housing

- Tłı̄chq̄ Łeàgı̄a Ts'ı̄ı̄ı̄ Kq̄ - Tłı̄chq̄ Friendship Centre, Behchokq̄
- K'asho Got'ine Housing Society, Fort Good Hope
- Aklavik Indian Band, Aklavik
- Home Base Transitional Home, Side Door Youth Ministries, Yellowknife
- Bailey House Transitional Housing, Yellowknife Salvation Army, Yellowknife
- Housing First Program, Yellowknife Women's Society, Yellowknife
- Lynn's Place, Transitional Housing, YWCA NWT, Yellowknife
- Community Transitional Housing for Families, YWCA NWT, Yellowknife

## Supported Living Programs

- Home Base Dorms, Home Base Yellowknife
- Independent Living Support Program, Yellowknife Salvation Army, Yellowknife
- Supported Living Program, Yellowknife Association for Community Living, Yellowknife
- Spruce Bough, Yellowknife Women's Society, Yellowknife

## Addictions Programs

- Addictions Treatment Withdrawal Management Program (WMS), Yellowknife Salvation Army, Yellowknife
- WMS Extension Program, Yellowknife Salvation Army, Yellowknife
- Addictions Services, Tree of Peace Friendship Centre, Yellowknife
- Spruce Bough Managed Alcohol Program

## Day Programs

- Tłı̄chq̄ Łeàgı̄a Ts'ı̄ı̄ı̄ Kq̄ - Tłı̄chq̄ Friendship Centre, Behchokq̄
- Case Management, Yellowknife Women's Society, Yellowknife
- Yellowknife Food Bank, Yellowknife
- Food Rescue, Yellowknife
- Community Services, Yellowknife Salvation Army, Yellowknife
- Adult Academic Upgrading, Tree of Peace Friendship Centre, Yellowknife
- Employment/Cultural Program, Tree of Peace Friendship Centre, Yellowknife
- Community Wellness Program, Tree of Peace Friendship Centre, Yellowknife
- Dehcho Friendship Centre Drop-in Centre, Dehcho Friendship Centre, Fort Simpson
- Soup Kitchen and Homelessness Support, Łı̄ı̄dlı̄ Kúé First Nation, Fort Simpson
- Hamlet of Fort MacPherson Food Program, Hamlet of Fort MacPherson, Fort MacPherson
- Hamlet of Paulatuk Food Program, Hamlet of Paulatuk, Paulatuk
- Ingamo Hall Friendship Centre Day Shelter, Ingamo Hall Friendship Centre, Inuvik

- Inuvik Food Bank, Inuvik
- Street Outreach Program, Yellowknife Women’s Society, Yellowknife
- Arctic Food Bank, Inuvik
- Quyllidauyuot Emergency Food Bank, Tuktoyaktuk
- Living in Balance, Tree of Peace Friendship Centre, Yellowknife
- Matrix, Tree of Peace Friendship Centre, Yellowknife
- New Day Program, Tree of Peace Friendship Centre, Yellowknife
- Resource Centre, Home Base, Yellowknife
- Resource Centres, Yellowknife Salvation Army, Yellowknife
- Victim Services, Native Women’s Association, Yellowknife
- Arctic Indigenous Wellness Foundation Camp, Yellowknife
- Employment Assistance Services, CDÉTNO (Conseil de développement économique des Territoires du Nord-Ouest), Yellowknife
- Norman Wells Food Pantry, Town of Norman Wells, Norman Wells
- The Soup Kitchen, Hay River
- Fort Smith Food Bank, Fort Smith

## Current Context and Finding a Way Home

Understanding the challenges and gaps in the current territorial response to housing and homelessness is an important part of the process of working towards solutions. Safe and affordable housing is a key priority identified in the Territorial Anti-Poverty Action Plan (Action Plan). The focus of the 2022 Anti-Poverty Roundtable, the annual meeting of partners working to advance the Action Plan was housing and homelessness. Participants had the opportunity to share their concerns about housing and homelessness in the NWT at this forum, which included:

- Housing needs are outpacing housing availability in all communities.
- There is a perceived systemic failure to provide housing solutions that are appropriate for communities and Indigenous families.
- Communities and individuals face high costs for materials and construction.
- The complex, unmet needs of people experiencing homelessness create barriers to long term housing under current policies and programs.
- Vulnerable populations (Elders and seniors, youth in transition, people experiencing mental health challenges and/or addictions, people who need income assistance, people involved in the criminal justice system) have specific housing needs that need to be addressed.
- The current systemic response to housing problems in the territory is fragmented and does not prioritize community engagement.
- Need to replace the system-centred approach to housing with a person-centred approach.

- Communications and collaboration challenges make access to funding challenging.
- Ongoing frustration with centralized housing decision-making in Yellowknife without engagement of community and Indigenous governments (GNWT, 2022).

These observations are consistent with responses received to engagement on the draft GNWT Homelessness Strategy. We also heard that the current system is fragmented and difficult to access and navigate, particularly for individuals with addictions or other high needs; is rigid and difficult to work with; and lacks clear accountability for quality service provision.

### A Way Home

Participants in the 2022 Anti-Poverty Roundtable also shared aspects of a vision for a system that could be. These ideas include:

- A housing system that considers the specific needs of different vulnerable populations including Elders and seniors, youth in transition, people experiencing mental health challenges and/or addictions, people who need income assistance, people involved in the criminal justice system when developing and implementing solutions.
- Greater community and Indigenous government autonomy with community and Indigenous governments making decisions about local housing needs and solutions directly, with support from the GNWT, NWT Housing, NGOs, other organizations, and experts as needed.
- Funding structures that more directly empower local decision-makers and do not restrict access to funds based on criteria imposed from outside the community.
- Client-centred housing programs for all communities and a culture-shift that removes the burden of navigating government services from residents accessing programs and services to service providers.
- Housing, partnering alongside other health and social services, take a case-by-case approach to finding individualized solutions in partnership with clients (GNWT, 2022).

Responding effectively to the root causes of homelessness requires us to meaningfully acknowledge the realities of the people accessing services. Shifting to person-centered service delivery recognizes the role that equity has in ensuring everyone has access to services and consider equity in the design of our approach to service delivery. GNWT Departments are already trying to do this work, but doing business differently means making an organizational cultural shift. Through the actions in this Strategy and sustained effort with community partners the GNWT would like to achieve:

***Equitable access to services:*** person-centered service delivery that meets individuals and families where they are. The Department of Health and Social Services defines equitable access as an outcome where all individuals have the opportunity to get the care they need to achieve their full, self-determined health and wellness potential in a system committed to explicitly removing barriers associated with socioeconomic status, race, gender, geographic location, ongoing and historic impacts of colonialism and other drivers of unequal opportunity.

***Timely and coordinated services:*** services can be offered immediately and with the right coordination among service providers. Individuals and families can tell their story once and have a full system response coordinated to address needs they identify at the earliest possible opportunity for people and focuses on prevention wherever possible. There is no wrong door for individuals and families who need help.

***Measurable outcomes and increased self-sufficiency:*** person-centered supports are linked with increased self-sufficiency.

***Efficient and effective use of resources:*** a team approach to identifying service solutions for the individual to prevent more serious, emergency outcomes, thereby alleviating time and effort of frontline service providers. Complex cases for one service provider become more manageable when all appropriate service providers fulfill their role in supporting individuals and families.

***Enhanced relationships among service providers:*** over time, the team approach allows service providers to focus more on what they can do as a team with one main objective, rather than the limitations of the silos in which they exist. This can lead to ***increased job satisfaction and collaboration among service providers***. In turn, individuals and families receive higher quality care.

This Strategy attempts to reflect the vision of a more equitable, accessible and culturally responsive social, mental wellness and housing system that so many northerners have expressed they want to see.

# Community-Driven Solutions

## Establish Functional Zero Homelessness Goals for All Communities

**Functional zero** means that the number of individuals and families experiencing homelessness is reduced to a level that can be effectively managed through permanent housing and services available in each community (Turner Strategies, 2017). Completely ending acute homelessness is not a realistic goal. There will always be a need for emergency shelter options. The goal for ending chronic homelessness, also called “functional zero,” is that homelessness is **prevented** whenever possible, and when homelessness does occur, it is rare, brief, and non-recurring (Turner Strategies, 2017). The goal is to ensure housing stability, which means that individuals have a fixed address and housing that is appropriate and that they have the required income, services and supports to enhance their well-being and reduce their risk of experiencing homelessness. (Gaetz et al., 2012)

While housing availability is a challenge, the goal should be that the number of individuals and families experiencing homelessness is low enough that the community can provide social, mental health and housing supports for individuals and families who need them, and the number of new individuals and families experiencing homelessness does not outpace the number of people that can be supported through social, mental health and housing resources (Northways Consulting, 2019; Turner Strategies, 2017).

Achieving functional zero will look different across communities. Reaching functional zero levels for each community in the NWT should be the ultimate goal of the homelessness strategy. It requires a coordinated, well-functioning system that can quickly assess, and support people experiencing homelessness and provide integrated services to prevent homelessness from reoccurring. It requires sustained effort, continuity of effective programs and services, collaboration, and teamwork.

While it may take some time to fully implement, NWT communities – particularly regional centres - would benefit from introducing integrated case management and, potentially, assertive community treatment. Integrated Case Management is a team-based approach that can help individuals and families maintain their housing and improve their quality of life (Hernandez, 2015; Stratos Inc. & Polar Knowledge, 2019). The teams offer services in a strengths-based and person-centered manner that works with participants with complex needs to access and navigate service systems that they would otherwise struggle to access (Hernandez, 2015). Equity, flexibility and person-centered services are foundational to effectively supporting clients.

Stakeholder and internal input have suggested a variety of models of care. Common themes among these approaches include: services delivered by a mobile team; active and sustained efforts to work with individuals and families to address root causes of homelessness; program and service coordination for the individual or family or across organizations; and that services may vary across communities. Examples of services include crisis assessment and intervention, treatment and supports, prescription management; services or supports for concurrent substance use disorders, work-related services, life skills, social and

relationship skills.

The City of Yellowknife recently launched a Coordinated Access System, a community-wide system that streamlines the process for people experiencing homelessness to access housing and supports to support a Functional Zero goal (CAEH, 2018). The GNWT has an opportunity to build on this work to help address homelessness and use lessons learned to consider further implementation in other parts of the NWT. The Coordinated Access System is motivated by a need to coordinate service delivery, federal funding requirements and recent case studies from Calgary, Alberta and St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador, that suggest a model could be adapted to Yellowknife (Turner Strategies, 2018).

Training is required to effectively implement a Coordinated Access System, and specific software and technology competencies. Stakeholders emphasize that client confidentiality is of utmost importance to this work, and part of building an effective relationship between individuals and families who need help and the people trying to help them. A procedure must also be in place for individuals who do not want to disclose personal information, so that appropriate supports can still be offered.

**Solutions**

- Set a “functional zero” goal where each community in the NWT has adequate services so that when homelessness occurs, it is rare, brief, and non-recurring.
- Engage with the City of Yellowknife to monitor the success of the Coordinated Access System.
- Develop a data-driven approach to assess effectiveness of interventions within communities and quickly identify and address areas of need.
- Continual engagement and collaboration with partners and the private sector to develop and implement strategies to address homelessness.

GOAL	Objectives	Inputs	Activities	OUTCOMES		
				12-24 months	>2 years	>5 years / Ongoing
<b>ESTABLISH FUNCTIONAL ZERO GOALS FOR ALL COMMUNITIES</b>	Goals set for all communities	System capacity measured; gaps identified	Communities and service providers engaged	Meetings held and inventory of needs for each community established  Communities and partners engaged to set manageable number of homeless	Goals set for each community to reduce homelessness  Coordinated Access System implemented	Homelessness is rare and brief in each community  Shelters are more oriented toward finding housing solutions within an integrated system



## Support Community Partnerships and Build Capacity

Homelessness cannot be solved by one single entity acting alone. The GNWT relies on community partners, including Indigenous governments, community governments and non-governmental organizations, to address homelessness in the NWT through critical work, often under urgent circumstances. With high demand and limited resources there is little opportunity to do more than offer basic programming and services. Community partners who deliver programs and services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness are under strain to address the increased demand to support program and service users who have complex needs. The funding the GNWT provides to community partners to deliver social, mental health and housing programs and services is often distributed on an annual basis and does not cover all program and service needs. Salaries, benefits, and working conditions offered by community partners are often uncompetitive, leading to recruitment and retention challenges. Feedback on the draft Strategy indicated that GNWT service providers frequently refer individuals or families to community partners because that organization is the only entity providing the services these clients need, but the organization may not have the capacity to support additional clients, nor does it have ability to refer people to the GNWT.

Part of the solution to this issue is implementing regular, solutions-oriented discussions with partners aimed at improving supports, strengthening collaboration, and implementing proven approaches like integrated case management (Northways Consulting, 2019; Patrick 2014). But meaningful partnership is key. In partnership, the GNWT, Indigenous governments, and community partners have discussed establishing integrated service delivery sites in each region where community members can access Integrated Case Management teams made up of staff from each of the partners. The teams can provide personalized case management based on the individuals self-identified needs and goals. The teams can also identify barriers in the system that community members are experiencing and inform policy or program design work needed to address those barriers.

People come to Yellowknife and other regional centres to find housing, social support, or health services, especially when escaping difficult or dangerous situations in their home communities (Northways Consulting, 2019; NWT Bureau of Statistics, 2021). The severity of factors creates greater need for urgent care. We've heard that people need more supports closer to home. All communities need support in implementing unique solutions that they identify to address homelessness in their local population (Stratos Inc. & Polar Knowledge, 2019). The small population and limited number of service providers inherently lends itself to service integration and person-centred approaches in smaller NWT communities. Offering services closer to home can help address aspects of Indigenous homelessness where people feel disconnected from their home and families.

Depending on a community's needs, capacity could be strengthened through interorganizational mentoring, peer support, advising the development of grant applications. The GNWT and community partners could consider offering regular, joint training to frontline service providers, culminating in the eventual development of a northern training program. Community partners and the GNWT could consider potential partnerships with Aurora College to offer professional development courses in case management, personal support, and viable options for career laddering.

**Solutions**

- Establish regular communication among partners that align with existing collaborative approaches, like the Anti-Poverty Round Table, and NWT Council of Leaders, for outcomes-focused, solutions-oriented conversations to help foster open communication and build an understanding territorial needs and capacity, and how organizations can work together to address needs.
- Establish Integrated Service Delivery sites in each region, including interprofessional teams from the GNWT, Indigenous governments, community governments and non-government organizations involved in addressing homelessness.
- Work with communities to identify funding, land and appropriate developers for housing and shelter needs.
- Formalize the GNWT Funders Group and create a single fund with flexible parameters that support community partners to deliver services that meet community needs with simplified application and reporting requirements.
- Determine how to implement core or multi-year funding with community partners, including the potential for expanded service delivery and forced growth.
- Provide joint training and capacity building initiatives among GNWT and other service providers.
- Create greater equity between the GNWT and community partners.

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES		
				12-24 MONTHS	>2 YEARS	>5 YEARS / ONGOING
SUPPORT COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS	Regular partnership meetings; establish regional ISD sites	Partners availability	Partners engaged to establish meeting schedules	Meetings set with available partners	Regular meetings occurring with coordination of efforts occurring	Regular communication among ISD Regional Sites; create a Community of Practice.
	Housing and shelter needs and program gaps in capacity identified for each community	Program inventory Engagement with partners	Partner meetings and collaboration with dedicated team Establish single fund with simplified application and reporting	Meetings and inventory of shelter needs conducted	Business plans and budgets adjusted to better meet identified needs Standing Committee engagement on strategies to address and prevent homelessness	Housing and shelter needs in each community quickly identified and addressed

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES		
				12-24 MONTHS	>2 YEARS	>5 YEARS / ONGOING
		Joint training for GNWT and community service partners	Establish working relationships with community partners	Regular engagement with Indigenous governments and regional partners on NWT housing and social needs		

# Needs-Based Services

## Improve Access to Mental Wellness and Addictions Recovery Services

Individuals experiencing homelessness or at high risk of experiencing homelessness often require added support to address mental wellness and addictions recovery challenges (Falvo, 2011). A visible part of the homeless population has complex needs requiring greater interventions and active coordination of services. The public health challenges related to the use of illicit and non-illicit drugs and addiction among the homeless population need to be addressed in a collaborative, culturally safe way to reduce disease transmission and promote positive health outcomes for all individuals (Falvo, 2011).

Both the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action (Call #19) and the Territorial Alcohol Strategy call for governments to identify and close the gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities on several health indicators, including addictions. To close these gaps effectively the GNWT needs to recognize, at all levels, the value of cultural knowledge and Indigenous healing practices and ensure that services are delivered in ways that are Indigenous-led and developed, with cultural competency considered at all levels of service planning and provision (Patrick, 2014).

People who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness may be reluctant to access health, mental health, and addictions services or are unaware of the range of supports and services available to them. Their hesitance could be due to negative past experiences that have created a justifiable lack of trust in health care providers or other people in positions of authority; a lack of trust or belief in western approaches to treatment, or frustration with expressing their concerns to new service providers every time they seek assistance. There is an important role for outreach workers and this reluctance could be addressed by ensuring that people who need services have access to supportive service navigators, continuity in service providers, and healing and wellness services that reflect their culture (Falvo, 2011; GNWT 2005).

### Solutions

- Explore ways to add additional navigator positions, particularly outside of Yellowknife where Integrated Case Management services are not presently available. Lived experience and ability to build rapport with, and advocate for individuals experiencing homelessness and multiple other challenges, should be considered as valid as formal qualifications.
- Create peer support roles for service users who would benefit from community links and mentoring but do not need or want the intensive support a navigator may provide.
- Determine ways to dedicate service providers to provide care to shelter-based and at-risk individuals where they are most comfortable, providing continuity of care and facilitating access to wraparound care.
- Provide training in trauma informed, culturally safe and anti-racist care and conflict management to all frontline service providers to ensure that service providers are equipped to provide care that avoids re-traumatizing, stereotyping or alienating service users.
- Develop integrated service delivery.
- Continue and expand wellness camps and opportunities for on-the-land treatment, with appropriate supports for aftercare.

GOAL	Objectives	Inputs	Activities	OUTCOMES		
				12-24 months	>2 years	>5years / ongoing
<b>IMPROVE ACCESS TO MENTAL WELLNESS AND ADDICTIONS RECOVERY SERVICES</b>	Services are provided in a culturally safe, trauma informed manner	Employee availability  Centralized intake and referrals	Training for staff within GNWT and partner organizations	Training needs identified  Barriers removed to information sharing	Training rolled out to employees in GNWT and partner organizations  Coordinated intake and referral processes established	All employees trained; training available as new employees hired
	Individuals and families are quickly matched to social, mental health, and housing services  Services are coordinated to integrate care among providers	Information from departments, agencies and partner organizations	Develop internal GNWT service and information sharing agreements  Increase outreach services, regular individual or family contact, and ongoing support	Required resources to improve outreach and supports identified  Information sharing agreements finalized  Implement standardized protocols to ensure continuity of care amid staff turnover	Resources added to increase outreach, provide regular contact and ongoing support	Individuals and families experiencing homelessness are quickly connected with services  Continuity of care amid staff turnover

## Ensure Shelter Services Have Appropriate Resources that Accurately Reflect the Program and Service Needs of their Users.

Shelter service providers express concern that the homeless population is changing, presenting with more complex needs. Organizations' ability and willingness to operate shelters is diminishing. Shelter space is required throughout the NWT including shelter options outside of regional centres. Shelter capacity challenges and a lack of qualified staff are longstanding sources of concern (Alternatives North, 2020). Recent GNWT requests for proposals to operate shelters in Yellowknife and Inuvik have gone unanswered.

Based on data collected by the NTHSSA, overall attendance at Yellowknife day shelters has increased:

- August 2020: 110 unique shelter users
- February 2021: 130 unique shelter users
- January 2023: 165 unique shelter users

Between September 2022 and January 2023 there was an average of 95 unique visits per day, meaning 95 different people accessed the day shelter per day. Over the same period, there was an average of 33 daily users at the sobering centre, with the highest being 45 in January 2023 and lowest being 12 in September 2022. Two outreach nurses have a case load of 166 clients from all Yellowknife shelters, included Spruce Bough, the Women's Shelter and the day shelter and sobering centre.

Data collected by Housing NWT recorded that attendance at the Inuvik Homeless Shelter averaged 17 nightly users in August 2020; 12 users in February 2021 and 9 users in January 2023. At the Inuvik Warming Shelter there was an average of 28 nightly users in August 2020; 35 nightly users in February 2021 and 16 in January 2023. The Hay River Shelter was closed from January to August 2020, and both the Hay River Shelter and the Inuvik Warming Shelter were closed from May to August 2021. A portion of shelter users sleep outdoors during summer months. The Hay River Shelter was also closed in July and August 2022. The Hay River Shelter saw an average of 6 nightly users in the last quarter of 2020; an average of 6 nightly users during the eight months that it was open in 2021; 8 nightly users during the ten months it was open in 2022 and an average of 8 nightly users in January 2023.

Individuals who have experienced homelessness or who are experiencing homelessness can offer valuable insight into the programs and services they need. Similarly, remote communities know what homelessness looks like for their members, and are best positioned to help identify effective, culturally relevant solutions (Hernandez, 2015). Preliminary engagement with shelter providers highlighted the need to help people across the NWT better understand the needs of community members experiencing homelessness and humanize individuals that they see in obvious need. Feedback on the draft Strategy also indicated that special attention needs to be devoted to certain demographics, specifically: youth, seniors, families, persons with disabilities who cannot be appropriately accommodated in shelters and individuals at transitional phases of life.

Youth homelessness is an increasingly visible issue across Canada and the NWT. Home Base Yellowknife is the only youth-focused non-governmental organization in the NWT. It has a waitlist of youth who need housing, and many youth in precarious housing situations access their programs. Many youth become homeless before they are 16 and youth who leave home at a younger age experience greater adversity on the streets. Youth homelessness often intersects with the child welfare system, family violence and abuse, and ongoing housing instability (Gaetz et al., 2016; NWT Bureau of Statistics, 2021). Working with community partners, the GNWT may be able to help prevent chronic homelessness by developing targeted supports for youth involved with the criminal justice system and youth aging out of care.

Families who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness have very different needs than individuals who stay in shelters or on the streets (Housing NWT, 2017). Stakeholders emphasize that women and women with children especially, need a safe space to access services. Furthermore, they may only feel safe if housed in a secure building rather than a standalone house or another dwelling that could be more easily accessed by unwanted visitors. This is an area where a “no wrong door” approach to coordinating access to services is particularly necessary.

Seniors have distinct housing needs, including needs for mobility accommodations and support programs to allow them to age in place within their community (Dillon, 2019). We have heard about the diverse housing needs of seniors, including concerns across the territory regarding housing affordability, adequacy, suitability, and accessibility, as well as lack of options along the housing continuum to support aging in place with dignity. Some seniors are unable to independently maintain their homes due to both physical and financial barriers, and some seniors report impacts from overcrowded housing and elder abuse. Along with inflationary pressures and high cost of living, these factors demonstrate the complexity of the risks for homelessness for older adults. The GNWT has committed to helping seniors have opportunities to age in place with dignity. A variety of programs are available to subsidize housing and fuel costs; however, outside of regional centres, housing options for seniors remain limited and there is a lack of practical supports for seniors who are unable to maintain their home. The continued growth in the number of seniors in the NWT, combined with the growing cost of living, lack of available affordable, adequate, suitable, and accessible housing, competitive housing markets, high labour costs, issues with land availability, and the need for practical supports may contribute to rising rates of senior homelessness in the territory. These observations underscore the need for seniors housing and targeted, person-centred supports, emphasizing social determinants of health and integrated service delivery, to advance aging in place with dignity for seniors in the NWT.

Persons with disabilities may experience similar housing circumstances to seniors especially in relation to low income and barriers to accessibility and inclusion. The GNWT acknowledges that households with a person with a disability are more likely to experience food insecurity and inadequate housing (GNWT, 2017). The distribution of programs and services for persons with disabilities over many public agencies, departments and non-government organizations creates integration and coordination challenges like those presented for individuals and families at risk of or experiencing homelessness (GNWT, 2017). Programs and services to address homelessness must be accessible and inclusive of persons with disabilities.

We have heard that individuals involved in the criminal justice system require targeted housing supports that are largely unavailable in the NWT, and elsewhere in Canada (CMHC, 2006). According to the John Howard Society (2022), homelessness and incarceration often operate in a feedback loop. A lack of support services to individuals experiencing either homelessness or incarceration can lead to the other. Often, the burden of providing reintegration support to incarcerated individuals falls on community-based service providers for those experiencing homelessness; however, these service providers often lack the resources and capacity to manage the complexities of supporting individuals to reintegrate into the community (John Howard Society, 2022). Violent behaviour is increasingly reported in shelters and results in individuals being banned and cut off from services, increasing the likelihood that they will reoffend (John Howard Society, 2022). There is a demonstrated need for continued correctional programming which targets both substance use and violent behaviours, improved discharge planning and targeted transition supports to help reduce homelessness and re-entry into the criminal justice system.

As much as shelters are a necessary response to urgent needs, shelters are not a home, nor an appropriate environment to address root causes of homelessness. We heard that with appropriate resources and programming, shelters can be better integrated into the larger collective response to homelessness and help ensure that individuals experiencing homelessness have access to the services and information they need to move toward more secure housing (CSTN, 2019).

## Solutions

- Work closely with past and existing shelter operators to identify barriers, service gaps and more sustainable approaches.
- Provide training and support services to frontline service personnel and shelter operators.
- Shared training on de-escalation of dangerous and violent situations.
- Establish mechanisms for GNWT departments to collaborate to prioritize person-centred care when requesting social, mental wellness and housing support services, consistent with legislated privacy protocols.
- Facilitate the exchange of information on shelter mandates and demographics between community partners who operate shelters and GNWT departments to ensure that the GNWT best uses shelter resources to fill program and service gaps.
- Establish long-term funding options to improve operator sustainability starting with zero-based budgeting to help identify and address funding gaps and accurately determine the cost of addressing homelessness through shelter operation in the NWT.
- Ensure targeted housing and social supports are available for population groups with distinct demographic needs.
- Ensure targeted supports are available for youth, especially youth involved in the criminal justice system and youth aging out of care.
- Create more secure housing options for women and children escaping family violence.
- Continue to develop housing options for seniors and persons with disabilities in their home communities.



- Ensure individuals transitioning from correctional facilities have access to targeted programming in facilities and reintegration planning is completed prior to release.
- Explore opportunities to reduce the stigma of homelessness, address public concern around the creation and operation of shelters and improve community and neighbourhood acceptance of shelter location.

OUTCOMES

GOAL	Objectives	Inputs	Activities	12-24 months	>2 years	>5 years / ongoing
<b>ENSURE SHELTER SERVICES HAVE APPROPRIATE RESOURCES</b>	Improved capacity for community partners	Engagement with partner organizations and communities	Meet with partners to review standards and identify barriers	Training offered	Consistent standards developed	Standards applied recognizing unique needs of each community
	Develop consistent service standards	Engagement with partners	Make training available to partner organizations	Review inventory of programs; gaps in services and solutions identified	Resources identified to address gaps	Expanded, coordinated suite of services available throughout NWT
	Contracted support services available and aligned with needs	Inventory of programs	Share information to identify gaps and ensure best use of resources		Changes to programs identified as required to match needs	Program changes implemented to match needs

## Shelter and Housing

### **Increase Transitional and Supportive Housing Placement Options**

Transitional housing provides a temporary, safe, and stable living environment for individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless. Transitional housing is designed to be a steppingstone to permanent housing, and should include supportive services, job training, and integrated case management (GNWT, 2005; Northways Consulting, 2019). It helps individuals and families bridge the gap between an unsustainable living situation, and a stable, long term, more independent living situation. Lack of suitable employment or training for suitable employment, addictions, family violence, mental illness, trauma recovery, returning from a correctional facility or an addictions recovery treatment program, and lack of suitable and affordable housing are examples of factors that contribute to unsustainable living situations, and can be addressed through transitional or supportive living options (GNWT 2005; NWT Bureau of Statistics, 2021). Engagement on the draft Strategy indicated that more transitional housing in the NWT is needed. With increased availability of transitional housing longer term targets can be established to reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness.

Recently the YWCA NWT received \$17.5 million in federal funding for an expansion to Lynn's Place, now referred to as the YWCA NWT Family Housing Building, which provides transitional housing for women and children. Construction on the new, 21-unit building is underway and expected to be completed by July 2023.

The GNWT, in a joint effort between the Department of Health and Social Services and Housing NWT are planning to advance a pilot program that would see the construction of transitional housing facilities in three or four communities for clients returning from addictions treatment. Health and Social Services is determining resource requirements and working to identify next steps in this process.

Transitional housing is intended to be short term, up to three years in the northern context, and does not provide any onsite medical support. Supportive housing, in contrast, is for individuals who need onsite medical support and full-time, round the clock staffing.

The Yellowknife Women's Society operates Spruce Bough, a 42-unit complex for at-risk men and women. The GNWT provides funding to Spruce Bough through supportive program elements. The goal of the programming offered at these facilities is to provide wraparound services that residents need to help rebuild their lives. Since Spruce Bough opened in April 2020, approximately 35 previous shelter users gradually transitioned from street homelessness to supported housing. Its services are in very high demand.

Many NWT communities do not have market housing for individuals and families to potentially transition into. Some people prefer the communal and social aspects of transitional and supportive housing and feel lonely on their own (Housing NWT, 2017). A long-term living arrangement that offers some ongoing social supports may be an appropriate resource for NWT residents who have experienced homelessness or who are at high risk of experiencing homelessness. This housing option could improve health outcomes and overall quality of life.

**Solutions**

- Determine the most appropriate approaches to provide supported housing options in regional centres and small communities
- Increase GNWT funding for transitional housing programs to improve community-driven solutions to address local needs.
- Engage landlords and provide property management education to support a more diversified rental market.
- Continue to provide and expand programming in correctional facilities to develop life skills, opportunities for improved literacy, financial management, home management and where appropriate, work experience or training.
  - Utilize options for community partners to deliver targeted, culturally relevant programming in correctional facilities.

OUTCOMES

GOAL	Objectives	Inputs	Activities	OUTCOMES		
				12-24 months	>2 years	>5 years / ongoing
INCREASE SUPPORTIVE AND TRANSITIONAL HOUSING	More transitional and supportive housing options available	Engagement with communities and partner organizations to determine need and options	Meet with partners to identify funding opportunities under existing programs	Meetings held to identify needs and options	Projects identified, funding obtained for construction of new facilities	Increased number of facilities created to meet functional zero goals
			Encourage greater coordination and collaboration on projects			
			Include new transitional housing facilities for clients returning from treatment			
			Increase GNWT funding			
			Engage landlords			

## Increase the Stock of Affordable Housing

In Canada, housing is considered “affordable” if it costs less than 30% of a household’s before-tax income (CMHC, 2018). “Affordable housing” includes housing provided by the private, public, and non-profit sectors, affordable, safe and accessible housing and all forms of tenure: rental, ownership and co-operative ownership, temporary and permanent housing (CMHC, 2018). Lack of affordable housing adds to the challenge of moving people who are in supportive or transitional housing into suitable, affordable housing and puts low-income individuals and families at risk of homelessness (Housing NWT, 2017). The lack of affordable housing is a complex issue that is influenced by a variety of factors such as income, employment, and housing market conditions (Turner Strategies, 2017).

Development and construction costs, and costs to maintain a home in the NWT have always been above the national average. Statistics Canada’s Residential Building Construction Price Index (2022) shows a national average increase of approximately 50 percent in the cost of residential construction since 2019 to current driven initially by COVID-19 impacts, and continuing due to supply-chain disruptions, labour shortages and geopolitical pressures. These factors have significantly increased the cost of construction in the NWT.

Housing NWT has identified the potential for some homeownership clients to take over older public housing units as Housing NWT builds more public housing units in communities. We heard from stakeholders that homeownership programs that involve selling old public housing stock need to be complemented by new public housing construction. Housing NWT, with support from the federal government is currently delivering 100 new public housing units which will be additions to the current asset base. These units are being delivered in communities outside of Yellowknife, increasing the number of affordable units in the communities.

Additionally, the current federal government is flowing funding directly to Indigenous governments to develop housing for their beneficiaries. This funding model creates opportunities for Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations to directly design and build housing that honours and reflects land-based lifestyles. Indigenous knowledge systems and western science can contribute to housing designs that are accessible to seniors, persons with disabilities and responsive to the impacts of climate change (Patrick, 2014). The GNWT will continue to work with Indigenous governments and external organizations such as the federal government to increase affordable housing options.

## Solutions

- Adopt the Canadian definition of affordable housing, as stated above: housing that costs less than 30% of a household's before-tax income.
- Implement rapid re-housing:
  - Focus efforts on moving individuals and families experiencing homelessness out of shelters and into housing as quickly and sustainably as possible, either into housing units with supports provided as needed or communal housing where general supports are available for all residents.
  - Provide rent supplements and appropriate social support services.
  - Increase stock of affordable housing.
- Create an inventory of available land and lot readiness for construction in communities.
- Incentivize more housing cooperatives
- Examine and implement solutions such as tiny homes, small homes with shared bedrooms for children, clustering tiny homes or small houses together for shared utilities, off-grid living, and other forms of affordable housing to provide accessible options for individuals or families.
- Examine the potential for Community Land Trusts
- Engage developers to identify development barriers
- Promote jobs in the trades and address other labour market barriers to affordable housing.
- Continue work with Indigenous governments and external organizations to increase suitable, affordable housing options.
- Continue to engage with CMHC and the federal government on long-term solutions to northern housing needs.

GOAL	Objectives	Inputs	Activities	OUTCOMES		
				12-24 months	>2 years	>5 years / ongoing
<b>INCREASE STOCK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING</b>	Mitigate the risk of people becoming homeless with more affordable housing and make it easier for persons to find affordable housing options	Engagement across governments, the private sector, and partnership organizations	Establish consistent Affordable Housing definition Increase points allocated to people experiencing homelessness to determine housing allocation priority Create inventory of land available in communities Incentivize more housing cooperatives Engage developers to identify barriers Engage Indigenous Government partners to align housing initiatives Engage CMHC and federal government on long term solutions	Meetings held with governments and partners, and options identified	More housing developments occurring with targets established throughout the territory  Regular meetings occurring between GNWT, Indigenous governments, communities, federal government	Housing affordability measurably improved in all communities

# Governance and Accountability

## Establish a Whole of Government Approach with a Team Focused on Integrated Service Delivery

The service system has been described as confusing and difficult to navigate, especially for residents who need to access multiple services across various departments (Schmidt et al., 2015). The way services are currently offered often does not reflect the actual needs NWT residents have. Stakeholders in the NWT have been clear through years of engagement that they require culturally safe, person-centred, strengths-based, whole-person care and support from GNWT systems, and that GNWT services are not often experienced that way (Hernandez, 2015). Stigma, racism, and deficit-focused colonial attitudes continue to be reflected in a fragmented and complicated service experience (Schmidt et al., 2015). Feedback indicates that services have been created to address one *problem* at a time rather than supporting the healthy *outcomes* we know people want for themselves and their families.

Acknowledging these challenges, Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) aims to create a person-centered approach to service delivery in the NWT that ensures positive lifespan development, enhanced wellbeing, and thriving among individuals, families, and communities (Northways Consulting, 2019). Person-centered Service Delivery is based on the principle of equity and recognizes the person as the expert in what they need and puts them at the center of service delivery and decision making. This change will require a cultural shift in service provision across the GNWT and a commitment to equity, anti-racism flexibility and teamwork when supporting NWT residents.

This Strategy envisions re-organizing **existing resources** to establish a team responsible for coordinating efforts to guide a whole of government approach to changing service system. This team would **work with** Regional ISD Sites by providing the required coordination and policy functions required to build and sustain ISD across the NWT. ISD **does not** create new positions or assume departments and agencies' current responsibilities. **ISD is intended to create structures for programs to work together better** to meet the needs of NWT residents. We will start by integrating services to address homelessness with the objective to incorporate lessons learned and eventually branch out to further GNWT services. ISD is a process to fundamentally change the way the GNWT and its partners provide services to better meet the needs of community members, break down silos, reduce duplication of effort, and improve sharing of knowledge (Northways Consulting, 2019). This initiative presents very real risks, but also great opportunities. It will require change management, training, teamwork and long term commitment to a vision of success.

## Solutions

- Establish integrated service delivery sites in each region, including interprofessional teams from the GNWT, Indigenous governments, community governments and non-government organizations involved in addressing homelessness.
- Establish a team with senior management leadership and a clear mandate to lead homelessness work, integrate services across departments, identify and address policy barriers and provide a consistent contact point for partners.
  - Reprofile a portion of existing social envelope resources to help offset the incremental costs of establishing the team.
  - Work with departments to establish parameters and formalize reporting structure to create accountability.
- Advance the Integrated Service Delivery model within the GNWT with a focus on services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness as a priority population.
- Establish parameters that clarify responsibilities and reporting structures among departments and formalize accountabilities.
- Establish a support worker or pathfinder in every region to work with the new team and other GNWT departments to help service users access appropriate social, mental health and housing supports and liaise with the team to identify policy barriers.
- Improve case management to better coordinate and target services, especially for clients with complex needs.
- Empower frontline staff and middle managers to provide person-centred services.
- Develop information sharing agreements between departments in accordance with legislated privacy protocols to expedite case management.
- Promote the coordinated implementation of GNWT social envelope strategies such as, but not limited to: the Territorial Alcohol Strategy, Anti-Poverty Strategy, the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Action Plan, NWT Seniors Strategy and Food Security Strategy.



GOAL	Objectives	Inputs	Activities	OUTCOMES		
				0-6 months	>2 years	>5 years / ongoing
ESTABLISH WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT APPROACH	Greater accountability for addressing homelessness established	Team with a clear mandate to lead work	Team established with senior management leadership	Team created with core team immediately working to advance strategy	Team filled and regular reporting on strategy implementation provided	Lessons learned applied to broader integrated service delivery goals within the GNWT
	Integrated Service Delivery model within the GNWT implemented with initial focus on homelessness	Engagement across government and with partners	Recruit and fill key positions with reprofiled resources where possible		Implement regional ISD sites	Empower frontline staff and middle managers
			Co-locate Unit within Executive and Indigenous Affairs			Establish pathfinder positions in every region
			Establish regular meetings with partners and key supports within Departments and Agencies			
			Develop internal GNWT information sharing agreements			

## Strengthen Policy and Program Efforts to Address and Prevent Homelessness

People often face barriers related to policy and government silos when trying to access social, mental health and housing supports at any point of need (GNWT, 2005). Reducing legislative and policy barriers can help address and prevent homelessness for individuals and families at risk.

A data-informed suite of policies that fit together effectively is required to support GNWT efforts to address homelessness. Policy development, monitoring and evaluation are important to the mandate of a team dedicated to advancing integrated service delivery and addressing homelessness (Northways Consulting, 2019). The ISD team would have a coordinating function in working to address policy barriers and shifting the siloed approach to social, mental wellness and housing programs and services through joint policymaking. Frontline service provider, including NGO input is required to help identify and change policies. Creating and maintaining an inventory of services, and potentially more detailed system mapping, for service provider and client reference has been identified as a useful resource for system navigation.

Examples of work underway to address homelessness through policy work:

Housing NWT is in the process of renewing several policies that are intended to improve relationships with clients and strengthen efforts to address and prevent homelessness. These include:

- Increasing the number of points allocated to people experiencing homelessness when determining the priority for housing allocation, which increases priority for allocation if a home is available.
- Changing the “Eligible Tenant” policy so that if a former tenant applies for public housing and can demonstrate they have made an effort to address the factors that led to their eviction they may still be eligible for public housing.
- Changing the approach to evictions to replace the “Last Chance Agreement” with a “Tenant Success Plan”.
- More support for housing stability programming to prevent homelessness, and a new, plain language tenant handbook and tenancy agreement that more effectively communicate the obligations associated with being a public housing tenant and help avoid evictions..

The GNWT, represented by Housing NWT continues to work with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to highlight the need for an ongoing subsidy program for affordability in the private rental market. Housing NWT also has a number of supports for homeowners who need financial assistance with repairs and maintenance, and one-time emergency homelessness prevention measures.

The Income Assistance program, administered by the Department of Education, Culture, and Employment (ECE), is also undergoing program review. ECE is proposing to divide the program in two, to focus one aspect of the program on seniors and persons with disabilities and the other to focus on adults aged 19 to 59. Other changes include: removing the requirement to participate in a productive choice, aligning benefits with the Northern Market Basket Measure, increasing earned and unearned income exemptions,

removing barriers and reducing administration for clients, service providers and staff. The goal of both Income Assistance programs will be to ensure residents can develop greater financial security. Both Housing NWT and ECE based their proposed changes on community and stakeholder engagement.

Participants in the 2022 Anti-Poverty Roundtable wanted to see the GNWT involve communities and people with lived experience of housing vulnerability and homelessness as part of the process for designing housing programs and policies, with consideration given to seniors, youth, residents with disabilities, mental wellness and addictions issues (GNWT, 2022).

## Solutions

- Continue to advance and assess the effectiveness of Housing NWT renewal initiatives and Income Assistance Review and related policy changes on access to housing.
- Engage with people who access GNWT social programs to review the impact of policy changes on housing and homelessness.
- Identify common, persistent policy barriers and options to address them.
- Ensure policies around individuals' and families' needs that are guided by UNDRIP, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- Include more engagement with communities and people with lived experience of housing vulnerability and homelessness as part of the process for designing housing programs and policies.
- Invite academics with an interest in northern housing issues to help inform key policy decisions.
- System mapping to inventory programs and resources and their roles in a coordinated delivery system.
- Consider offering mobile Income Assistance services in youth shelters for eligible clients.
- Promote skill development in financial literacy and occupant responsibilities among clients for whom these solutions would be appropriate.
- Offer hands-on basic maintenance training for homeowners.

GOAL	Objectives	Inputs	Activities	OUTCOMES		
				0-6 months	> 2 years	>5 years / ongoing
<p><b>ADDRESS POLICIES THAT CREATE BARRIERS TO HOUSING AND STRENGTHEN POLICY EFFORTS TO ADDRESS AND PREVENT HOMELESSNESS</b></p>	<p>Policy barriers to accessing social, mental health and housing supports addressed.</p> <p>Joint policies between departments established.</p>	<p>Team with a clear mandate to lead work</p> <p>Engagement across government and with partners to identify most common policy barriers.</p>	<p>Advance and assess the effectiveness of Housing NWT renewal and policy changes associated with Income Assistance review.</p> <p>Policy barriers addressed at regular meetings at all levels and addressed by Child and Family Deputy Ministers' and Committee-of-Cabinet.</p>	<p>Team created with policy development and coordination included in its mandate.</p>	<p>Policy barriers identified and options for revision advanced to Deputy Ministers' and Ministers' Committees.</p>	<p>Implement policy changes and monitor their effectiveness.</p> <p>Coordinated policy-making between departments.</p>

## Improve Methods of Collecting, Sharing and Analyzing Client Information and Data

Consistent data collection, sharing and use of health information are required to assess the scope and nature of homelessness in the NWT and effectiveness of interventions (Northways Consulting, 2019). Much of the data needed to accurately assess homelessness in the NWT does not exist. Policy makers need data that tells the story of individuals and families experiencing homelessness and informs how to effectively fill gaps, improve policies, and design programs and services, evaluate the long-term impact of interventions and identify areas for improvement. Evaluation of existing programs and services should ensure that the needs of at-risk populations are considered. Work undertaken through the Government Renewal Initiative to inventory programs and services will support further evaluation efforts. Service providers across all organizations need current, data-driven information on best practices and effective interventions (Stratos Inc. & Polar Knowledge, 2019). Service providers are often forced to choose between providing services to their clients and completing documentation necessary for data collection. Feedback from engagement on the draft Strategy suggested key areas where data is needed:

- Mental wellness needs among the NWT's homeless population.
- Trends in the homeless population over time and individuals and families with recurring homelessness and evictions.
- Where individuals go after they leave shelters or where individuals go when they have been restricted from shelters for violent behaviour or active substance use.
- How many people live in tents for part of the year because they have no other options.
- Community-level homelessness outside of Yellowknife.
- Youth homelessness.
- The concurrence of seasonal work, chronic health problems, addictions, family violence, involvement with child and family services and homelessness.
- Factors contributing to solutions and individuals' and families' success in obtaining stable, long-term housing.

This Strategy should be subject to periodic review to ensure it reflects ever-evolving social realities, changes to programs and services and progress toward meeting objectives. The Minister responsible for Homelessness, or similar coordinating function, will review the Strategy internally three years after implementation and initiate a full review five years after implementation.

## Solutions

- Establish robust, simplified, and standardized informed consent processes and controls for use of data and information sharing, consistent with legislated privacy protocols.
- Implement information sharing agreements between GNWT service providers, consistent with legislated privacy protocols, to facilitate access to programs and services and an integrated, person-centred approach to care.
- Prioritize gaps in information needed to design and evaluate programs.
- Establish accountability mechanisms and agree on internal evaluation criteria and schedules.
- Monitor individuals' and families' progress in access to housing.
- Monitor the effectiveness of homelessness services and reallocate funds to programs with best outcomes.
- Evaluate programs and services against service integration and outcomes rather than program by program.
- Use government resources to help coordinate consistent information gathering and improve program evaluation with reduced burden on partners.
- Regularly review and update the GNWT Homelessness Strategy.

GOAL	Objectives	Inputs	Activities	OUTCOMES		
				6-24 months	>2 years	>5 years / ongoing
<b>IMPROVE DATA COLLECTION</b>	<p>Allow for greater coordination of services and increased program evaluation</p> <p>Trends and needs are monitored and addressed through program planning</p> <p>Program evaluation improved</p>	<p>Engagement across government and partner organizations</p> <p>Program goals and objectives, program documentation and stakeholder engagement</p>	<p>Establish data sharing agreements and consent processes for clients, consistent with legislated privacy protocols</p> <p>Develop plain text materials to clarify why data sharing is needed, and define the scope.</p> <p>Monitor progress of individual's and families access to housing</p> <p>Continually evaluate programs and services</p> <p>Create evaluation team to undertake planning, data collection and partner engagement</p>	<p>Data sharing and standardized informed consent processes set up.</p> <p>Team established and initial plans complete</p>	<p>System established to monitor client progress in access to services and housing</p> <p>Data collected, engagement conducted, and periodic recommendations related to programs provided</p>	<p>Functional zero goals supported with robust data availability</p> <p>Programs regularly evaluated and adjusted to optimize services and improve results</p> <p>Data used to inform policy making and implement evidence-based solutions</p> <p>Strategy reviewed</p>

## Concluding Comments

Effectively addressing homelessness in the NWT requires a different approach to service provision and meeting program objectives. Housing is a fundamental human need. Only once a person's basic needs for food, clothing and shelter are met can they begin to realize their potential in other essential aspects of life. Addressing the root causes of homelessness requires sustained collaboration, cooperation and the meaningful, inclusive participation of Indigenous Governments, NGO's, communities, and people with living or lived experience. It requires the GNWT to move away from program-centric thinking and behaviours towards person-centred service delivery that considers the whole picture of individuals' and families' needs. It requires commitment to ongoing effort that may in some cases, only produce small, incremental positive change, especially at first. It requires continued engagement, learning and adaptation. The ambitious and worthy goal of functional zero homelessness in NWT communities and the actions presented in this Strategy are a step in this direction.

We gratefully acknowledge the individuals and organizations that provided input on the preliminary draft and who have been involved in recent related GNWT engagement, including the work undertaken by the Standing Committee on Social Development, and engagement on Integrated Service Delivery. We would like to thank representatives from the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness; the City of Yellowknife; the Hay River Committee for Persons with Disabilities; Home Base Yellowknife; Infrastructure Canada Homelessness Policy Directorate; the National Indigenous Housing Network; the NWT Association of Communities; the NWT Disabilities Council; the NWT Seniors' Society; Resource Association for Teens (RAFT), the RCMP Yellowknife Detachment; Salvation Army Yellowknife; the Shelter Transformation Network; the Yellowknife Women's Society; YWCA NWT, Dr. Julia Christensen, Jeff Horowitz and numerous individuals who contributed valuable insights and input into this Strategy.

This Strategy is intended to provide overarching guidance in delivering resources in ways that offer as many people as possible the opportunity to thrive. There is immense public and political will to meaningfully address homelessness and social development in the NWT. The GNWT looks forward to being a strong and dedicated partner in this work.



# APPENDICES

## Homelessness and Integrated Service Delivery Team

### **Mandate:**

Provide leadership, improve accountability, and offer a single point of contact for organizations outside the GNWT collaboration on homelessness.

### **Role**

- Collaborate with the GNWT social envelope departments, other GNWT departments and community partners as required.
- Provide governance structure for implementing coordinated access, advancing integrated service delivery, addressing policy barriers with GNWT, and coordinating frontline services to the homeless.

### **Functions:**

- Communication, interdepartmentally and externally.
- Program design and evaluation, including research, training, analytics, and assessment.
- Program delivery, including quality assurance and financial oversight.

### **Description:**

The ISD Team will be attached to the Department of the Executive and Indigenous Affairs and report to the Minister Responsible for Homelessness. This arrangement is like that which currently provides policy support to the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women and is intended to avoid potential conflict that might exist between other GNWT departments and agencies with the ISD Team Mandate.

The ISD Team will be led by an Assistant Deputy Minister, who will report to the Minister Responsible for Homelessness, provide oversight and direction to the Team, participate in relevant interdepartmental committees and working groups, and support the Minister and represent the GNWT in interprovincial and federal partnerships and initiatives.

Reporting to the Assistant Deputy Minister will be a total of 18 to 20 employees, working with two teams:

A program evaluation and design team will be tasked with, research, analysis and assessment of policy, programs, and services, as well as development of training materials for frontline service providers. Best practice incorporates program evaluation with program design. This team will also support quality assurance initiatives and change management efforts. The team's work will also be supported by the improved data collection and the inventory of government programs and related analysis conducted under the Government Renewal Initiative.

A person-centered services team will advance the integrated services delivery model and lead the coordination of frontline services to the homeless. This team will advocate and promote a multi-departmental approach that provides better coordination of services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness and work with program evaluation and design to ensure practical solutions to

existing policy and program barriers. The person-centered services team will also provide advocacy for individuals and families experiencing homelessness at the front line, by working directly with other front-line service providers to match services to needs.

### **Staffing**

It is a priority to build the Team with minimal cost to the GNWT.

A scan of GNWT organizational charts and job descriptions reveals a number of existing divisions, units, and positions that describe the roles, responsibilities, and competencies required within the ISD Team. The Integrated Case Management Team, including the Territorial Director for Integrated Service Delivery will be moved from the Department of Justice to the Team. It is possible other existing positions within social envelope departments and agencies may also be transferred.

Those positions that cannot be found through transfer of similar positions from elsewhere, may be developed through transfer and reprofiling of non-essential FTEs from across the entire GNWT that have either been vacant for a prolonged period or are chronically vacant.

## Homelessness Strategy Draft Logic Model

Logic models for each of the goals are provided below, organized by timeframe and category of action.

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	0-6 MONTHS	OUTCOMES	
					>2 YEARS	>5 YEARS / ONGOING
ESTABLISH WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT APPROACH	Greater accountability for addressing homelessness established	Team with a clear mandate to lead work	Team established with senior management leadership	Core team created immediately working to advance Strategy	Team filled and regular reporting on strategy implementation provided	Lessons learned applied to broader integrated service delivery goals within the GNWT
	Integrated Service Delivery model within the GNWT implemented with initial focus on homelessness	Engagement across government and with partners	Recruit and fill key positions with reprofiled resources where possible		Implement regional ISD sites	Empower frontline staff and middle managers
			Co-locate Unit within Executive and Indigenous Affairs			Establish pathfinder positions in every region
			Establish regular meetings with partners and key supports within Departments and Agencies			
			Develop internal GNWT information sharing agreements			

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	0-6 MONTHS	OUTCOMES	
					>2 YEARS	>5 YEARS / ONGOING
<p><b>ADDRESS POLICIES THAT CREATE BARRIERS TO HOUSING AND STRENGTHEN POLICY EFFORTS TO ADDRESS AND PREVENT HOMELESSNESS</b></p>	<p>Policy barriers to accessing social, mental health and housing supports addressed.</p> <p>Joint policies between departments established.</p>	<p>Team with a clear mandate to lead work</p> <p>Engagement across government and with partners to identify most common policy barriers.</p>	<p>Advance and assess the effectiveness of Housing NWT renewal and policy changes associated with Income Assistance review.</p> <p>Policy barriers addressed at regular meetings at all levels and addressed by Child and Family Deputy Ministers' and Committee-of-Cabinet.</p>	<p>Team created with policy development and coordination included in its mandate.</p>	<p>Policy barriers identified and options for revision advanced to Deputy Ministers' and Ministers' Committees.</p>	<p>Implement policy changes and monitor their effectiveness.</p> <p>Coordinated policy-making between departments.</p>

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	6-24 MONTHS	OUTCOMES	
					>2 YEARS	>5 YEARS / ONGOING
<b>IMPROVE DATA COLLECTION</b>	<p>Allow for greater coordination of services and increased program evaluation</p> <p>Trends and needs are monitored and addressed through program planning</p> <p>Program evaluation improved</p>	<p>Engagement across government and partner organizations</p> <p>Program goals and objectives, program documentation and stakeholder engagement</p>	<p>Establish data sharing agreements and consent processes for clients, consistent with legislated privacy protocols</p> <p>Develop plain text materials to clarify why data sharing is needed, and define the scope.</p> <p>Monitor progress of individual's and families access to housing</p> <p>Continually evaluate programs and services</p> <p>Create evaluation team to undertake planning, data collection and partner engagement</p>	<p>Data sharing and standardized informed consent processes set up.</p> <p>Team established and initial plans complete</p>	<p>System established to monitor client progress in access to services and housing</p> <p>Data collected, engagement conducted, and periodic recommendations related to programs provide</p>	<p>Functional zero goals supported with robust data availability</p> <p>Programs regularly evaluated and adjusted to optimize services and improve results</p> <p>Data used to inform policy making and implement evidence-based solutions</p> <p>Strategy reviewed</p>

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES		
				12-24 MONTHS	>2 YEARS	>5 YEARS / ONGOING
<b>ESTABLISH FUNCTIONAL ZERO GOALS FOR ALL COMMUNITIES</b>	Goals set for all communities	System capacity measured; gaps identified	Communities and service providers engaged	Meetings held and inventory of needs for each community established	Goals set for each community to reduce homelessness	Homelessness is rare and brief in each community
				Communities and partners engaged to set manageable number of homeless	Coordinated Access System implemented	Shelters are more oriented toward finding housing solutions within an integrated system

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	12-24 MONTHS	OUTCOMES	
					>2 YEARS	>5 YEARS / ONGOING
SUPPORT COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS	Regular partnership meetings; establish regional ISD sites	Partners availability	Partners engaged to establish meeting schedules	Meetings set with available partners	Regular meetings occurring with coordination of efforts occurring	Regular communication among ISD Regional Sites; create a Community of Practice.
	Housing and shelter needs and program gaps in capacity identified for each community	Program inventory Engagement with partners	Partner meetings and collaboration with dedicated team Establish single fund with simplified application and reporting	Meetings and inventory of shelter needs conducted	Business plans and budgets adjusted to better meet identified needs Standing Committee engagement on strategies to address and prevent homelessness	Housing and shelter needs in each community quickly identified and addressed
		Joint training for GNWT and community service partners	Establish working relationships with community partners	Regular engagement with Indigenous governments and regional partners on NWT housing and social needs		

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	12-24 MONTHS	OUTCOMES	
					>2 YEARS	>5 YEARS / ONGOING
<b>ENSURE SHELTER SERVICES HAVE APPROPRIATE RESOURCES</b>	<p>Improved capacity for community partners</p> <p>Develop consistent service standards</p> <p>Contracted support services available and aligned with needs</p>	<p>Engagement with partner organizations and communities</p> <p>Engagement with partners</p> <p>Inventory of programs</p>	<p>Meet with partners to review standards and identify barriers</p> <p>Make training available to partner organizations</p> <p>Share information to identify gaps and ensure best use of resources</p>	<p>Training offered</p> <p>Review inventory of programs; gaps in services and solutions identified</p>	<p>Consistent standards developed</p> <p>Resources identified to address gaps</p> <p>Changes to programs identified as required to match needs</p>	<p>Standards applied recognizing unique needs of each community</p> <p>Expanded, coordinated suite of services available throughout NWT</p> <p>Program changes implemented to match needs</p>



GOAL	OBJECTIVES	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	12-24 MONTHS	OUTCOMES	
					>2 YEARS	>5 YEARS / ONGOING
<b>IMPROVE ACCESS TO MENTAL WELLNESS AND ADDICTIONS RECOVERY SERVICES</b>	<p>Services are provided in a culturally safe, trauma informed manner</p> <p>Individuals and families are quickly matched to social, mental health, and housing services</p> <p>Services are coordinated to integrate care among providers</p>	<p>Employee availability</p> <p>Centralized intake and referrals</p> <p>Information from departments, agencies and partner organizations</p>	<p>Training for staff within GNWT and partner organizations</p> <p>Develop internal GNWT service and information sharing agreements</p> <p>Increase outreach services, regular individual or family contact, and ongoing support</p>	<p>Training needs identified</p> <p>Barriers removed to information sharing</p> <p>Required resources to improve outreach and supports identified</p> <p>Information sharing agreements finalized</p> <p>Implement standardized protocols to ensure continuity of care amid staff turnover</p>	<p>Training rolled out to employees in GNWT and partner organizations</p> <p>Coordinated intake and referral processes established</p> <p>Resources added to increase outreach, provide regular contact and ongoing support</p>	<p>All employees trained; training as new employees hired</p> <p>Individuals and families experiencing homelessness are quickly connected with services</p> <p>Continuity of care amid staff turnover</p>

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES		
				12-24 MONTHS	>2 YEARS	>5 YEARS / ONGOING
<b>INCREASE SUPPORTIVE AND TRANSITIONAL HOUSING</b>	<p>More transitional and supportive housing options available</p> <p>Reduce time individuals and families wait for programs and supports</p>	<p>Engagement with communities and partner organizations to determine need and options</p>	<p>Meet with partners to identify funding opportunities under existing federal and territorial programs</p> <p>Encourage greater coordination and collaboration on projects</p> <p>Include new transitional housing facilities for clients returning from addictions treatment</p> <p>Increase GNWT funding</p> <p>Engage landlords</p>	<p>Meetings held to identify needs and options</p>	<p>Projects identified, funding obtained for construction of new facilities</p>	<p>Increased number of facilities created to meet functional zero goals</p>

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	12-24 MONTHS	OUTCOMES	
					>2 YEARS	>5 YEARS / ONGOING
<b>INCREASE STOCK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING</b>	Mitigate the risk of people becoming homeless with more affordable housing and make it easier for persons to find affordable housing options	Engagement across governments, the private sector, and partnership organizations	<p>Establish consistent Affordable Housing definition</p> <p>Increase points allocated to people experiencing homelessness to determine housing allocation priority</p> <p>Create inventory of land available in communities</p> <p>Incentivize more housing cooperatives</p> <p>Engage developers to identify barriers</p> <p>Engage Indigenous Government partners to align housing initiatives</p> <p>Engage CMHC and federal government on long term solutions</p>	Meetings held with governments and partners, and options identified	<p>More housing developments occurring with targets established throughout the territory</p> <p>Regular meetings occurring between GNWT, Indigenous governments, communities, federal government</p>	Housing affordability measurably improved in all communities

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