



Needs Analysis of Housing Supports in Prince County Region of Prince Edward Island

Progress on Recommendations





OVERVIEW

Through the Community Housing Fund, The Canadian Mental Health Association, in partnership with the Department of Social Development and Housing, engaged MRSB Consulting Services Inc. to undertake a needs analysis of housing supports in the Prince County region of Prince Edward Island.

This report identifies affordable and adequate housing, emergency shelter, supportive housing, transportation, daytime support, addictions and mental health, coordination and communication, and data collection as gaps affecting homeless individuals in the Prince County region. The report provides both short and long-term recommendations to address regional needs.

This document provides an update on the status of implementation of the recommendations as of June 2022. The Prince County needs assessment identified six short term recommendations and one long-term recommendation, each with action items:

As a next step in the Housing Action Plan, government is committed to working with community partners to support the implementation of recommendations from the Needs Analysis of Housing Supports in Prince County report.

SHORT TERM RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. *Secure units in the Prince County Region to use for Short-Term Supportive Housing: three action items, all in progress.*
2. *Continue to work with service providers and support the immediate implementation of Coordinated Access and Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) 4.0: one action item, in progress.*
3. *Continue to support the construction of affordable housing in Prince County: one action item, in progress.*
4. *Increase awareness of and connection to housing supports: one action item, in progress.*
5. *Enhance the working capacity of the Provincial Housing Navigator: one action item, in progress.*
6. *Increase the number of hotel/motel emergency shelters in the Prince County area: one action item, in progress.*

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATION:

1. *Increase supportive housing with appropriate wrap-around supports in the Prince County region: one action item, in progress.*

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

The Community Housing Fund is a collaboration between the Canadian Mental Health Association, PEI Division (CMHA-PEI) and the Province of Prince Edward Island to develop sustainable affordable housing.

The aim of this program is to support housing developments focused on affordability, vulnerable populations, assisted living, or those that require increased support. Funding under this program can be used to develop solutions to PEI's housing shortage. Through this fund, CMHA-PEI commissioned a needs analysis of housing supports in the Prince County region of Prince Edward Island published in January 2021.



Since that time, Government has made significant investments in housing including options for emergency and supportive housing services in Prince County, such as:

- *Identifying scattered supportive housing sites in Prince County;*
- *Supported the Boys and Girls' Club of Summerside to start an emergency shelter and transitional housing facility in Summerside;*
- *Opened 114 units since 2019 with another 58 currently under design in Prince County;*
- *Distributed mobile rental vouchers and rental supplements;*
- *Supported 35 builds through the Affordable Housing Development Program in Prince County; and*
- *Increased the working hours of the Housing Navigator from half-time to full-time.*

While all action items have been identified as in progress or completed, the work in delivering emergency, transitional and supportive housing in Prince County and across the Province is on-going and does not have an end date. The department will continue to work collectively with federal, municipal and community partners to deliver supports and services that support homeless or housing insecure Islanders.

We know that an adequate supply of safe, affordable and appropriate housing is a prerequisite to truly ending homelessness in the long term, which Government has committed to working toward with the *Poverty Elimination Strategy Act*. Through federal, municipal and community partnerships we will continue to provide access to emergency and supportive housing to Islanders who need it most.

Hon. Matthew MacKay

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew MacKay". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Minister of Social Development and Housing*

*For the reporting period, MLA Brad Trivers served as Minister responsible for Social Development and Housing.



CONSULTANT'S RECOMMENDATIONS: <i>SHORT TERM</i>	Status as of Spring 2022
<p>Units throughout Prince County be secured to use for scattered-site¹ supportive housing.</p> <p>Non-profits and service provider organization could enter into service agreements to provide case management and non-clinical supports to individuals at scattered-site supportive housing locations.</p> <p>The eligibility criteria for scattered-site¹ supportive housing in Prince County should be adopted from the ongoing Charlottetown pilot project and adapted to the Prince County area.</p>	<p>Identifying units for scattered-site supportive housing has started in early 2021 along with engaging community partners to operate services in Prince County. Currently, suitable community partners are unable to take on a supportive housing service agreement. The work to identify potential sites and units is ongoing.</p> <p>Experience and eligibility criteria for scattered-site supportive housing will be shared with Prince County service provider organizations leading this work.</p> <p>In 2021, the department of Social Development and Housing engaged in a service agreement with the Summerside Boys and Girls Club to establish LifeHouse Summerside. Two houses have been purchased and are undergoing extensive renovations. One will be designated for emergency shelter with two bedrooms. The second building will be designated for transitional housing with beds in three rooms for women and their children. LifeHouse is continuing to explore other funding options to grow their service offerings.</p>
<p>Continue to work with service providers and support the immediate implementation of Coordinated Access and HIFIS 4.0</p>	<p>The steps to initiate, plan and implement Coordinated Access and HIFIS 4.0 began in April 2020 and formally launched on March 31, 2022. Addressing Homelessness PEI is a collaborative partnership of seventeen government and community organizations working to reduce and end homelessness. Prince County service providers include Canadian Mental Health Association, Chief Mary Bernard Memorial Women's Shelter and LifeHouse Summerside. Coordinated Access is a process using common consent, standardized intake and assessment tools, policy and procedures, training, prioritization, matching to services and, and ongoing case management. HIFIS 4.0 is a web-based IT platform that is used to gather data on the clients facing homelessness and the depth of their needs.</p>

¹ - A scattered-site refers to individual transitional housing units throughout a city, town or community.

CONSULTANT'S RECOMMENDATIONS: <i>SHORT TERM</i>	Status as of Spring 2022
<p>Continue to support the construction of affordable housing in Prince County.</p>	<p>Since 2019, the department of Social Development and Housing (SDH) supported affordable housing including the following in the Prince County area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opened 3 units in Tignish; • Opened 19 units in Alberton with another 10 units under design; • Opened 12 housing units in O'Leary; • Opened 9 units in Kensington; and, • Opened 71 units in Summerside with another 48 units under design. <p>Housing through the Community Housing Fund (CHF)</p> <p>In June 2021, government announced another \$3 million in the Community Housing Fund, a partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association, to provide a second round of funding to ten community organizations to support initiatives for seniors, the Indigenous community, or those experiencing homelessness. In April 2022, the province announced funding to six organizations through the Community Housing Fund and invested another \$3M with \$500K earmarked for indigenous housing projects.</p> <p>Housing through the Affordable Housing Development Program (AHDP)</p> <p>The Affordable Housing Development Program supports the development of affordable rental units. Assistance is provided to private entrepreneurs, non-profit corporations, municipalities, development corporations or housing cooperatives who are building affordable housing units in Prince Edward Island.</p> <p>From the time the Prince County needs analysis was published, (January 2021), the province has supported the build of 77 units through the AHDP with 16 units located in Prince County. These units will support Islanders on the social housing registry with rent set at 25 per cent of income.</p> <p>Since the beginning of the program, the province has created 103 social housing units through the AHDP with 35 located in Prince County.</p> <p>Government owned social housing units</p> <p>As of February 2022, there are 420 seniors' units in Prince County owned and operated by the PEI Housing Corporation supporting people through rent geared to income in addition to 62 rental supplements offered to seniors in Prince County. plus, 62 seniors rent supplements. There are 169 family units in Prince County owned and operated by the PEI Housing Corporation supporting people through rent geared to income in addition to 21 rental supplements offered to seniors in Prince County. plus, 21 rent supplements. Of the 589 units, 31 of them are accessible.</p> <p>As of February 2022, approximately 860 mobile rental vouchers have been implemented across PEI, with 425 of these are available in Prince County.</p>
<p>Increase awareness of and connection to housing supports</p>	<p>There are natural connections points in the Prince County region including the partners in Addressing Homelessness PEI. People dealing with housing instability can also reach out to Housing Services, the Housing Navigator and Social Programs division. The Shelter Support Line and 211 can be used to provide information, plan, and seek emergency shelter placements.</p> <p>The Shelter Support Line and the 211 service are promoted on an ongoing basis through Communications PEI. An awareness campaign for the Shelter Support Line will take place in the winter of 2022.</p> <p>To ensure front-line service providers are aware of what supports exist and how to access them, Housing Services prepared a presentation for all staff and posted it online explaining the Housing Continuum and a wide variety of services and support available to people. Presenters provided high level overviews of programs, including how 211 supports everyone to find services across the Island.</p> <p>Recently all communications materials related to the Shelter Support Line; to build awareness of government and community supports for emergency housing; and, work to de-stigmatize the experiences of individuals who face homelessness and housing insecurity.</p> <p>An updated Shelter Support Resource has been circulated to community partners and publicly.</p>



CONSULTANT'S RECOMMENDATIONS: <i>SHORT TERM</i>	Status as of Spring 2022
Enhance the working capacity of the Provincial Housing Navigator	Since the Needs Analysis was conducted, the Provincial Housing Navigator has increased to a full-time staff position. This role is part of the Supportive Housing Section, well-connected and embedded in several collaborative processes including Addressing Homelessness PEI, the Community Outreach Center, and the Bridge Table with government and community supports and services.
Increase the number of hotel/motel emergency shelters in the Prince County area	<p>The department has ongoing arrangements with 3 hotel/motel operators in Prince County to support people in need to temporary shelter.</p> <p>Through the Boys and Girls Club of Summerside, LifeHouse Summerside opened in early June 2022.</p> <p>The department has recently put out a request for expression of interest to establish an emergency shelter for identifying men in the Prince County area.</p>

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

CONSULTANT'S RECOMMENDATIONS:	Status as of Spring 2022
Increase supportive housing with appropriate wrap-around supports ² in the Prince County region	<p>Supportive housing (also called transitional) is now available for women and children at LifeHouse Summerside. LifeHouse is also a member of Addressing Homelessness PEI.</p> <p>Smith Lodge in Charlottetown, provides housing and wrap-around supports for people facing homelessness. With nine beds currently available, Smith Lodge provides ongoing support to Islanders.</p> <p>Government is working with interested parties in Prince County to explore the establishment of a men's shelter. Coordinated Access and HIFIS is currently being used by community partners to assist with systems planning and better understanding the needs of clients.</p>

² - A strength-based intervention that relies on key figures in a person's life (family, community organizations and professionals) that create, implement and monitor a plan of support. Wrap-around supports seek to identify and capitalize on individual and family assets.



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