



For Immediate Release

North End Community Health Centre selected to implement Housing First - Phase One

July 31, 2015 - Halifax, NS - The Housing and Homelessness Partnership (Partnership) announced today that North End Community Health Centre's (NECHC) Mobile Outreach Street Health (MOSH) has been chosen to implement the Housing First - Phase One initiative. NECHC will be responsible for setting up and managing Housing First – Phase One with a plan to house 50 - 60 of Halifax's most chronically and repeatedly homeless individuals. The first people will move into housing during the fall of 2015.

This five-year Housing First – Phase One initiative marks an important milestone for the Partnership, a coalition of eight organizations committed to working together to put an end to homelessness and housing poverty in the Halifax region. Partners include: Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Halifax Regional Municipality, Housing Nova Scotia, Investment Property Owners Association of NS, IWK Health Centre, Nova Scotia Health Authority - Central Zone, United Way Halifax.

The Honourable Peter MacKay was on hand to announce the government's role in the Housing - First Phase One, a project funded in part by the Government of Canada's Homelessness Partnering Strategy.

"Our Government is proud to support the Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia and all of the important work they do in our province to help those in need. With a roof over their heads, all Canadians can prosper as we work together towards eliminating homelessness."

– The Honourable Peter MacKay, Minister of Justice, Attorney General of Canada and Member of Parliament for Central Nova.

"We are pleased to partner with the Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia and other local organizations on initiatives that help prevent homelessness. Our goal for individuals coming out of homelessness is for them to thrive and secure employment so they can contribute their skills and talents to our communities."

– The Honourable Candice Bergen, Minister of State for Social Development

"Having a safe, affordable home is a basic human need and its impact shapes every aspect of our lives," said the Honourable Joanne Bernard, minister responsible for Housing Nova Scotia. "Nova Scotia is pleased to support the Housing First initiative and is committed to working with our partners to help break the cycle of homelessness."

Mayor Mike Savage has been an important advocate for those living in homelessness in the region. "Council voted strongly in favour of our participation in this significant initiative to support strong, caring communities. When we start with a roof, we truly open a door to new possibilities for the homeless," said Mike Savage, Mayor of Halifax.



“Housing First – Phase One marks a major milestone for the Housing and Homelessness Partnership as we move forward in a collaborative approach and work to end homelessness,” said Sue LaPierre, Director, Strategies and Partnerships, United Way Halifax.

NECHC has extensive experience working with homeless people and will deliver Housing First – Phase One through their Mobile Outreach Street Health (MOSH) program. “It is our plan to create excellence in the delivery of housing and health to those who are most vulnerable in our community. In the last seven years MOSH has worked collaboratively with agencies doing similar work and with the support of Housing First funding, the services in our community will be enhanced and an improved quality of life for the people we serve will be realized,” said Patti Melanson, Team Leader, MOSH.

The main funding for Housing First – Phase One has been provided by the federal government’s Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS). Other contributing partners are Housing Nova Scotia, Halifax Regional Municipality and the Nova Scotia Health Authority. . HPS funds for Housing First – Phase One are managed by the Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia (AHANS).

Housing First is a program and philosophy that accommodates people regardless of their challenges. It supports them to remain housed without a requirement that they first become “housing ready”. We know from similar programs across North America that a Housing First Program is a very effective intervention to offer people who have long struggled with homelessness. Housing First is a complementary initiative to existing services in the community that also do not require housing readiness.

NECHC’s mission is to support North End Halifax to be a healthy community by offering leadership in primary health care through health services, education, community development, outreach and advocacy. Mobile Outreach Street Health (MOSH) provides accessible primary health care services to people who are homeless, insecurely housed, street involved and underserved in our community.

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