



## The Pacific Housing Research Network

### Symposium on Housing Research in BC

CLICK!- BC's Affordable Housing Conference  
November 22-25, 2015, Richmond BC

# Summary Report

Symposium Sponsors Include:



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# Introduction

The Pacific Housing Research Network was pleased to host our 2015 Symposium on Housing Research in BC in concert with the BC Non-Profit Housing Association's annual conference, "CLICK!- BC's Affordable Housing Conference," which took place November 22-25, 2015, in Richmond BC. The sharing of recent research with so many varied housing stakeholders created a vibrant symposium.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who contributed to the success of the symposium, including: the University of Victoria, UBC School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP), UBC Okanagan, BC Housing, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), and the BC Non-Profit Housing Association (BCNPHA). The network benefits from the combined expertise of our members. Additionally, we thank all of the panel presenters who shared with us their work and commitment to contributing to affordable and sustainable housing in the province of BC.

In this summary report, you will find descriptions of all of the research presented at the 2015 Symposium. Please do not hesitate to contact the PHRN coordinator at [phrn@uvic.ca](mailto:phrn@uvic.ca) for how to contact specific researchers about any of the research summarized here.



## **Session M04: Monday November 23, 10:30-12:00**

### **Planning for Affordable, Equitable, Walkable Housing**

**Four research projects were presented as part of the “Planning for Affordable, Equitable, Walkable Housing” Panel:**

*Beyond the Downtown Eastside: A Regional Perspective on Affordability, Displacement, and Social Justice* was presented by Jeremy Stone and Karla Kloepper

*Affordable Housing for Coquitlam—Working together for Positive Economic Growth: An Analysis of Local Government Responsibilities, Tools and Measures for Affordable Housing around Rapid Transit Developments* was presented by Gaby Young

*Centralized Access to Supported Housing (CASH), Victoria, BC: A Program Evaluation* was presented by Trudy Norman

*Neighbourhood Housing Mix and Residential Location Choices in Metro Vancouver* was presented by Leonard Machler



## ***Beyond the Downtown Eastside: A Regional Perspective on Affordability, Displacement, and Social Justice***

*Jeremy Stone and Karla Kloepper*

### **Abstract:**

Although Vancouverism is traditionally associated with sustainability and progressive urban design, the city's growth has been accompanied by a skyrocketing cost of living and the subsequent displacement of many low and moderate income households. However, this is no longer purely (or even primarily) an inner-city phenomenon as rapid suburban development in Metro Vancouver between 1970 and 2011 suggest that affordability and security of tenure is increasingly a regional problem. The Downtown Eastside of Vancouver helped establish a local political culture that has to some degree recognized the needs of the poor, and has consequently catalyzed considerable social housing and innovative health care initiatives. However, over the last 40 years, a number of the region's emerging low- and moderate-income areas have not had the same history of sympathetic city councils and strong community organizations that have been present in Vancouver's inner city. Using the strengths and weaknesses of Vancouver's planning practices and social justice environments as a model, this study analyzes the housing and economic challenges that face low-income communities in the region, and comparatively evaluates the policy responses in several suburban municipalities including Surrey, Burnaby, Coquitlam/Burquitlam, Maple Ridge, and Langley City. Semi-structured qualitative interviews with municipal planners and local non-profit leaders are supplemented with a quantitative mapping of low-income neighborhoods in these areas, and a discourse analysis of local media depictions of low income communities and the relevant municipal responses. This study is funded by the Neighbourhood Change Research Partnership (NCRP) of the University of Toronto, and findings will be published in their series of papers in 2016.

### **Presenters:**

Jeremy Stone (PhD Candidate, Planning, UBC) is founder and director of Recovery and Relief Services (RRS), a niche consultancy providing economic development and recovery planning services. Jeremy has a BA in Anthropology from Reed College, and an MPA from NYU.

Karla Kloepper (MAP Candidate, UBC) has 10+ years of experience in community programming and engagement, housing development and social service provision.

Nathan Edelson is an Adjunct Professor at UBC's School of Community and Regional Planning and a Bousfield Distinguished Visiting Scholar at the University of Toronto. He is a Senior Partner with 42nd Street Consulting, which supports inclusive planning for diverse communities.



# **Affordable Housing for Coquitlam - Working Together for Positive Economic Growth: An Analysis of Local Government Responsibilities, Tools and Measures for Affordable Housing Around Rapid Transit Developments**

*Gaby Young*

## **Abstract:**

In 2014, Gaby finished her Master's project, *Affordable Housing for Coquitlam – Working together for Positive Economic Growth: an analysis of local government responsibilities, tools and measures for affordable housing around rapid transit developments*, which was prepared for the City of Coquitlam under the supervision of Dr. J. Bart Cunningham of the School of Public Administration at the University of Victoria. Recognizing that many public sector leaders are increasingly more interested in the strategies used to promote affordable housing and the fact that it remains an ongoing public policy issue for all levels of government, her report looks at solutions to address the difficulty Canadians face in keeping up with housing costs by focusing on the role of local governments specifically.

The purpose of the report is to develop a better understanding of the policy implications of municipal regulations and programs for affordable housing and determining the inhibiting and enhancing factors of common policy tools and resources used. The research is based on the perspectives of different stakeholders from the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors.

This presentation covered the report's research and findings, categorized under five research areas: leadership, financial incentives, policies and regulations, rental housing (primary and secondary), and partnerships/community consultations. This research was based on a literature review, numerous interviews, and a scan of municipal strategies for affordable housing. The findings presented the most common challenges and opportunities local governments face when it comes to affordable housing, and contributed to the discussion of potential ways to overcome these challenges and take advantage of the opportunities. The presentation concluded with six recommendations that were developed as a result of a force-field analysis of the research findings.

## **Presenter:**

Born in Toronto, but raised in Coquitlam, BC, Gaby stayed close to home and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree with a specialization in International Relations and History from the University of British Columbia. Knowing she wanted to pursue a career in the public sector, she started the Master of Public Administration program at the University of Victoria in September 2012. Gaby moved to Ottawa in 2013 to work for the federal government, and at the same time, started her Master's Project on affordable housing. She completed my graduate studies by the end of August 2014.

# Centralized Access to Supported Housing (CASH), Victoria, BC: A Program Evaluation

*Trudy Norman, Bernie Pauly*

## **Abstract:**

A key resource for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness is access to social and supported housing. Individuals must often navigate a complex and fragmented system with multiple waiting lists to access supported housing. When housing resources are limited, individuals often experience extended waiting periods, perhaps never receiving housing.

Central or 'single point' access to housing and services for people who experience homelessness aims to assist clients, housing providers and decision-makers to address issues related to accessing scarce resources. We will discuss evaluation of Centralized Access to Supported Housing (CASH) in Victoria, BC to determine fidelity to program objectives and Housing First principles, provide feedback on user satisfaction and offer recommendations for enhancements to CASH. Using a case study design and drawing data from key informant interviews with clients, referral agents, housing providers, community and funding partners, program observations, documents and records, we were able to gain an understanding of the usefulness and shortcomings of the CASH program.

Several themes emerged in our findings. First, CASH is a pathway to a waiting list for supported housing, not a housing program. Second, CASH is a ticket in a supported housing lottery; third, CASH aims to be a fair and equitable process; having CASH is better than not having CASH and fifth, there is a lack of client engagement in the CASH process. Our findings emphasize that a systematic attempt to foster equity in accessing housing cannot address a shortfall of safe, adequate affordable housing or the systemic issues that influence the availability of housing. Recommendations highlight potential solutions to multiple program 'disconnects' including lack of referral agent and client awareness of CASH processes and client involvement in the CASH process. If implemented, recommendations may assist funders and advisors to better assess program utility and the importance of systematic barriers that present challenges to administering scarce resources in a sociopolitical environment that focuses on withdrawal rather than creation of social welfare supports.

## **Presenters:**

Trudy Norman is an interdisciplinary doctoral candidate in Nursing and Anthropology at the University of Victoria focusing specifically on homelessness. Her research interests center on various aspects of social inclusion. She has over twenty-five years experience working with people who experience homelessness in a variety of practice and research settings.

Bernie Pauly is an Associate Professor in the School of Nursing and Scientist at the Centre for Addictions Research of BC at the University of Victoria. She is a research collaborator with the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness. Her research focuses on health equity, homelessness, harm reduction and substance use and interventions that promote health equity in public health services and community responses to homelessness and substance use.

# Neighbourhood Housing Mix and Residential Location Choices in Metro Vancouver

*Leonard Machler*

## **Abstract:**

Policies aimed at improving the distribution and diversity of different housing types – such as townhomes, multifamily units and secondary suites - enjoy widespread support in the planning community. Metro Vancouver’s Regional Growth Strategy, for example, seeks to increase the supply and diversity of the housing stock within neighbourhoods to meet its goals of developing “Complete Communities.” The intent of this strategy, and policies like this, is to enable a broader spectrum of the population – including people of different economic means and space needs – to settle in their preferred neighbourhood. Improving neighbourhood matching opportunities may be particularly important for households with preferences for “walkable” (Frank et al 2011) communities where stores, services and amenities are within walking distance of homes, and the physical environment is designed for pedestrians and public transit use over the car. Matching people with preferences for walkable communities into these types of neighbourhoods is important since residing in walkable neighbourhoods has been linked to numerous social, environmental, and economic benefits compared to residing in suburban environments. However, few studies have investigated whether a greater mix of housing types successfully enables households to settle in the community of their choice. This presentation highlights results from a doctoral dissertation aimed at uncovering the association between the degree of neighbourhood housing mix and the ability for households with preferences for walkable neighbourhoods to live in these communities. These relationships are tested using data obtained from a household survey of 1,186 residents of Metro Vancouver.

This presentation was primarily aimed at practitioners and researchers interested in planning walkable and New Urbanist developments and housing researchers studying affordable housing strategies in high-priced regions. Additionally, the presentation was also intended to appeal to researchers in the fields of urban design and transportation.

## **Presenter:**

Leonard Machler is a PhD Candidate in the School of Community and Regional Planning at the University of British Columbia (UBC) and a researcher in the Health and Community Design Lab at the School of Population and Public Health, also at UBC. His research focuses on Smart Growth planning, residential preference and satisfaction, and housing affordability.

## Poster Presentations: Monday November 23, 3:00-3:30 and 5:30-7:00

Ten posters were featured at the PHRN poster session on Monday November 23:

### **Social Inclusion: Sheltering Homeless Seniors in British Columbia**

*Peter Fedos*

#### **Abstract:**

Accommodating homeless seniors in emergency shelters has emerged as challenge for shelter operators. Homeless Shelter Services in British Columbia (BC) define seniors as people who are 50 years old or older. This elder population has been growing in the shelter sector for the last five years. Options Community Services Society (OCSS) began discussions in the shelter community in order to learn how best to shelter homeless seniors.

#### Methods:

1. OCSS participated in a literature review and engaged in discussions within the sector to see what prior learning was available that could be built on or could be synthesized to serve homeless seniors better.
2. Identified common needs and abilities homeless seniors may have.
3. OCSS shelter staff looked at ways to create safe space in the shelters for homeless seniors using proxemics within building design.

Findings: OCSS identified two groups of seniors who were entering emergency shelter programs. One group were people with lived experienced of homelessness. The other population were individuals with no lived experience of homelessness. OCSS recognized common threads in the literature and through discussions with staff were able to connect this learning with the shelter case management practices for homeless seniors.

Conclusions: Engagement, case planning and length of stay were adjusted to accommodate homeless seniors in the shelter. The program shaped space in the shelter in a way that supported older people being served. OCSS managed to lessen the trauma of being homeless which impacts this vulnerable population especially. OCSS has the highest population of seniors served in the Lower Mainland. This is due to building design and the program's ability to shape safe space.

#### **Presenter:**

Peter Fedos is the senior manager at Options, with 25 years experience managing emergency shelters and 13 years experience in outreach services. Post graduate studies; currently affiliated with Saint Francis Xavier University, Nova Scotia, researching credentialing in the Outreach and Shelter sectors. Part time instructor for Shelter Net British Columbia which is the umbrella organization that provides training and education to the homelessness services sector in British Columbia.

# Parenting and Depression among Homeless Women: Understanding the Mediating Role of Subjective Quality of Life

*Janice M. Y. Hu, Denise M. Zabkiewicz, Michelle Patterson, Lawrence McCandless*

## **Abstract:**

Research literature that addresses housing instability issues in North America focusing on single adults has been growing while research on the challenges and circumstances of homeless families remains relatively sparse. Homeless families, comprised mostly of single women with young children, is the fastest growing segment of the homeless population in North America. Among homeless women, mental health problems, thought to be rooted, in part, in an undermining of women's feelings of competency as parents, are prevalent. The complex circumstances and struggles experienced by homeless women with children further jeopardize their mental health and undermine their quality of life.

Research findings on women living in poverty consistently reveal that homeless women who are mothers experience poor quality of life and increased depression. Evidence also indicates that, among homeless mothers, a positive relationship between quality of life and depression exists where increased quality of life is associated with improvements in depression. It is, however, unclear whether the effect of parenting status on depression is mediated by quality of life.

By drawing from a national sample of homeless women with mental health problems who participated in the At Home Study, a randomized controlled trial conducted in five Canadian cities between 2009 and 2013, this study seeks to assess whether the relationship between parenting and depression can be accounted for by quality of life.

Given the growing rate of homelessness among families, obtaining a better understanding of the connections between family circumstances, quality of life and mental health can offer important directions for future services. This is a salient issue as a failure to recognize the differences in needs between homeless women with and without children may contribute to intergenerational consequences of homelessness and mental health issues.

## **Presenter:**

Janice Hu is a Master of Science student in the Faculty of Health Sciences at Simon Fraser University (SFU). Her research interests focus on the challenges faced by marginalized populations, in particular single homeless women with young children.

## Aboriginal Coalition to End Homelessness

*Fran Hunt-Jinnouchi*

### **Abstract:**

Increasing numbers of Aboriginal households are living away from their home communities. It was estimated in 2006 that 73.4% of Aboriginal Households reside off-reserve, with 54% living in cities (NAHA, 2009; Environics Institute, 2010). The movement of Aboriginal households into urban centers provides unique sets of challenges for those households, resulting in 20.4% being in core need (CMHC, 2011). Incidences of homeless have a similar level of disproportionate representation with 21.5% of shelter visits in Victoria self-identifying as Aboriginal (Finding Our Path, 2010).

To address this the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness embarked on a unique journey after dialogue circles with the Aboriginal homeless indicated that in addition to their physical needs what was equally essential to their survival was a spiritual and cultural connection with each other as Aboriginal people, and to their homelands.

Hunt-Jinnouchi, the project coordinator, led the task to attain support from the First Nations Chiefs across Vancouver Island to bring an indigenous lens and voice to seeking solutions to end homelessness. During this time an Aboriginal Coalition to End Homeless was also established. The engagement with Chiefs culminated in a gathering of leaders in a local Bighouse on Esquimalt Nation territory that brought the Aboriginal people facing housing challenges, municipal leaders and organizations together to “stand up” and cloak the men and women from the street in traditional tunics. The Chiefs in attendance made a symbolic gesture by signing a drum that read:

***Our way is to care for all of our people, from the youngest to the oldest. We are all one. Some of our people living away from home are suffering, isolated, and homeless. We stand together to end homelessness.***

The gathering had profound impacts and launched the momentum for the coalition to move forward in collaboration with First Nations leaders, something not done previously.

### **Presenter:**

Fran Hunt-Jinnouchi is an indigenous consultant who owns Hunt-Jinnouchi Enterprises. She lost her mother to the streets of the “East Side” in Vancouver so her recent work with the Greater Victoria Coalition has personal meaning. She believes indigenous people must articulate their own issues and solutions and has played a lead role in bringing leaders from across Vancouver Island together.

Hunt-Jinnouchi was a former elected First Nations chief, a school trustee, and inaugural director at UVic for the Office of Indigenous Affairs. She is currently a restaurant owner and federal candidate MP for the Green Party (Cowichan-Malahat-Langford riding).

# Consumer Guide to High Performance Homes

Remi Charron

## Abstract:

Faced with rising energy costs, a greater concern for the environment and an increased focus on the comfort and health of their families, homebuyers are looking for homes that are more comfortable and healthier, more energy efficient, environmentally friendly—and less expensive to operate. To help consumers navigate their way through the number of emerging options, the Homeowner Protection Office (HPO), a branch of BC Housing, developed a *Consumer Guide to High Performance Homes*.

Despite an increasing number of energy efficient technologies, and emerging building performance labels, experience has shown that the most cost-effective way for a consumer to spend their money to increase performance has remained unchanged over the decades:

- maximize the performance of the building envelope by adding more insulation,
- pay attention to details to increase the airtightness, and
- add mechanical ventilation with heat recovery to improve indoor air quality.

This simple approach was shown to be the central component of all the 11 EQUilibrium™ Sustainable Housing demonstration projects that were constructed as part of a Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) initiative launched in 2006, two of which were in B.C.

As energy conservation and renewable energy generation technologies such as LEDs and solar photovoltaic (PV) systems become available and more affordable, they can be purchased and added relatively easily to the home, so focusing on the building envelope at the time of construction makes sense.

The HPO consumer guide provides details on the benefits of buying a high performance home, and provides information on the basic design approach. The presentation for the 2015 PHRN Symposium gave an overview of the *Consumer Guide to High Performance Homes*.

## Presenter:

Remi Charron obtained his Ph.D. in Building Engineering in 2007, where his research focused on developing an optimisation tool for the design of net-zero energy solar homes. He then worked for three years as a senior researcher in sustainable housing at Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), with many projects focused on their EQUilibrium Housing demonstration initiative. He has been a member of various committees and teams including the R-2000 and Energy Star for Houses renewal committees. He now offers consulting services, working actively on research and education initiatives with the BC Homeowner Protection Office.

## Local Energy Efficiency Partnership in BC

*Gary Hamer*

### **Abstract:**

Local Energy Efficiency Partnership (LEEP) BC is a multi-stakeholder initiative aiming at identifying and removing barriers to adoption of energy efficient building innovation technologies in BC. It involves a technology evaluation and facilitation process developed and delivered by Natural Resources Canada, and works with local stakeholders, including homebuilders, suppliers, utilities and governments, to identify technologies that will significantly improve energy efficiency of new residential construction beyond the minimum code requirements. LEEP has previously been launched in Ontario and Manitoba, with positive accolades.

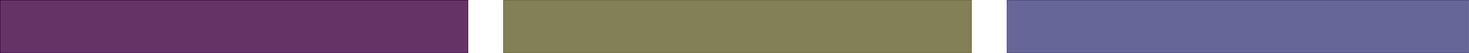
LEEP has been found to enable homebuilders to speed the pace of innovation in their industry. In the LEEP process, the participating builders help to assess and screen technologies based on their suitability and marketability in the region.

LEEP-BC is also looking for stretch energy targets that can be endorsed by authorities and adopted by interested municipalities so that the home building industry can work with more consistent targets from region to region. With local and provincial building codes being repeatedly updated over time, the LEEP-BC partnership is also interested in working with the housing industry to focus on key technologies in sufficient depth that they can determine which upgrades could be implemented smoothly and which ones are not yet ready. There is a need to work more closely with industry so that it is easier to make appropriate decisions on programs and codes.

Phase 1 of LEEP-BC is in-progress for Climate Zone 4 (Lower Mainland & Island South). Pending the success of the first phase, two more phases are tentatively planned for Climate Zone 5 (Southern Interior & Island North) and Climate Zones 6-8 (Central & Northern BC). This poster presentation described technologies evaluated for Climate Zone 4 in BC.

### **Presenter:**

Gary Hamer is Standards Lead, Advanced Demand Side Management Strategies, Power Smart Marketing, at BC Hydro.



## **An Analysis of the Partnership and Network Approach to Ending Street Homelessness in the City of Vancouver**

*Debbie Biring*

### **Abstract:**

This research project provides an analysis of the Social and Supportive Housing Partnership that is between the City of Vancouver, the Province of B.C. (BC Housing), and the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority. The purpose of this Social and Supportive Housing Partnership is to increase affordable housing and end street homelessness in Vancouver. The Partnership believes that effective communication and collaboration is needed to develop affordable housing and to solve street homelessness. This project then answers the research question: What lessons can the City of Vancouver learn from the Social and Supportive Housing Partnership to improve future collaboration and communication with the Province of B.C. (BC Housing) and the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, specific to affordable housing and street homelessness?

### **Presenter:**

Debbie Biring is a graduate student at the University of Victoria in the School of Public Administration

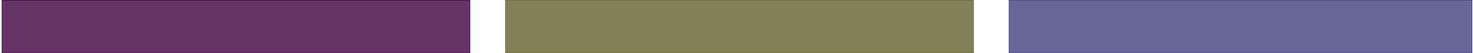
## **Mixed income housing considerations for Vancouver**

*Shirin Karoubi, Priyanka Chakrabarti*

### **Abstract:**

Our research focuses on the use of mixed income housing in Vancouver and throughout Canada. We looked at the success and failures of such developments and made several recommendations guided by the best practices for the social-economic feasibility of mixed income-developments. The recommendations have been listed and expanded upon within the themes Empowerment, Communication with Residents, Social Support, Accessibility, Municipal Policies and Partnerships, Development, Ownership and Separation (integrated vs. segregated units within the same building).

Our research also addresses the benefits and anticipated challenges for each recommendation. Our themes were developed using information obtained both from interviews with housing professionals, and from a literature review of case studies on existing mixed income developments in North America. The housing experts we contacted were from BC Housing, Toronto Community Housing, local non-profit housing organizations, architects, private developers, property managers, municipal planners, and academics. Interview questions were guided by the literature review to obtain a “real-world” view of mixed-income developments in Vancouver.



Among other things, our findings taught us that housing would work best in ‘rental only’ developments rather than in buildings that include market ownership. We also address the major concerns of private developers, who have fewer liberties while engaging in mixed-income housing in Vancouver, and have only recently started working with the city on mixed income housing projects. Our recommendations also expand on issues such as private developer ownership of non-market units and separation of market from non-market housing residents (e.g. separate entrances in Woodward’s). Separation of residents has worked to the benefit of the building and neighborhood in some instances, and created conflict in others. Our findings can have a substantial and positive impact on the future of housing by identifying decisions that have led to success, and mistakes that should be avoided.

**Presenters:**

Shirin Karoubi and Priyanka Chakrabarti are currently completing their Masters graduate degrees at the School of Community and Regional Planning at the University of British Columbia. Shirin has a strong interest in waste management and upcycling at the municipal level. She plans to combine her interests in affordable housing and waste reduction by researching the financial benefits of using recycled Demolition Land Clearance (DLC) waste in housing development. Priyanka’s focus is on urban development and design. She is conducting research on the effects of changing industrial economy and real estate escalation on neighborhoods in Vancouver and San Francisco.

## **Pacific Housing Research Network**

*Tricia Roche, Emily Comeau*

**Abstract:**

The Pacific Housing Research Network (PHRN) facilitates multi-sectoral housing research activities across BC and fosters dialogue and collaboration among housing researchers and stakeholders to encourage the effective application of research results to housing solutions.

PHRN aims to promote the dissemination and discussion of research results and lessons learned from research focused on housing affordability and sustainability. The network seeks to encourage its members to communicate and discuss ongoing research projects, and to seek out and communicate opportunities to disseminate research.

**Presenters:**

Tricia Roche is Network Coordinator for PHRN and Associate Director of the UVic Centre for Youth and Society. Her background includes campus-community partnership development, research facilitation, teaching community engaged research and grants strategy.

Emily Comeau is a Research Assistant at the Pacific Housing Research Network. Currently a Masters student in Linguistics at the University of Victoria, her research focuses on community-based language revitalization and the decolonization of language pedagogy.



**Session T04: Tuesday November 24, 10:30-12:00**  
**Housing First**

**Four projects were presented during the “Housing First” Panel:**

*Lived Experiences of Community Integration and Housing First.* Jim Frankish, Faith Eiboff, with the Vancouver Housing First Speakers Bureau.

*At Home Looks Like – Making Housing Home’s photovoice project.* Karina Czyzewski, Nathan Lauster, Frank Tester, Sara Amadi, Ria Nishikawara, Yalan Yang, Adriana Brodyn, Zachary Hyde

*The Link Housing First: Making Housing First Work for Youth Leaving Care.* Drew Stewart

*Housing First – Mapping the Choices / Understanding the Options.* Lorraine Copas



## Lived Experiences of Community Integration and Housing First

Unfortunately, principal investigators *Jim Frankish and Faith Eiboff* were unable to attend this session, so in lieu of their presentation, three community members from the Vancouver Housing First Speakers Bureau described their experiences with homelessness, integration, and available programming. The original presentation would have pertained to the following:

### **Abstract:**

Supported housing programs, such as Housing First, have demonstrated success in helping transition the most vulnerable homeless individuals into independent housing. The Housing First model offers choice and immediate access to housing in the community, with flexible recovery-oriented services and supports. However, evidence to date has shown fewer gains across domains of community integration among formerly homeless citizens once housed in the community, indicating that many individuals may face continuing challenges and unmet needs in the transition to becoming housed, e.g., ongoing mental health and addiction issues, marginalization and stigma, exclusion from the workforce, and social isolation. A better understanding of the integration needs of this population is therefore critical for maintaining long-term housing stability, recovery, and quality of life outcomes.

This presentation will explore the key components and dimensions of community integration among homeless persons from a recently conducted scoping review. Findings will be informed by the participation and expertise of formerly homeless individuals from the Vancouver site of the national At Home/Chez Soi Project who will share their first-hand experiences on the impacts of Housing First programming in their lives, and what it's like interacting with their community of choice and creating a safe place to live. The session will encourage dialogue on how to effectively integrate formerly homeless persons into the broader community. The importance of community integration in Housing First will be highlighted. The role of public health in supported housing and decision-making about housing policies, programs and practices will be discussed.

### **Presenter:**

Dr. Jim Frankish is a Professor in the School of Population and Public Health and Director of the Centre for Health Promotion Research at UBC. Faith Eiboff is completing an interdisciplinary doctoral program in Public Health and Psychiatry at UBC. The Vancouver Housing First Speakers Bureau is a peer-led homelessness advocacy group initiated in 2011 by participants from the Vancouver At Home/Chez Soi project and offers a platform for people with histories of homelessness and mental illness to engage with the community, open the dialogue on mental health and homelessness, and discuss the impacts of Housing First in their lives.



## **At Home Looks Like- Making Housing Home's Photovoice Project**

*Karina Czyzewski, Nathan Lauster*

### **Abstract:**

Home, as distinct from housing, and home-making are navigated and constructed through objects, relationships, and routines, among other daily interactions. Through the Making Housing Home project, researchers at the University of British Columbia are gathering data on how people inhabit and make a home of both their housing and their broader living environments. Making Housing Home questions how housing and community circumstances do and do not work to make people feel 'at home.' This presentation focuses on the young people's project At Home Looks Like, which explores the perspectives of young people in Vancouver through the use of photovoice methodology. 12 young people (19 to 27 years of age) were equipped with digital cameras to capture what 'at home' looks like for them. All of the participants had lived experience with housing insecurity or homelessness and many are participants in Providence Health Care's Inner City Youth (ICY) program. The young people's photos and stories on what home means to them provide valuable insider knowledge on stigma, belonging, community resources, economic insecurity, transitions and housing challenges for young people in Vancouver. The young people gained awareness on their home-making, they reflected on the research process and what they attained from their research assistantship. By focusing on the everyday practices and the routines of individuals, this research provides insight into building more supportive and inclusive communities. Making Housing Home is funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) of Canada, and led by professors Nathanael Lauster (Sociology) and Frank Tester (Social Work).

### **Presenter:**

Karina Czyzewski is a visitor here on unceded Coast Salish territory and is originally from Ottawa on unceded Algonquin territory. She has a MA in Anthropology from the U of T and a MSW from UBC. Karina enjoys facilitating popular education workshops, using arts-based approaches to group work, and arts-based methods to conducting participatory action and community-based research.



## **The Link Housing First: Making Housing First Work for Youth Leaving Care**

*Roshine Morrison and Sarah Stewart, standing in for Drew Stewart*

### **Abstract:**

Aunt Leah's presentation explained the challenges and successes of adding a Housing First component to The Link's care model. Reporting was also done on housing goals & outcomes, plus SROI analysis. Last, the specific barriers of eligibility, youth transiency, re-housing, and landlord retention were laid bare, with two short case studies of youth Housing First participants. The Link Housing First is the first Housing First program in BC to specifically target youth leaving care.

### **Presenter:**

Drew Stewart is a former childcare worker at Aunt Leah's Place, who completed his graduate studies at the London School of Economics and now heads up program development and evaluation at Aunt Leah's Place.

## **Housing First- Mapping the Choices/Understanding the Options**

*Lorraine Copas*

### **Abstract:**

Many communities struggle with ensuring that there is an adequate supply of suitable and appropriate housing to meet the full range of needs across communities. Housing First has emerged as an important model for helping to provide increased housing stability for low income and vulnerable individuals who have a history of homelessness. Through SPARC BC's work with the Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness, we have been working on the development of an 'atlas' to help identify the continuum of housing choices that are available across communities. In putting together this 'atlas,' our goal is to help provide the different agencies and services providers to gain a better understanding of the full range of housing options that are available in their community as well as to work with the different agencies and service providers on potential outreach and engagement strategies. This information is intended to provide support to the different agencies and service providers in their efforts to reach out to landlords and building owners in order to find suitable and appropriate housing for their clients. Through the collection of this information, it is also possible to look at the potential opportunities and constraints related to the different supply-side and demand-side solutions that are available at the community level.



**Presenter:**

Lorraine Copas is the Executive Director for the Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC). Lorraine has dedicated her career to community social planning and capacity building and has worked extensively in the area of housing and homelessness. Lorraine holds a Master's Degree in Public Policy and Public Administration from McMaster University and a Master's Degree in Urban and Regional Planning from Queen's University. Lorraine brings provincial, municipal and regional level experience in the area of housing and homelessness and has recently co-authored a report on family homelessness with funding provided through HRSDC. Lorraine believes strongly in the difference that can be made when people and communities come together with a shared vision and a common purpose.

**Session T14: Tuesday November 24, 1:30-3:00**  
**Seniors Housing Research**

**Three projects were presented as part of the “Seniors Housing Research” Session:**

*Seniors' Housing Intentions Survey.* Deborah Kraus, Kyle Agnew

*Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) Knowledge Transfer and Outreach: Promoting Age Friendly and Affordable Housing for All Canadians.*  
Elizabeth Tang

*Seniors Housing: Life Lease.* Kate Mancer



## Seniors' Housing Intentions Survey

*Deborah Kraus, Kyle Agnew*

### **Abstract:**

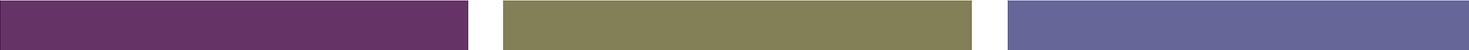
The purpose of this research is to gain a better understanding of the future housing intentions of adults aged 55+ in BC. The research involved a survey of seniors across the Province, with a focus on Kitimat, Port Edward, Prince Rupert, and Terrace, to gather information about the types of housing (form and tenure) seniors are likely to want and the types of services they think they may need. Participants were asked questions relating to aging-in-place and whether they are planning to move in the next 5 years. Seniors were also asked to identify factors that are likely to influence where they live, such as accessibility, proximity of family or friends, amenities, public transportation, and home maintenance. The survey was conducted in June and a final report is due September 2015. The findings are expected to inform policy and program development to help address the housing needs of a growing senior population in BC.

This research was conducted by Sentis Market Research on behalf of BC Housing, the Office of Housing and Construction Standards (OHCS), and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

### **Presenters:**

Deborah Kraus is Manager of Performance Management at BC Housing.

Kyle Agnew is a Policy Analyst in Housing Policy at the Housing Policy Branch of the Office of Housing and Construction Standards, Ministry of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing.



## **Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) Knowledge Transfer and Outreach: Promoting Age Friendly and Affordable Housing for All Canadians**

*Elizabeth Tang*

### **Abstract:**

CMHC helps Canadians meet their housing needs. As Canada's authority on housing, we contribute to the stability of the housing market and financial system, provide support for Canadians in housing need, and offer objective housing research and advice to Canadian governments, consumers and the housing industry.

Demographic trends like aging population and migration to urban centres are influencing housing design and affordability. While more than 85% of Canadians aged 55 years old or older want to remain in their current homes for as long as possible, the aging housing stock is impacting age-friendliness of homes and communities, as well as operating and maintenance costs.

Drawing upon CMHC's extensive research on accessible and adaptable housing design and sustainable building practices, this presentation provided examples of practical housing measures that can improve the quality of life and accommodate the needs of everyone, including seniors and people with disabilities. It also illustrated how better construction and renovation practices can positively influence housing affordability.

### **Presenters:**

Elizabeth Tang is CMHC's Knowledge Transfer Consultant in BC. In her role as Knowledge Transfer Consultant, Elizabeth is focused on engaging with professionals in the housing industry, academics and provincial and municipal governments to ensure access to the latest and most relevant housing information from CMHC. Elizabeth has been with CMHC since 2006. Prior to working at CMHC, Elizabeth was Trade Commissioner, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. She is a LEED Green Associate, and holds an MBA from University of British Columbia with a specialization in sustainability and business strategic management.

## Seniors Housing: Life Lease

*Kate Mancer*

### **Abstract:**

How society deals with the housing needs of an aging population is becoming ever more important. Governments are increasingly unable to fund needed housing and health care initiatives and the non-profit sector will inevitably assume more of the resulting gaps in service than it already does. But what is the most workable way of filling those gaps? Life lease housing is one of the only practical ways available to the non-profit sector.

Life lease, which is a hybrid of owning and renting, is uniquely suited to the non-profit sector. Title remains with the organization but the capital required to build comes from future residents.

Not only does life lease enable the development of good quality seniors housing in the absence of public funding, it creates the ability to develop some rental units for lower income seniors. It also contributes to the more efficient use of the existing housing stock by encouraging over-housed seniors to downsize to more appropriate, safer and more affordable alternatives. From the perspective of the non-profit sector, life lease offers the opportunity to redevelop sites without losing ownership of those sites and has the ability to facilitate revenue generation.

Moreover, mechanisms to provide services of various kinds may be piggy-backed onto life lease housing projects, thus creating much more affordable and satisfactory approaches to aging in place in the community. This concept borrows from the village movement in the US which has grown rapidly over the last 10 years.

Terra Lumina Life Lease is actively involved in the development and operation of life lease housing projects. Kate Mancer, a director of the firm, has been researching life lease since 1999. Kate is currently interviewing buyers in Mission and Vernon in order to determine their motivation for buying a life lease unit and their subsequent satisfaction.

### **Presenter:**

Kate Mancer, M.A., Principal, Lumina Services; Director, Terra Lumina Life Lease, is the author of *The Future of Seniors Housing: Planning, Building and Operating Successful Seniors Housing Projects*, the only reference book on seniors housing in Canada. Kate is one of Canada's leading authorities on life lease housing. She has written three major reports on the subject, two for CMHC and one for the Real Estate Foundation and BC Housing. Lumina is a member of BCNPHA, the BC Senior Living Association, the Mortgage Investment Association of BC, the Canadian Association on Gerontology and the Gerontological Society of America.

## Session W03: Wednesday November 25, 10:15-11:45 Housing Justice- Selected Topics

**Four projects were presented as part of the “Housing Justice- Selected Topics” Session:**

*Building Supports: Housing Access for Immigrant and Refugee Women Leaving Violence.* Jill Atkey, Louise Godard

*Housing For All: Innovations in Housing Supply Internationally.* Penny Gurstein, Prajna Rao

*Short-term Consequences: Understanding the Extent, Nature and Implications of Airbnb Activity in Vancouver.* Karen Sawatsky

*Housing Needs of the Jewish Community of Greater Vancouver.* Susana Cogan

### **Building Supports: Housing Access for Immigrant and Refugee Women Leaving Violence**

*Jill Atkey, Louise Godard*

#### **Abstract:**

BC Non-Profit Housing Association, BC Society of Transition Houses and SFU’s FREDA Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children have just completed the research phase of their three year joint project on the barriers to housing for immigrant and refugee women leaving violence.

The qualitative research spans BC’s regions and looks directly at the barriers to various forms of housing for a broad range of immigrant and refugee women. Transition house workers, multi-service agency workers, housing managers and 49 women with lived experience were involved in the study, and collectively identified key themes in five overarching categories: barriers to safety, barriers to housing, policy barriers, impacts and solutions. Barriers within these overarching themes encompass discrimination, misconceptions about transition house services, waitlists, tenant selection processes and lack of affordable housing and support to find housing. Coupled with policy barriers related to time limits in transition housing, income assistance policies and complexities related to legal or immigration status and access government services, the barriers to housing for immigrant and refugee women leaving violence are layered and complex.



This presentation provided an overview of the research findings in each of these five theme areas, as well as an overview of the project's plans for developing promising practices for transition houses and non-profit housing providers, and strategies for outlining and reducing policy barriers. The Building Supports project is funded through the Vancouver Foundation and the Representative for Children and Youth.

**Presenters:**

Jill Atkey is the Director, Research and Education at BC Non-Profit Housing Association and has been active in the non-profit sector for more than 20 years. She is the Co-PI on the Building Supports project, and recently led the development of the Rental Housing Index in partnership with Vancity credit union and the development of rental housing demand and core housing need projections for the province and 28 regional districts. Jill also co-led the development of a planning guide for non-profits facing the expiry of their operating agreement, which is now being adopted nationally and won the 2015 Canadian Institute of Planners' Planning Publication Award. She has co-authored several book chapters on housing and income security policies, and has an M.A. in Planning from UBC.

Louise Godard is the research and project co-ordinator of the Building Supports project and a project co-ordinator in Population Health Promotion, BC Women's Hospital & Health Centre. She holds a MSW from Wilfred Laurier University and has been working in the area of violence against women for 16 years. Her research focuses on the intersecting oppressions impacting the lives of girls and women with experiences of violence and exploring and how systems can be restructured to foster women's health and safety in a meaningful way. Louise has co-authored several publications, most recently a book chapter on disrupting dominant discourses related to violence against women.

## **Housing for All: Innovations in Housing Supply Internationally**

*Penny Gurstein, Prajna Rao*

**Abstract:**

This research outlines the innovations in the delivery of publicly-assisted housing internationally from Europe, Asia, and North and South America. Based on findings from an international workshop organized by the authors in Spring 2015, new directions were described that include partnerships between various housing actors and an important role for government as a catalyst for these innovations. The conclusion of the presentation was a speculative piece on the renewed role for the three levels of government in Canada that is needed if Canada is to address its housing crisis.

**Presenters:**

Penny Gurstein is Professor and Director of the School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP), UBC, co-PI of the Housing Justice Project and PI of the Future of Public Housing Project.

Prajna Rao is a SCARP, UBC PhD student and Research Assistant on the Future of Public Housing Project.

# Short-term consequences: understanding the extent, nature and implications of Airbnb activity in Vancouver

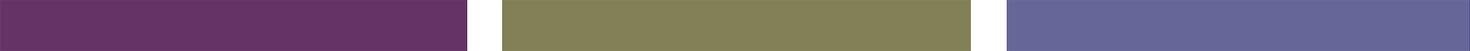
*Karen Sawatzky*

## **Abstract:**

Airbnb is a privately held, internet-based corporation that earns its revenue by making it easy for people (usually, but not always, tourists) seeking short-term accommodation to connect online with others who are willing to rent (or sublet) their accommodation on the same basis. Airbnb, founded in 2007, has grown from having 60,000 listed properties in 2011 to 1.2 million in 2015. Some of that growth has taken place in Metro Vancouver and the City of Vancouver, but the actual quantity, type and geographic distribution of Airbnb properties in those areas has been unknown due to limitations built into Airbnb's search function and the lack of information available from the company itself. For this presentation, a web-scraping script was used to collect data on the quantity, type, geographic distribution and nightly rates of Airbnb properties in the City of Vancouver and Metro Vancouver on multiple dates. As well as the results of the data collection and analysis, which were provided in tables, charts and maps, this presentation discussed the financial incentives that Airbnb creates for landlords and other property owners to use their properties as short-term accommodation for tourists, instead of long-term housing for residents. The implications of these incentives and the local growth in the quantity of Airbnb properties were also discussed, especially in relation to policies designed to protect the supply of rental housing. As such, this presentation was of interest to policy-makers and those involved in the provision or management of affordable and rental housing.

## **Presenters:**

Karen Sawatzky is completing a master's degree in urban studies at Simon Fraser University. She has a journalism certificate from Langara and a B.A. (Hons) in history from the University of Victoria. She has worked as a reporter, a technical editor and in communications and outreach positions for a Member of Parliament and the BC Ombudsperson's Office. Among other volunteer activities, she is a member of the City of Vancouver's Renters Advisory Committee. She blogs about her Airbnb research, as well as her personal views on housing and other urban topics, at [shorttermconsequences.wordpress.com](http://shorttermconsequences.wordpress.com) and [karensawatzky.ca](http://karensawatzky.ca). On Twitter, she is @karensawa.



# **Housing Needs of the Jewish Community of Greater Vancouver**

*Susana Cogan*

## **Abstract:**

Shelter is key to the well-being of all. In Vancouver, where housing is the highest priced in Canada, ownership and rental is a serious issue. Housing affordability affects almost everybody, including members of the Jewish Community living on low to moderate incomes.

The 2011 National Household Survey (“2011 NHS”) determined that there are 26,250 Jewish people living in the Vancouver Census Metropolitan Area (CMA), of which 16.1% (4,225) are low income.

The study is based on data from Statistics Canada 2011 National Household Survey. An assessment to determine the existing housing situation and the need for safe, secure and affordable shelter by Jewish households was developed. The report provides insight into the reasons for Jewish community members to reside in their present accommodation, their housing preferences and needs. It identifies the requirements of Jewish low-income singles, couples and families to plan ways to support them. It also estimates the number of affordable units required, their preferred location and unit sizes.

The magnitude of the identified issue is significant and solutions are expensive. Creating all new units is an unreachable goal for the Jewish community. Several different approaches were proposed to solve this problem.

## **Presenters:**

Susana Cogan, MA, is an economist, who consults to the housing industry based on her long standing experience working in social housing for the province of BC and the non-profit sector. She has strong knowledge of housing policy development and implementation, project development, financial management and administration. Presently, she works as an independent consultant and for the past seven years, as Housing Development Director for Tikva Housing Society.

## PHRN Luncheon: Wednesday November 25, 11:45 am-12:30 pm

### The Researchers are In

On Wednesday November 25, PHRN facilitated a luncheon discussion of province-wide research priorities and possibilities. This luncheon was well attended, and provided an excellent atmosphere for lively discussion. Participants were asked **“What are your research priorities?”** Below are the topics that were discussed.

- Youth Transitioning out of Foster Care. What is the extent of this issue? What housing and supports are needed? It is important to identify and understand the housing needs of youth transitioning out of foster care.
- Manufactured Home Parks. Volunteer representatives from Langley are working with a group of volunteers on seniors housing issues. They did a survey and heard from seniors in a manufactured home park. The seniors feel it is an ideal form of housing that provides a nice community. It is also an affordable option. They would like to see more of this available. There are 14 manufactured home sites in Langley and 1,300 pad sites. There are concerns that this housing may be lost i.e. that the parks are at risk of being redeveloped. It was suggested that research could focus on options to protect manufactured home parks and the manufactured home park lifestyle – including what municipal policies could protect this form of housing. It was suggested that the manufactured home parks in Langley could be used as a case study. It was noted that some of the pension funds are investing in manufactured home parks, and that they could be a potential partner.
- Virtual Retirement Communities. How can they work for life lease projects? The idea would be to explore how to link ‘central trustworthy information resources’ with housing. What kind of structures would promote this?
- Rental Housing Supply. It was noted that we have the Rental Housing Index. The question is how to quantify how many units are needed in communities across the province, and how much will it cost to build these units where they are needed? This would help in developing the National Housing Plan.
- Income Assistance and Housing Subsidies (e.g. RAP). How inadequate are they? How much should IA rates and rent subsidies be increased?
- Housing that promotes healing: Inter-generational housing models
- How does cultural safety get translated into physical space? What does this look like? What does design of spaces look like if we are meeting the goal of being inclusive of different cultures?
- What can be done about the long waitlist for people with disabilities? Can housing be designed that includes spaces and opportunities for part time jobs for people with disabilities? Simple housing needs but accessible to meaningful work/engagement opportunities that do not have full time demands that cannot be met due to disabilities.
- How can we design and build housing where people can be business owners in the same spaces? Mixed commercial/housing that is not big commercial but small, local enterprises? A more integrated approach; affordable housing with support for entrepreneurship?
- How can housing create community? How can access to on site shared spaces like: café, wood working shop, shared work spaces be priced along the housing model of “market, deep subsidy, shallow subsidy”? goal is to combat isolation...housing and community and meaningful activities.

- When working as front line staff in youth housing...how to balance having community with friends with still maintaining healthy living (for example the pressures on newly housed youth to accommodate friends who are still using substances...). This question is about the role of on site staff and support for them in addressing this tension between maintaining community for/with the youth .
- With regard to working with Indigenous peoples, it might be more appropriate to use the term “traditional” rather than “innovation” – the new buzz word. In other words, traditions, and not innovations, are what are needed.
- Issues around short term rentals/Airbnb
- Issues affecting the rental stock...disappearing rental housing
- Issues with better data collection in public agencies
- More long term trends research (verified) on rental/tenants housing
- Welfare rates...no one can find rental at \$325
- Better options for affordable housing for people with mental illness
- Research on community demand for smaller communities/Powell River
- Better impact assessments/social value needs to be factored in/and investment in healthy strong people
- Research on people’s ability to pay current viable rent – what is the gap between what people can pay and what rent is necessary?
- Capacity of non-profits; where the gaps are; what do they really need? Risk assessment, business cases, accept change
- Housing needs of vulnerable refugees – identify gaps

**North Vancouver context:**

- best practices to determine eligibility for affordable housing for men?
- How to preserve existing rental stock?
- How to meet growing demand for adult day (programs?)
- Studies of consortium/partnership projects...look at entire process
- How to make land cheaper? Price of land. Gap in land value between trying to maintain affordable housing and current value.

**Terrace context:**

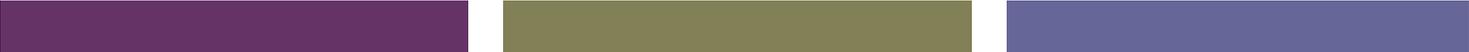
- Homeless outreach. How to access resources for homeless in smaller communities? Boom economies and the impact on homelessness

**Sicamore, Shuswap context:**

- How to work effectively with other organizations? How to understand what a board is and what a board member does? Need an understanding of what a board does.
- How can building green pay for itself? How do you do that?

**Kelowna context:**

- What is the long-term future of organizations that are merging? Are their mandates remaining?
- How to get income tax off on rental?



## **Session W11: Wednesday Nov. 25, 1230-200**

### **Integrating Strategies to Prevent Harms of Substance Use in Housing and Shelter Settings**

In this workshop, presenters discussed the connections between substance use and a range of harms including overdose and transmission of disease, as well as stigma and discrimination. Presenters examined two important issues for housing and shelter providers that can reduce the harms of substance use for residents who use drugs. First, they highlighted current issues in the development of harm reduction policies and practices in shelter settings. Then they explored issues specifically related to the implementation of overdose prevention in these settings.

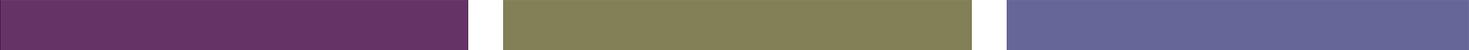
Three learning objectives from the session were:

- 1) Identifying substance use related harms.
- 2) Discussing development of harm reduction policies and implementation of harm reduction strategies, particularly naloxone administration.
- 3) Identifying and discussing solutions and research priorities related to preventing harms of substance use in housing and shelter settings.

This session was conducted a differently from previous panels. Discussion centred around two presentations:

***Responding to Substance Use in Shelter Settings. Bruce Wallace, Bernie Pauly, Katrina Barber***

***Opioid Overdose Crisis - Addressing Barriers to Overdose Response in Shelters and Residences. Alex Scott, Shannon Riley***



## Responding to Substance Use in Shelter Settings

*Bruce Wallace, Bernie Pauly, and Katrina Barber*

### **Abstract:**

The lack of critical harm reduction services in conjuncture with the lack of affordable housing options for people experiencing homelessness challenges emergency shelters to respond both to homelessness and problematic substance use within these programs. In previous research, we found mixed messages and a lack of clarity for both residents and staff in substance use and harm reduction policies, with tensions between providing harm reduction supplies to those actively using while also supporting those who are trying to abstain, and frequently turning a “blind eye” to use in settings where use is not tolerated.

In order to address these conflicts related to substance use, we are undertaking further research to actively engage shelter staff and residents to better understand and develop potential strategies for addressing these issues. The workshop provided a forum for discussion and interaction to help shape future research to develop supportive policies and practices related to substance use in shelter settings.

This workshop provided an opportunity to interact with others on these challenging issues while helping to shape ongoing collaborative research to inform the implementation of innovate harm reduction policies and practices in programs responding to homelessness.

### **Presenters:**

Dr. Bruce Wallace is an Assistant Professor at University of Victoria’s School of Social Work and a Collaborating Scientist with the Centre for Addictions Research of BC (CARBC). His research focuses on poverty, health and equity where he brings over twenty years of experiences with nonprofit agencies, often collaborating with consumer-led agencies focused on poverty, homelessness, health, mental health and substance use.

Dr. Bernie Pauly is an Associate Professor in the School of Nursing, a Scientist with the Centre for Addictions Research of BC, a UVIC Community Engaged Scholar, and a member of the Renewal of Public Health Systems and Services Research Initiative. The focus of her research is promotion of health equity through strengthening public health systems and reducing health inequities associated with substance use, poverty and homelessness. She has done extensive research and evaluation of housing and harm reduction services and supported the development of policy locally, provincially and nationally in these areas.

Katrina Barber is a graduate student in the Social Dimensions of Health M.A. program at the University of Victoria and is a research assistant with the Centre for Addictions Research of BC.

# Opioid Overdose Crisis - Addressing Barriers to Overdose Response in Shelters and Residences

*Alex Scott and Shannon Riley*

## **Abstract:**

Opioid overdose is a growing public health concern in Canada. As a result, provinces are responding in a variety of innovative ways to address this issue. In 2014, BC had over 350 illicit drug overdose deaths, and significant long-term illness and injury was associated with non-fatal overdoses. Harms caused by opioid overdose can be reduced with timely naloxone administration by first responders.

Naloxone is a safe, prescription only medication that restores breathing in the event of an opioid overdose. The BC Take Home Naloxone (THN) program was implemented in August 2012, training people to prevent, recognize and respond to opioid overdose (including naloxone administration), and providing naloxone to participants who use opioids. Housing and shelter providers can play an important role in collaborating with healthcare providers and overdose response educators to ensure the safety of their residents who use opioids.

Many housing and shelter providers, however, have concerns or encounter barriers related to naloxone. In this presentation we will discuss the THN program in the context of federal, provincial, health, and organization-specific policies. Using examples informed by the experiences of non-medical frontline housing and shelter providers, we will discuss:

- how employers can support THN in shelter and residential settings
- how staff and resident input can be used to implement other strategies to prevent overdose death and morbidity
- how to support the wellbeing of staff and clients who intervene in overdoses

The presenters of this abstract have a range of experience with the THN program and were able to share lessons learned from their work with peers, housing, health authorities and supervised injection.

## **Presenters:**

Alex Scott is Coordinator, Peer Programs at Vancouver Coastal Health. She has over 10 years of experience working collaboratively with people who use drugs in Vancouver. She has a background in community-based research and has trained hundreds of people in overdose prevention and response.

Shannon Riley is a Masters student in Public Policy at SFU. She did her summer co-op placement with Vancouver Coastal Health in harm reduction. In her free time, she works as an RN at Insite/ Onsite.

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