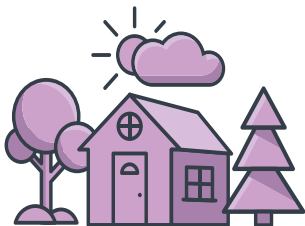




Safe housing is the starting point for positive, lasting change.

Shelter & Housing



Safe and affordable housing is essential to a person's wellness and quality of life.

Without a safe place to live, life's challenges are even harder as the need for shelter overrides every other concern. From our earliest days, we have worked to help people who were homeless or struggling with housing, find safe, affordable places to live. From emergency shelters such as the Women's Emergency Accommodation Centre (WEAC), which offer a refuge from life on the street, to supportive housing in communities such as McCauley where on-site assistance helps people stay housed, our goal is to help people living in poverty find a home.

We believe that housing is a human right, not something people must earn by changing themselves or their lives. And we are equally committed to helping both individuals and families find a place they can call their own.

For close to 50 years, e4c has been helping Edmontonians get what they need to tackle life's challenges. e4c believes that people deserve to be listened to and respected, no matter what their circumstances or challenges. We see people and welcome them without judgment or bias.

e4c's vision is to limit, alleviate and ultimately eliminate poverty.

e4calberta.org | **f** **t** Follow Us

9321 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5H 3T7 **780.424.7543**



Seeing people not poverty.

Innovative Transitional Housing leads to independence

Program focuses on building relationships

Over the last two years, e4c partnered with Alberta Health Services (AHS), on an innovative project designed to meet the transitional housing needs of vulnerable individuals.

"The transitional housing project came out of discussions with AHS that began in early 2016," recalls Mandie Denning, e4c Project Manager. "Our organizations shared the goal of wanting to offer individuals safe housing during critical transitions such as being discharged from acute care or while they were experiencing a housing crisis. And we wanted to create a setting that treated people with respect and dignity, while helping build skills that would set them on a path to independence."

Why this approach?

Research and experience have shown that people are most vulnerable during transitions. Having housing and recovery supports not only eases transitions, but also improves an individual's chance of long-term success and independent living. The transitional housing project takes a trauma-informed and harm reduction approach that utilizes community-based treatment

teams and clinical services to wrap people with the care they need.

"Before this project, people were often released from hospital or corrections with literally no place to go, or would be kept in hospital longer than necessary because of a lack of housing," notes Mandie. "Now that transition is easier, people have a chance to work toward recovery and develop the life skills needed to live independently. We walk alongside individuals on that journey."

Mandie stresses that everything done in the project is based in evidence and lived experience. Individuals who have first hand knowledge know the challenges faced by people in the program.

"People sometimes think experience is not as important as data, but lived experience is critically important to helping vulnerable people."

The program areas

There are three distinct areas within the transitional housing project – Inner Ways, Inner Ways Women's and Emerging Adults.



Housing is a human right, not something people must earn by changing themselves or their lives.



Inner Ways Transitional Housing

Inner Ways serves individuals, men and women aged 18 plus, who are already connected to AHS community supports and who are currently homeless or have a history of street entrenchment and/or are at risk of homelessness, in a shelter environment, waiting for residential addiction treatment or being discharged from acute care or corrections.

The program provides a supportive, recovery-based environment that encourages people to maintain their connections with treatment teams as they work toward recovery, independence or reintegration. Most individuals are eligible to stay for three to six months in the program which is able to support 10 individuals in two houses.



3 to 6 months



Harm reduction



Complex addictions & mental health



SUPPORTS

CASE MANAGEMENT

LIFESKILLS AND WELLNESS

- PLANNING
- SKILL DEVELOPMENT
- COACHING

SOCIAL WORKER

PEER SUPPORT

5
Beavers Den

5
Bears Den



Inner Ways Women's Transitional Housing

Inner Ways Women's program serves self-identified women aged 18 plus, dealing with complex trauma, mental health challenges and addictions. There are several levels of support within the program, with beds for women being discharged from acute care or corrections, and women with significant medical conditions who have been referred from other agencies.

The program offers accommodation for 10 individuals and allows for longer stays, which is essential when dealing with trauma.



Length of stay varies



Harm reduction



Complex addictions, mental health & physical health barriers



SUPPORTS

CASE MANAGEMENT

LIFESKILLS AND WELLNESS

- PLANNING
- SKILL DEVELOPMENT
- COACHING

SOCIAL WORKER

PEER SUPPORT

10



Emerging Adults Transitional Housing

The Emerging Adults program serves the needs of individuals, men and women, aged 16 to 25, living with complex addiction and mental health challenges. It focuses on helping individuals learn independent living skills, while continuing to work on their mental illness and addiction recovery needs.

Residents receive individualized services, and are encouraged to engage in their own future planning. Up to five young adults can stay for six to 12 months and receive assistance and follow-up on their transition plan.



Up to 1 year



Harm reduction



Complex addictions & mental health



SUPPORTS

CASE MANAGEMENT

LIFESKILLS AND WELLNESS

- PLANNING
- SKILL DEVELOPMENT
- COACHING

RECREATIONAL THERAPIST

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

PEER SUPPORT

5

A relational approach

The Inner Ways and Emerging Adults programs all take a relational approach that builds relationships and trust with residents.

“People need to be able to feel safe and know they will be helped without judgment,” says Mandie Dening, e4c Project Manager, Transitional Housing.

Each program includes a focus on the daily structures and routines that mirror the way the world works. “During the day, people are encouraged to get up, take their medications, go to appointments and do other tasks that are meaningful to them,” Mandie explains. “Then in the evening it’s all about wellness and supporting people in doing things that they enjoy, like art projects and baking.”

The overnight structure focuses on making people feel safe and secure, with an enhanced support team available to handle any crisis that might occur. “A person in the program takes things one day at a time

and the routines help life feel more manageable.”

This is an approach that takes into consideration the whole person and all aspects of who they are. This is accomplished through routine, reciprocal learning, and modeling, in a positive environment. The lifeskills and wellness teams foster an approach that is fun and engaging.

What comes next?

In looking ahead to 2018, the project invited staff and residents to contribute ideas and suggestions as to how the program should be delivered. The result is a strategy that focuses on intentional relationships.

“Building relationships builds strength and opens the door to working with individuals in transition,” says Mandie. “The plan is to build stronger relationships with our staff, other agencies and care providers, with cultural supports and with the community. And most importantly, with the people finding a home with the program.”

“Relationships are at the core of everything and will always guide the work we do.”



Without a safe place to live, life's challenges are even harder.

Stories of individuals and their journeys

For Mandie Dening, the chance to see the effects the transitional housing programs have had on people, has been incredibly impactful. "We've had a lot of individuals make positive movement forward, but there are a number of people whose journeys stand out."

Among these, was a young Indigenous woman dealing with complex addiction and mental health issues, who entered the Inner Ways Women's program, and initially was very reactive.

"There was a lot of yelling and she was really struggling. She stayed with the program for about six months, and in that time staff worked to build a trusting relationship, being firm but kind and gentle regardless of her reaction. Through interactions with staff and the relationships which were built, this young woman began to be able to manage her emotions better and take care of herself. She gained confidence and recognized her strengths and thrived with routine. She loved spending time on her art each evening. Over time, she reacted less, the relationships became stronger and she was even able to recall and reclaim the teachings her grandmother had shared with her in childhood. By the time she left, she was independent and ready to live on her own. She really owned her experience and took responsibility for herself."

Another memorable individual Mandie recalls was a young man who came through the Inner Ways program and was dealing with a severe addiction.

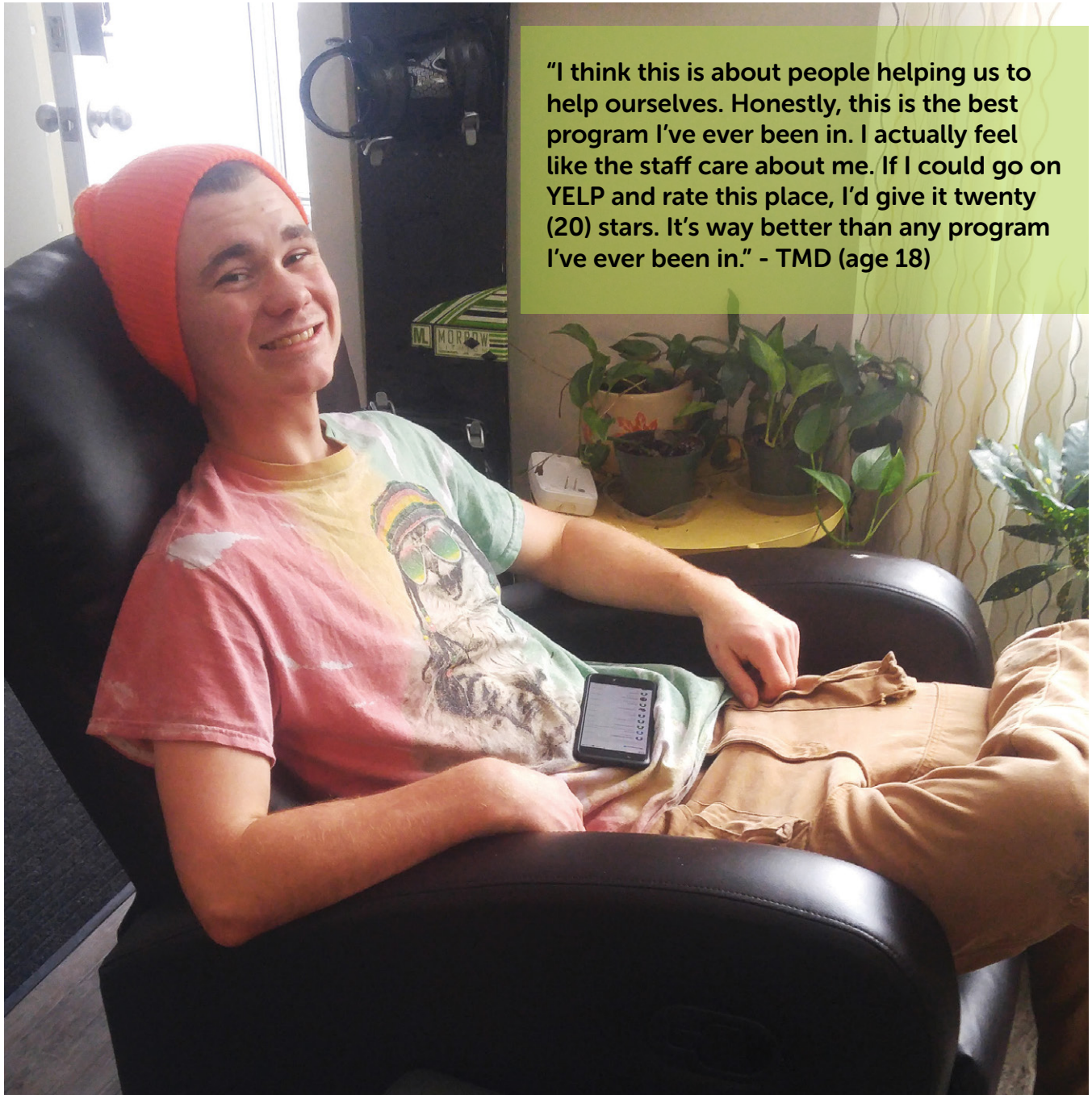
"He was a hardcore user, but managed three weeks of sobriety while he was in the program which is amazing because he had time for clarity. And he worked to find meaningful things to do which included service to others. He established a garden, growing everything from seed. And he spent time mowing the lawn and tidying the yard. We were able to recognize him for his work and he personally gained self-esteem and was very proud of his accomplishments. He made the program his home."



The third resident story that resonates with Mandie, is a young woman in the Emerging Adults program which works with young adults experiencing mental health and/or addiction.

"She is the sweetest, brightest light, but was having difficulty sharing with her family what she wanted for her future. Emerging Adults is all about striving for independence and finding your way, and she has been working hard to do that. So much so, that she has been able to sit down with her mother, courageously discussing their relationship and setting boundaries for what she needs. It is a beautiful thing, because we're always working to help people to build relationships."

What individuals have said about their experience in transitional housing



"I think this is about people helping us to help ourselves. Honestly, this is the best program I've ever been in. I actually feel like the staff care about me. If I could go on YELP and rate this place, I'd give it twenty (20) stars. It's way better than any program I've ever been in." - TMD (age 18)

"I thought I was going to be happy to leave . . . but leaving made me realize how much I appreciate the people that work here. I feel like there are good people here and it's okay to talk about anything! Like, I can talk about things here that I can't talk about with other people." - DP (age 49)

"This program is a gift. I'd like to write to whoever is in charge in order to increase the amount of houses for programs. It's the healthiest program I've ever been in and would like more people to have the chance." - JA

e4c Housing: Home looks different from one person to the next

Providing a home for an individual can look very different from one person to another, based on life circumstances and individual need. It is this difference that is reflected in the residences that are part of the e4c residential portfolio. Housing is a fundamental human right and a first step in changing lives and growing community.

Affordable Housing

In the late 1980s and 1990s, the federal, provincial and municipal governments conducted various housing needs and demands studies that highlighted the need for affordable and supportive housing in communities. This continued through the 2000s with the Edmonton Community Plans on Housing and Homelessness. e4c responded to these initiatives and developed a number of safe and **independent, affordable housing units** in the Boyle Street, McCauley and Alberta Avenue communities.

Designed for low income persons and/or persons with ongoing mental illness these safe and independent affordable housing units give very low income and special needs tenants a stable base to make improvements to their lives. Units include bachelor suites and one-bedroom suites, as well as two-bedroom and three-bedroom suites in various numbers. Residents maintain stable housing and there is a very low suite turnover.

Permanent Supportive Housing

In 1992, the government asked e4c to partner with Handicapped Housing Society to deliver **permanent supportive housing** and two residences, Meadow's Place and Our Place, were opened.

Designed for men and women with ongoing mental illness, these safe and affordable (rent geared to income) residences also provide support services to address nutrition, life skills, medication, appointments, social needs, community connection and other issues. Residents maintain stable tenancy which fosters an environment for mental health stability and access to social opportunities.

Planning is currently underway for a 20-bed permanent supportive housing facility for individuals aged 18 plus, who have struggles with addictions and mental illness. Once open, staff at this location will collaborate with residents to do intentional long-term community development and build sustained lifeskills and wellness practices.

Supportive Facility Management Model

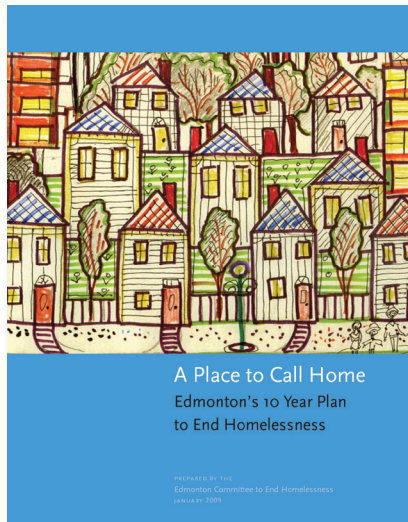
Capital Region Housing Corporation, the operator of McCauley Apartments, experienced high tenant turnover in their building and approached e4c for assistance. In 1996, e4c began a **supportive facility management model** that aimed to build interdependent relationships with apartment residents and their community.

McCauley Apartments is located in the McCauley community and is geared toward low income persons and/or persons with mental illness. This facility has permanent housing for up to 37 households with independent, affordable (rent geared to income) two-bedroom apartment suites.

Community development and wellness activities take place in McCauley and neighboring communities. Individuals increase their housing stability and interaction with community and participants benefit from social activities, workshops and events.



A resident in supportive housing participates in holiday crafting.



A Place to Call Home Edmonton's Updated Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness

In 2009, Edmontonians came together and committed to an ambitious goal: ending homelessness in our community. After extensive consultations with community, *A Place to Call Home, Edmonton's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness* was launched.

Over the last eight years, Housing First programs have housed and supported more than 6,000 people. With this effort, point-in-time homeless counts have fallen considerably since 2009.

Although Edmonton has made strong progress against the targets of the original 10-year plan, some areas were not resourced to the level required. For example, the original plan called for 1,000 new units

of permanent supportive housing, but only about 200 units have been added. Today, there is a better understanding of the scope of homelessness in our community, and what is required to end it.

Homeward Trust and the City of Edmonton launched a collaborative process to review and update the plan in 2017. More than 3,000 Edmontonians contributed to the Update, including community members, people with lived experience of homelessness, experts and front line workers, orders of government and mainstream systems.

The Plan Update is a "living document" that sets priorities to 2020, while also defining high-level strategies to guide collective work long-term.

Moving Forward

The Plan Update is founded on three goals and their associated targets and strategies. These goals are interrelated and mutually reinforcing, working together to achieve an end to homelessness.

1. End chronic and episodic homelessness
2. Prevent future homelessness
3. Develop an integrated systems response

This approach will eliminate chronic and episodic homelessness by 2022, allowing resources to shift over time towards homelessness prevention, and to longer-term supports for those who need them.

The Plan Update affirms our community's commitment to end homelessness in Edmonton.

Together, we can ensure everyone has a place to call home.

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Gifts can also be made securely online through Canada Helps, by calling e4c Fund Development at 780.424.7543, or in person at e4c, 9321 Jasper Avenue.

Thank you for your support!

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