

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
THURSDAY, JUNE 30, 2022  
COMMITTEE ROOM 'A' AND VIDEOCONFERENCE  
7:00 P.M.**

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**AGENDA**

1. Prayer
2. Review and Adoption of Agenda
3. Declarations of Conflict of Interest
4. Public Matters
  - a) Public Hearing on Homelessness Prevention
5. In Camera Matters
  - a) Wrap-up discussion
6. New Business
  - a)
  - b)
  - c)
7. Date and Time of Next Meeting: At the call of the Chair
8. Adjournment

# Homelessness prevention and Housing: A Yellowknife not-for- profit perspective

Yellowknife Women's Society

Presentation to Standing Committee on Social Development

June 30 2022



Est. 1990

*Yellowknife*  
**Women's Society**



# Yellowknife Women's Society

- A society founded by Yellowknife-based women in 1990, after about three decades of organizing in other ways
- First opened its doors as the drop in Yellowknife Women's Centre in Yellowknife's downtown, through the support of local business owners and volunteers
- Expanded services to provide nutritional and other program supports to women and their families, and then a daycare program
- Services expanded again to include the Housing First and short-term/transitional housing programs, operation of the Yellowknife Street Outreach van, and work ready programming.
- In 2020, at the beginning of the pandemic, Spruce Bough opened its doors

# Spruce Bough



- Unique program introduced during COVID-19 through COVID-19 funding
- Barrier free housing program prioritizing seniors/Elders currently experiencing homelessness and health conditions elevating their risk of catastrophic COVID-19 outcomes
- Converted the former Arnica Inn into supported living units, provided 24/7 staffing, bi-weekly visits from public health nurses, a kitchen and managed alcohol program
- Employs 20 staff
- Currently housing 38 individuals formerly experiencing homelessness
- Most clients are Indigenous seniors or Elders who are either residential school survivors themselves, or have a direct relative who attended residential school



# Spruce Bough funding

Three different funding arrangements:

1. Funded by Indigenous Services Canada through a direct contribution agreement between 2020-2021;
2. Funded by Indigenous Services Canada through a direct contribution agreement and a direct contribution agreement from GNWT between 2021-2022;
3. Funded by GNWT in 2022-2023 through a direct contribution agreement and a mix of Income Assistance program funding and Canada pension plan funding to clients who in turn pay Yellowknife Women's Society a portion of their IA or CPP benefits as 'rent'

# How do different funding models impact service delivery?



**Single funder:** contribution agreement between funder and organization

- One reporting relationship for financial and activity reporting
- Stable, albeit short-term funding of 6 to 12 months

➤ Allows for concentration of work on program design and delivery

# How do different funding models impact service delivery?



**Two/multiple funders:** contribution agreements between funders and organizations

- Multiple funders usually means multiple financial and program reporting, increases administrative workload
- Can increase funding instability as there is a need for the organization to facilitate coordination across funding entities – things like timelines and allowable expenses

➤ Administrative workload on the organization is increased, taking away from program design and delivery

# How do different funding models impact service delivery?



**Single or multiple funder and client benefits program funding:** contribution agreement between funder(s) and organization, and enrollment of clients into CCP and IA programs and subsequent garnishment of benefits from clients to organization

- Retains the reporting responsibilities associated with single / multiple funders
  - Dramatic increase in administrative workload for organizational staff: responsible for supporting clients to enroll in and maintain benefits
  - Increases administrative workload on government – administration of benefit programming from government end as well
  - Places organization in difficult dual role of landlord and provider of wellness program
  - Leads to financial precariousness from month to month for organization due to requirement for clients to stay eligible for the benefits *and file the paperwork demonstrating so*
- Administrative workload on the organization is increased, taking away from program design and delivery, and role of the organization is forced to change from wellness service provider to landlord and service provider



# Implications for homelessness prevention housing



- Benefit and funding design impact organizational choices and constraints
- The Spruce Bough has been through three funding models in as many years
- The mixed funding model – of contribution agreement and client benefit program funding – is the most challenging
  - Unmanageable administrative burden on YWS
  - Month-to-month financial insecurity/uncertainty for the organization
- Doesn't align with YWS values, including barrier free housing and choice-centred programming
- We strongly caution other organizations about getting into a situation like this – this is not a good funding model for YWS or our clients.



# What are the options?

## Barrier free housing

*Housing is not contingent upon readiness, or on 'compliance' (for instance, sobriety). Rather, it is a rights-based intervention rooted in the philosophy that all people deserve housing, and that adequate housing is a precondition for recovery.*

- Housing First in Canada: Supporting Communities to end Homelessness (<https://www.homelesshub.ca/HousingFirstCnada>)

## Choice, autonomy, and dignity for clients

UNDRIP Articles 21 and 23

Come speak directly to Spruce Bough residents for their perspectives

# Questions



Contact us at [executivedirector@ykws.ca](mailto:executivedirector@ykws.ca) or [boardchair@ykws.ca](mailto:boardchair@ykws.ca)