

Homeward Trust Initiating Help for Most Vulnerable Edmontonians

New housing first teams will move people from the streets into permanent housing.

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NEWS RELEASE

(Edmonton) – As part of its effort to end homelessness in Edmonton, Homeward Trust has released two Requests for Proposals (RFP), one for the operation of an assertive outreach housing first team, and one for an Aboriginal Housing First team. The housing first model has proven successful in Edmonton, helping more than 1300 people move into housing since April 2009.

The Assertive Outreach team resulted from consultation with agencies and stakeholders over a period of several months. When operational, it will complement the work of existing housing first teams. It will focus on people on the streets, providing outreach services with a direct linkage to safe, permanent housing.

“People sleeping on the streets are amongst the most vulnerable in our city” said Susan McGee, Executive Director of Homeward Trust Edmonton. “There are many programs connecting with them. This housing team builds on that work, and in collaboration with other housing first teams, provides direct and immediate linkages to housing. This team will move people from the streets into housing almost overnight”.

The Aboriginal team will integrate traditional customs and teachings into day-to-day service delivery, providing intervention and support in a cultural context for clients who request it. “Aboriginal peoples are vastly overrepresented amongst the homeless population – comprising around 40%, compared to 6% of the city’s population as a whole. Through our research, and feedback from clients in the program, we believe a culturally-specific service will enhance our ability to help Aboriginal people experiencing homelessness”.

“Housing is a foundation for everything else in life” added McGee. “By adding additional capacity to the housing first program, we will be able to serve Edmonton’s most vulnerable populations faster, and in an even more effective way. They bring us one step closer to ending homelessness in Edmonton by 2019”.

To read the RFPs, visit www.homewardtrust.ca/. Applications are due September 23, 2011.



For More Information and for Interviews:

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Homeward Trust Edmonton is a not-for-profit organization that uses a community-based approach in pursuing the goal of ending homelessness in Edmonton. Its primary role is to coordinate a response to housing needs by working together with local agencies and all orders of government. Community engagement and involvement are the foundation of Homeward Trust's work.