

## **A Place to Call Home: Report of the Expert Advisory Panel on Homelessness**

October 28, 2015 9:00 A.M.

As part of the [Poverty Reduction Strategy](#), Ontario established the [Expert Advisory Panel on Homelessness](#) as a key step to tackling homelessness. Co-chaired by the Honourable Ted McMeekin and the Honourable Deb Matthews, the panel's final report describes the complexity of the problem and sets out recommendations that will inform both immediate and future provincial actions. As one of the first steps, Ontario has accepted the recommendation to end chronic homelessness in 10 years.

### **Purpose and Scope**

To support the development of common, systematic approaches to measuring the number of homeless people in Ontario, and expand efforts to reduce and end homelessness, the panel was asked to provide practical input on:

- a provincial definition of homelessness
- approaches and methods to collect, measure and track data related to homelessness in Ontario
- approaches to establishing a target related to homelessness for Ontario
- methods to more effectively collect, disseminate and apply existing and emerging evidence about what programs, interventions and investments are most successful in different contexts and for different sub-populations
- and approaches to expand the base of evidence and its application in Ontario.

### **Ontario's Response to the Panel's Recommendations**

Based on the advice of the panel, the government has committed to a number of immediate and long-term actions to help people now, as well as gather the data needed to measure and make meaningful progress on preventing, reducing and ending homelessness over time.

This includes the following immediate next steps:

- setting a target to end chronic homelessness in 10 years
- providing up to \$10 million over two years in targeted funding from the [Local Poverty Reduction Fund](#) to help prevent and end homelessness across the province
- adopting the recommended definition of homelessness, including chronic homelessness, to build common language and thinking about the problem
- prioritizing provincial action to reduce homelessness in four areas: youth, Aboriginal, and chronic homelessness, as well as homelessness following transitions from provincially-funded institutions and service systems, such as jails and hospitals

- planning to require enumeration at the local level to gather data about homelessness

In addition, the province will launch projects that will help gather evidence:

- **Youth Lab:** The province will engage youth who are homeless and youth with lived experience of homelessness, in collaborative, action-oriented conversations on key issues raised in the panel's report.
- **Community Profiles:** In partnership across ministries, the province will visit select communities in Ontario to better understand, through the local lens, systems changes that could reduce homelessness.

## **What Ontario is Currently Doing to Prevent and End Homelessness**

### **Local Poverty Reduction Fund**

To date, through the [Local Poverty Reduction Fund](#), Ontario has allocated \$1.6 million to support eight projects that aim to prevent and reduce homelessness.

### **Affordable Housing**

The province has allocated \$44.1 million as part of the Investment in Affordable Housing Initiative to support access to affordable housing by Aboriginal peoples. As of September 30, 2015, more than \$9.1 million has been committed to build and repair 126 units and provide down payment assistance to 47 households. Ontario is also currently updating the [Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy](#) to integrate new research on best practices related to housing and homelessness.

### **The Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative**

The [Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative](#) aims to prevent, address, and reduce homelessness by improving access to adequate, suitable and affordable housing that is linked to flexible support services based on people's needs. In 2015-16, Ontario is investing almost \$294 million under the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative. In 2014-15, funding under this initiative has assisted approximately 30,500 households experiencing homelessness obtain housing and has helped approximately 104,400 households at-risk of homelessness remain in their homes.

### **Youth**

In May 2015, Ontario provided one-time grant funding of \$390,000 over two years to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Foundation on behalf of the Toronto Homeless Youth Transitions Collaborative for the development of a strategy to support youth leaving homelessness. The research pilot project aims to improve the health and quality of life of 30 previously homeless youth.

## LEARN MORE

- [Report of the Expert Advisory Panel on Homelessness \[PDF\]](#)
- [Expert Advisory Panel on Homelessness](#)
- [Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy](#)
- [Ontario's Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy](#)

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