



**homeward trust**  
edmonton

# Reframing Recovery and Housing First

Strategies for Homeless Solutions

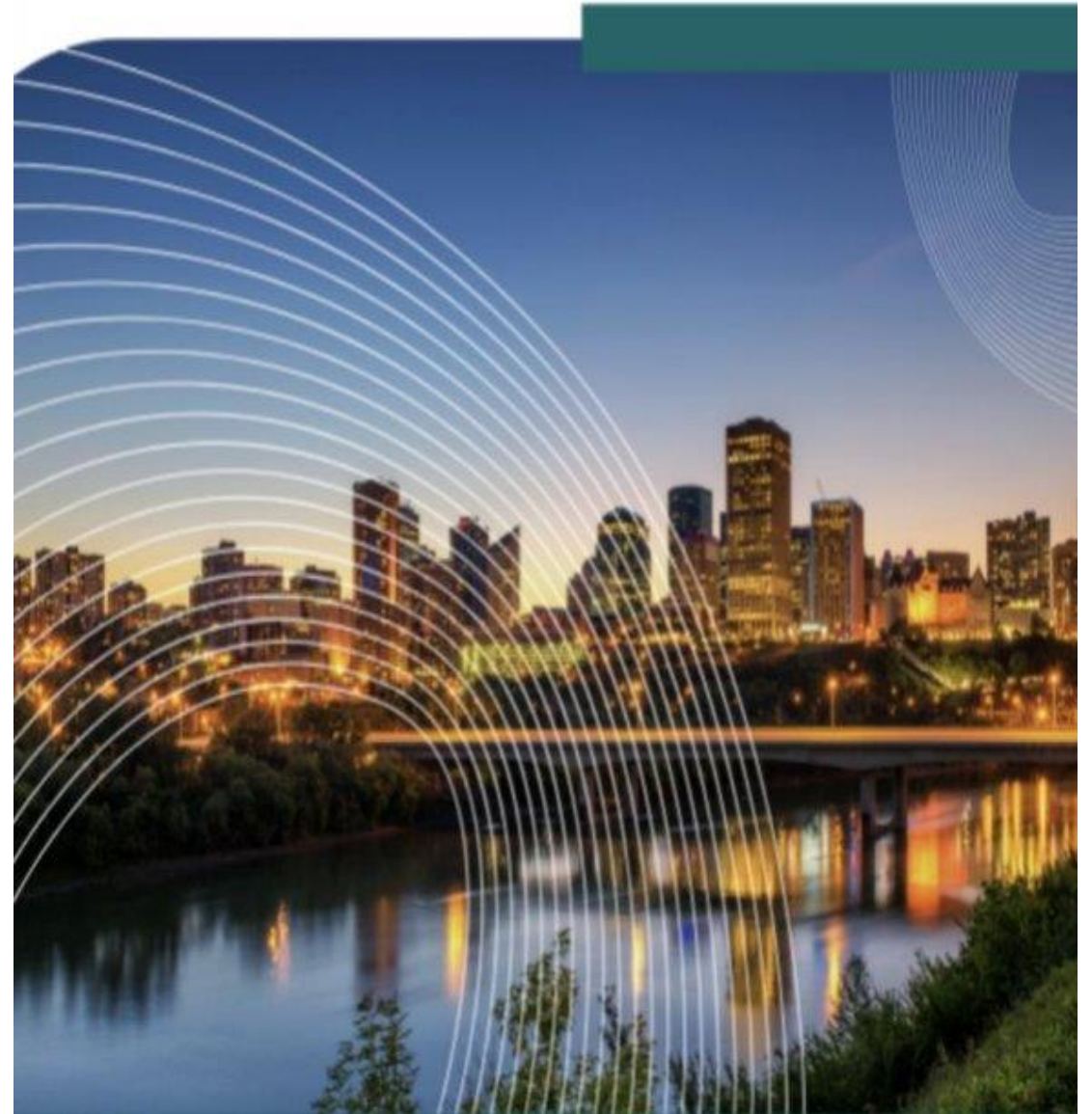
**Jeff Walker**

November 8, 2023

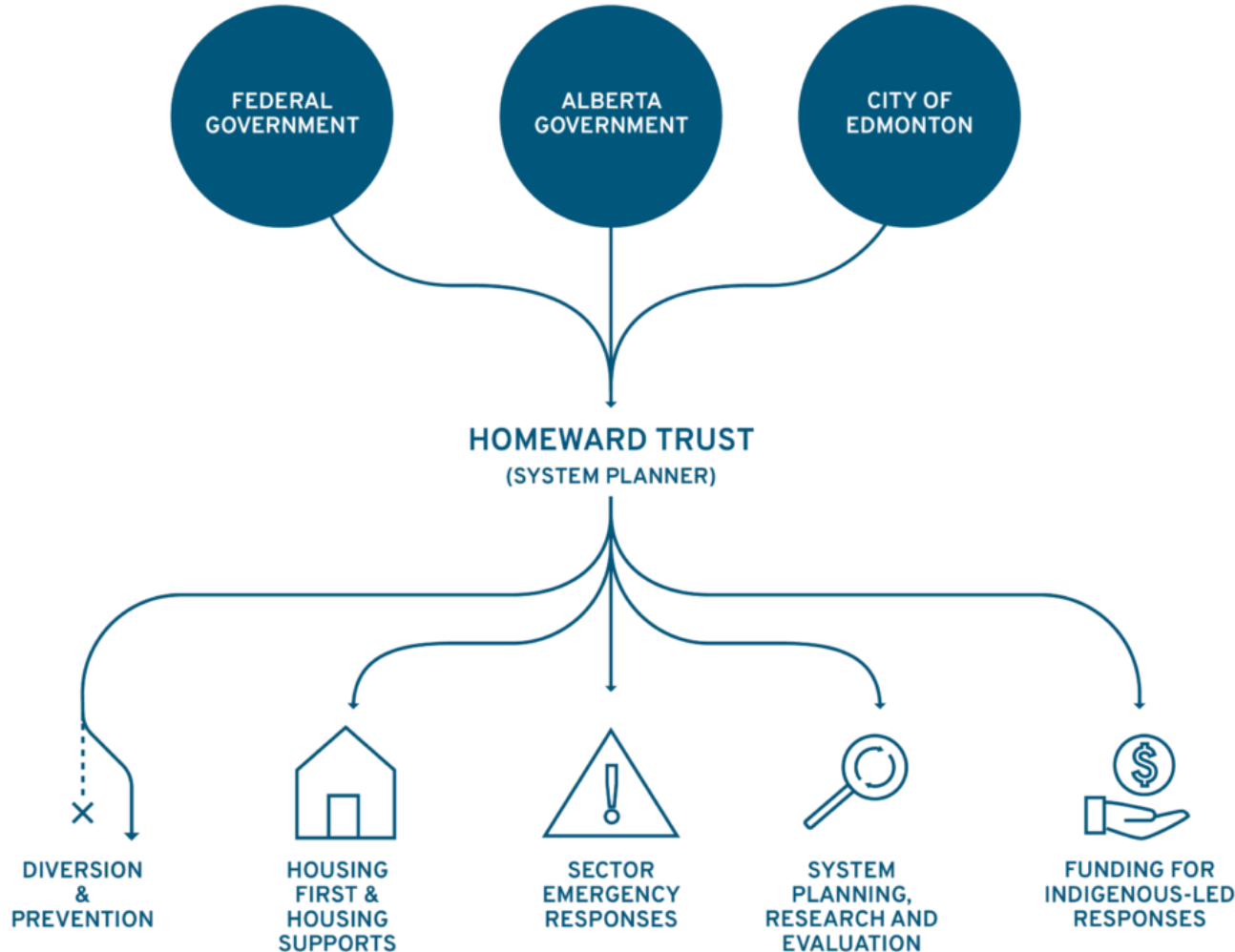
# Overview

## Learning objectives

- Understanding of the perceived tension in Alberta
- Reframing our understanding of how Housing First and Recovery-Oriented principles intersect to promote Wellness Recovery
- Examples of interventions in Edmonton that are contributing to Wellness Recovery



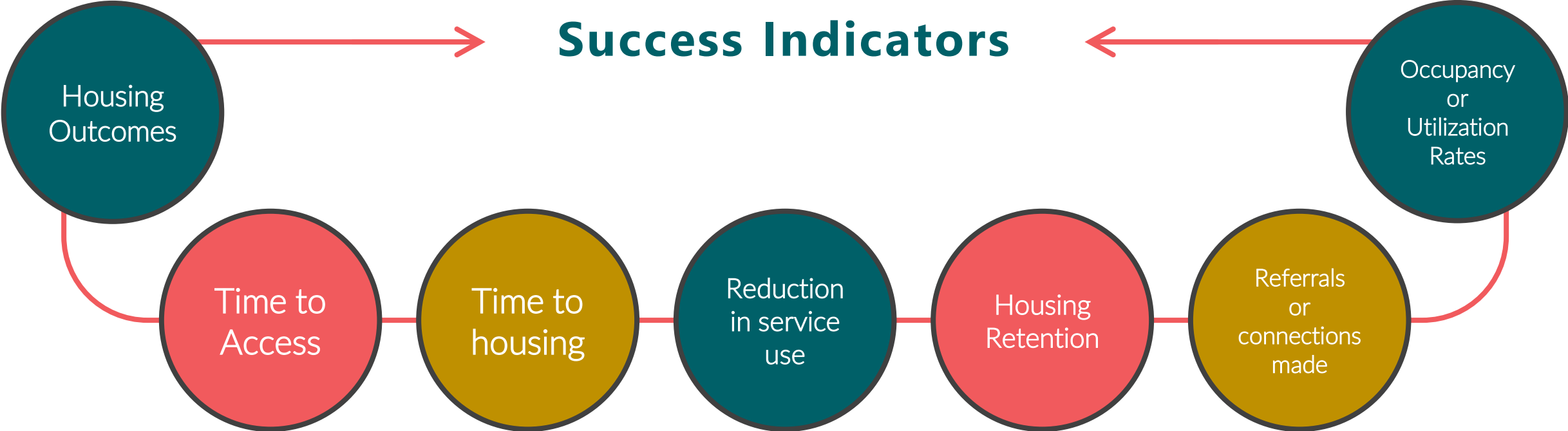
# Homeward Trust Edmonton



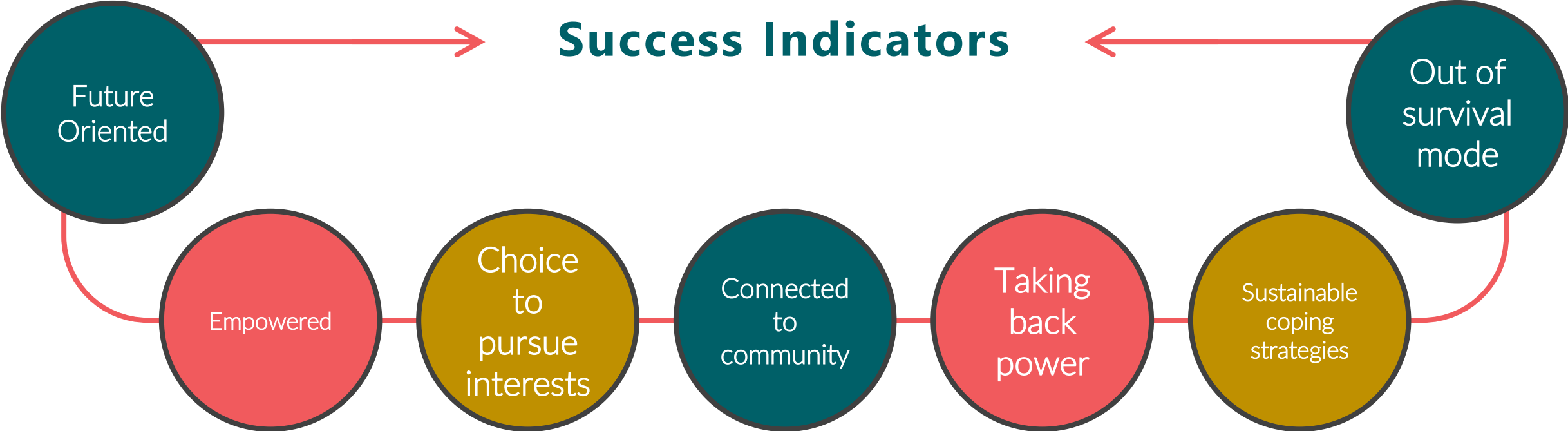
Homeward Trust acts as the System Planner Organization that takes on day-to-day system operations and strategy work advancing the Community Plan to End Homelessness in Edmonton.

In this role we steward funding from all 3 levels of Government to coordinate the sector and drive the impact of innovative homeless solutions.

# How do WE know it's working?



# How does a PARTICIPANT know it's working?



# Why this conversation is important in Alberta?

## Involuntary treatment of drug addicts the Alberta election issue the rest of Canada is watching

*Alberta's bold plan to force chronic drug addicts into treatment is a stark contrast to the drug decriminalization approach of B.C.*

Tristin Hopper

Published Apr 29, 2023 • Last updated Apr 29, 2023 • 9 minute read

## Alberta premier's addictions mandate includes controversial involuntary treatment law



By [Emily Mertz](#) • Global News

Posted August 2, 2023 5:21 pm • Updated September 11, 2023 5:33 am

## Is mandatory treatment 'compassionate' to people with addictions? Not everyone agrees

UCP's proposal raises ethical and moral questions that aren't easy to answer



[Joel Dryden](#) • CBC News • Posted: May 18, 2023 6:00 AM MDT | Last Updated: May 18

# The Perceived Tension

Housing  
First is  
being  
challenged



Housing First is becoming **Marginalized** and perceived as **Perpetuating Addiction**

There is a **Treatment First** mentality

The first step in Recovery is attending **Addiction Treatment**

Resolution of **Addiction** will lead to Resolution of Housing

# What we know about how Homelessness and Addiction Intersect



**25.1%**

... report losing housing because of addiction

**1 in 4**

... drug poisonings take place outdoors

**1 in 10**

... release from institution 30 days before death

**84%**

... individuals living in homelessness report addiction challenges

Homelessness is leading to more addiction

Addiction isn't leading to more homelessness



# Reframing the Finish Line

Success is NOT fully realized when:

- Housing is secured
- Treatment is attended
- Use lessens or stops entirely

Success IS fully realized when:

- The individual is supported in recovering from their experience of homelessness

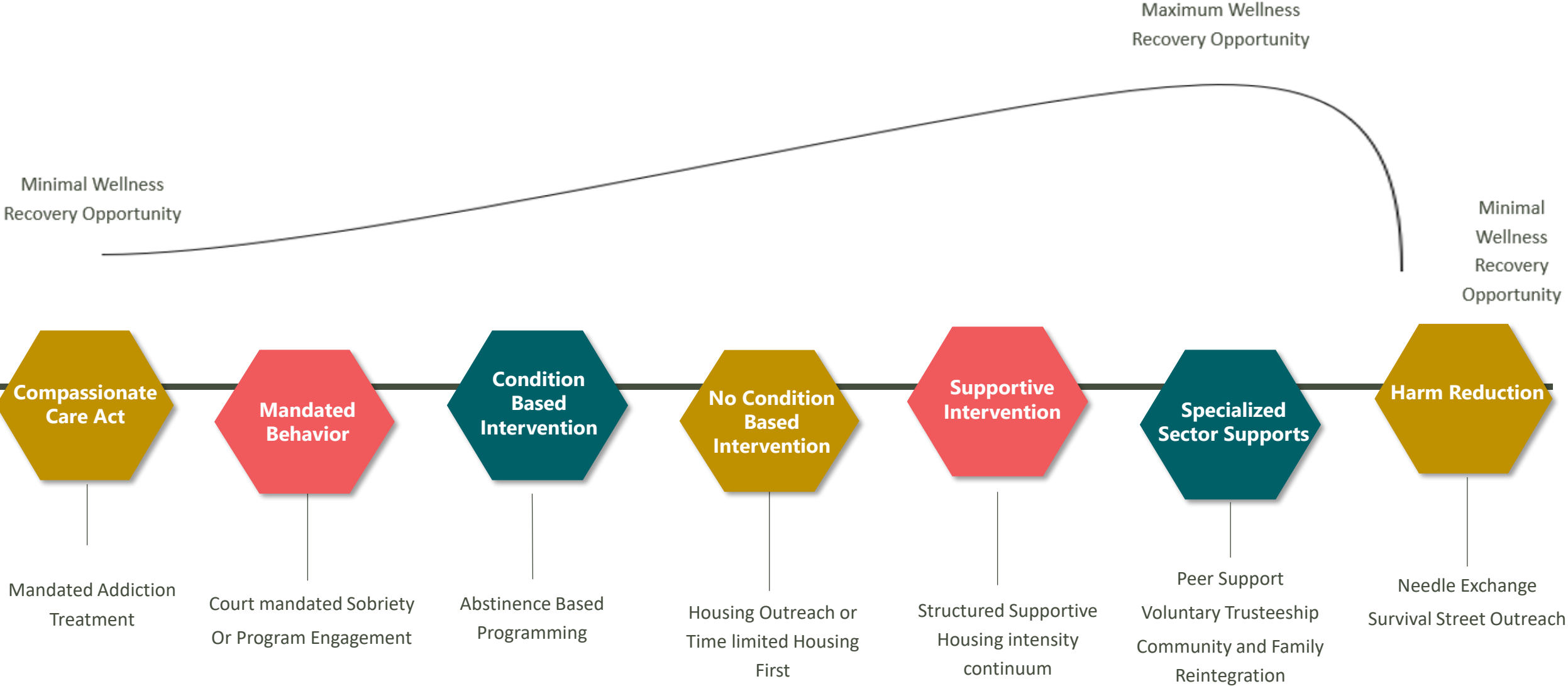
# Defining Wellness Recovery



## Toolbox for Sustainable Wellness



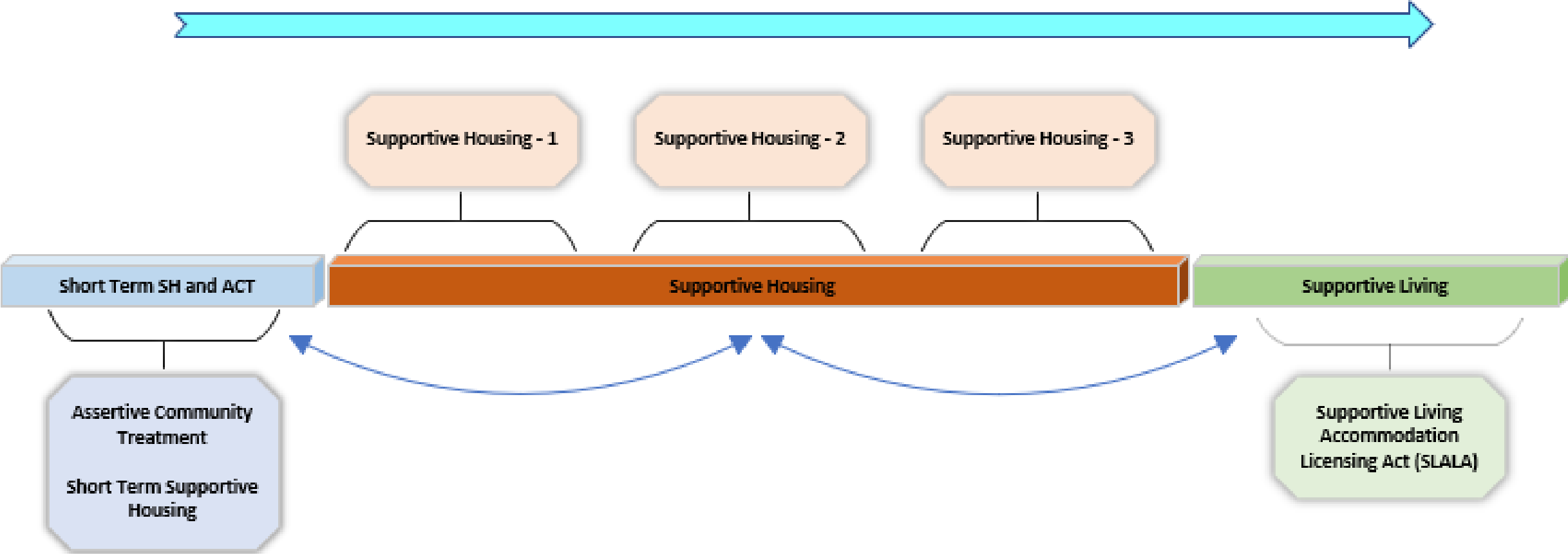
# Continuum of Wellness Recovery





Supportive Housing creates the largest opportunity to achieve **Wellness Recovery** and Recovery from the **Experience of Homelessness**

# Supportive Housing Structure



# Supportive Housing Service Intensities



## Supportive Housing 1

- 1) Care needs are scheduled
- 2) Staff are Generalized
- 3) Ability to respond to crisis with limitations
- 4) Services are primarily accessed in Community

## Supportive Housing 2

- 1) Care needs are primarily scheduled with limited ability to meet unscheduled needs
- 2) On site staff are generalized with specialized staff in reach
- 3) Capacity to respond to most crisis situations
- 4) Service are primarily accessed in Community or in reached as needed

## Supportive Housing 3

- 1) Care needs may be scheduled or unscheduled
- 2) Both generalized and specialized staff onsite.
- 3) Capacity to respond to all crisis situations with limitation around violence
- 4) Service are primarily accessed in reach or embedded onsite

# Supportive Housing Participant Profile



## Supportive Housing 1

- 1) No support needed with activities of daily living (ADLs).
- 2) Minimal support needed for Instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs)
- 3) May need minimal supports with tenancy management
- 4) No or minimal supports needed for substance use/mental health management.
- 5) Some complex barriers to securing and maintaining stable housing.

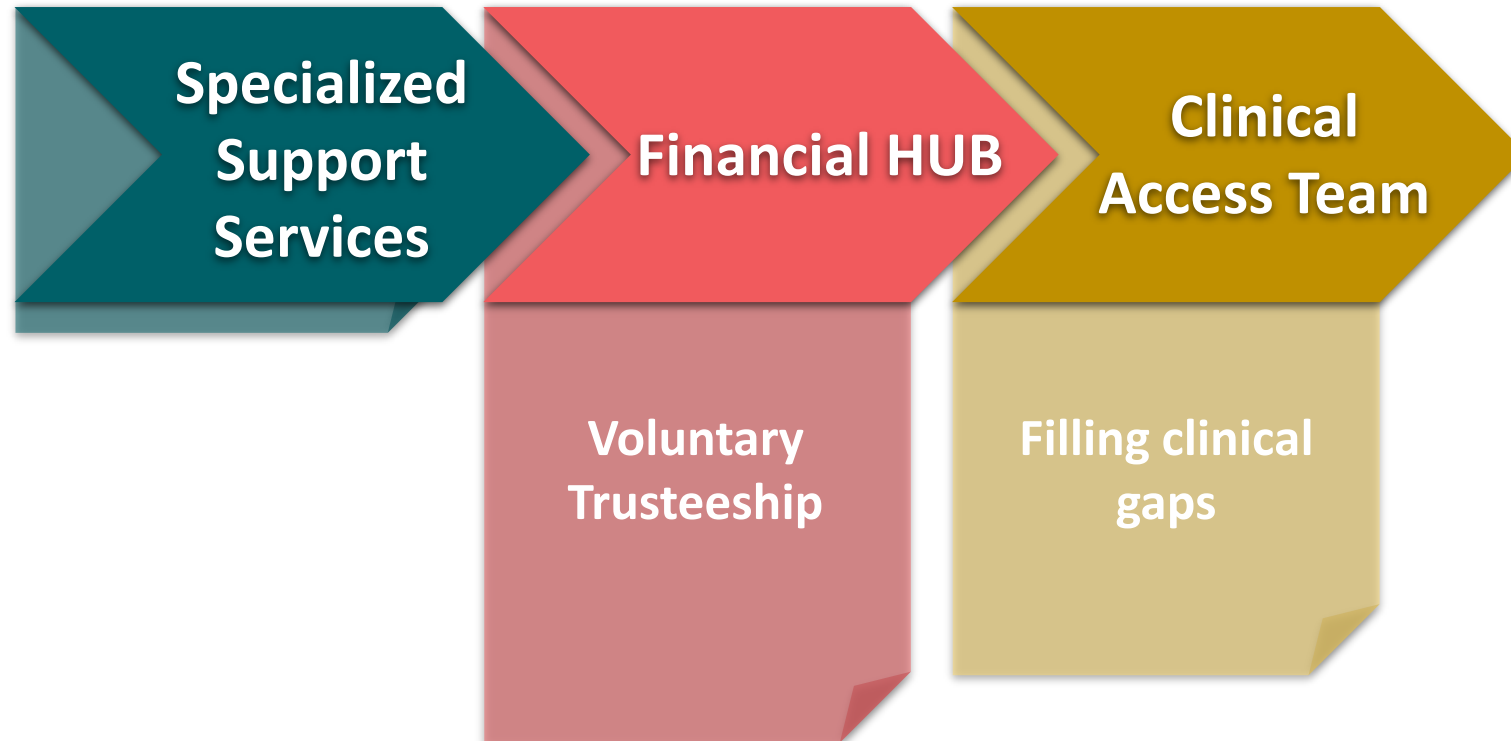
## Supportive Housing 2

- 1) Support needed to learn and routinize activities of daily living (ADLs)
- 2) Support/planning needed for Instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs)
- 3) Support needed for tenancy management
- 4) Regular supports needed for substance use/ mental health management.
- 5) Co-occurring disorder with a history of complex homelessness

## Supportive Housing 3

- 1) Tri-morbidity
- 2) High-Level supports needed to accomplish ADLs.
- 3) High-Level support needed for Instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs)
- 4) Regular and immediately accessible supports needed for substance use/ mental health management.
- 5) Care needs may be unscheduled.
- 6) Complex or disruptive behavior patterns

# Specialized Supports in action





# What we know works

## What is NOT working

- A system that mandates engagement, creates conditions for care, and hopes for behavior change.



- A responsive, housing focused system where programs drive impact and individuals achieve sustainable wellness.
- Access to housing with the right supports for the right people at the right time.

## What IS working

# Thank You!

— Jeff Walker

Director of Supportive Housing

Homeward Trust

[jwalker@homewardtrust.ca](mailto:jwalker@homewardtrust.ca)

[homewardtrust.ca](http://homewardtrust.ca) | [@homewardtrust](https://www.instagram.com/homewardtrust)

