Unique Community Driven Responses to Rural, Remote and Indigenous Homelessness

CAEH 2022

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Land Acknowledgment

The Rural Development Network (RDN) sincerely acknowledges that our physical office is located on the Traditional Territories of Treaty 6 and home to Métis Nation Region 4. I currently live in Amiskwaciwâskahikan, also known as Beaver Hills House or Edmonton.

We acknowledge the ancestral and unceded territory of all the Inuit, Métis, and First Nations people that call this land home and who have gathered on these lands for centuries. It is important to reaffirm my personal and our organization's responsibility and commitment to reconciliation and respecting the diverse histories and cultures of Indigenous peoples.

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Rural Development Network

VISION: A strong sustainable network that **empowers rural communities** by facilitating and **providing access** to trusted **rural development expertise**, information and services

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RDN's Key Initiatives

IMMIGRATION

HOUSING

RURAL REVITALIZATION

HOMELESSNESS

ESTIMATIONS

SHELTER PULSE

TRANSPORTATION

HEALTH & WELLNESS

COALITIONS

WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING

AGRI-FOOD

INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT

Reaching Home

- RDN is the Rural & Remote Community Entity for Alberta
- Federal Government's Homelessness Strategy
- Funding supports organizations and communities located outside of the 7 major cities in Alberta and Indigenous communities including First Nations, Métis Settlements and Nations
- 100 + projects funded in the past few years

Canada

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$832,249
In Annual RH Funding for 2019-2024

$2,368,704
Through COVID-19 Economic Response Plan

$2 million
In Additional RH Funding for 2022-2024

Reaching Home

Canada

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Rural Homelessness

CALGARY HERALD

News / Local News

Rural homelessness in Alberta a 'hidden crisis': new study

Jason Herring
2 days ago • 2 minute read

Homelessness and home insecurity is a problem in rural Alberta too, although it's often not s visible as it is in urban areas, a new study has found. AL CHAREST / Postmedia

Homelessness is pervasive even outside of Alberta's urban centres, according to a new study into the scope of the problem in the province's rural communities.

The report is touted by the Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN) as the largest co-ordinated count of homelessness and housing instability ever completed in rural Alberta, and was completed in co-ordination with local service agencies operating in 20 communities.

- Sleeping rough or camping
- Living in vehicles or abandoned buildings
- Sleeping in emergency shelters
- Couch surfing
- Inadequate and unsafe housing
- Indigenous Homelessness (Thistle, 2017)

Challenges Rural Communities Face

- Limited and inconsistent funding
- Lack of emergency shelter, affordable, transitional and permanent supportive housing
- Transportation barriers
- Lack of mental health and addictions supports
- Developing culturally appropriate responses to Indigenous Homelessness
- Community engagement and education
- Capacity to implement coordinated community responses
- Data gaps

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Community Responses to
Homelessness

HIGHLIGHTS

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Supportive Housing Complex

For Indigenous, By Indigenous

Changing Horses
NFP Society

Moses Lake, Blood Tribe, Alberta

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"Changing Horses is probably the first group ever on the Blood Tribe reserve that has gotten together not under the umbrella of chief and council that has started something like this to provide the housing for some of our homeless...To others looking out at us, it's a small project. But, for us, it's a big project. It is not going to house everyone that needs to be housed, but we have got to start somewhere. I believe if we are able to do that, we could do a lot more on the Blood Tribe reserve and other First Nation communities."

-Katie Rabbit Young-Pine, Changing Horses

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Homelessness Among Older Adults

Rural communities are reporting **a rise in homelessness among older adults**

Older adults are considered 65+ and comprise of 17% of Canada's population (Statistics Canada, 2020).

There is a **lack of data** available on **homeless older adults**

Homelessness among **older adults** is expected to **significantly increase over the next 5-10 years**

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Cloverleaf Manor Intensive Supports Program

George Spady Society
Warburg, AB

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Foothills Centre

Operates detox program

Provides transition beds in Fort Macleod, AB

Served 128 clients this past year

In 2021-2022, 78% of clients successfully exited the program

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Soaring Eagle Support Society

Provides **transitional housing** and **outreach services**

Safe I.D. Program, assistance with income support applications, Income Tax filing, mailing address, addiction and mental health supports, court supports, housing navigation, community referrals and basic needs services
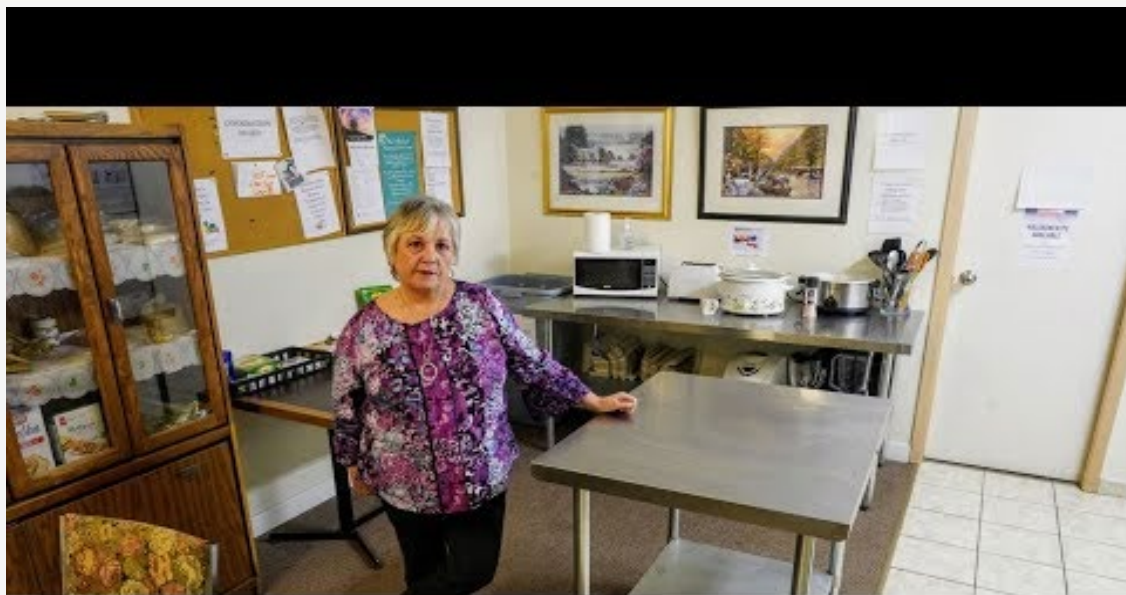
Housed 42 individuals in the last year

Community Driven Solutions

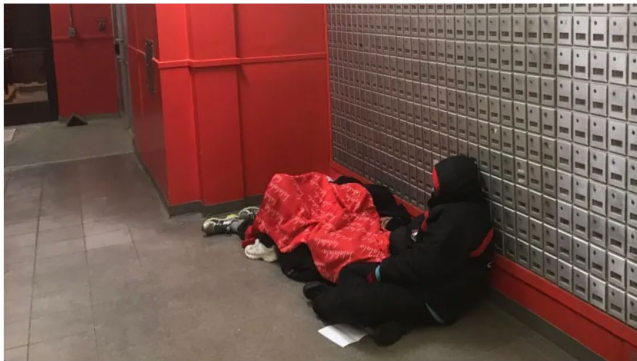# Shelter Pods - Edson and Drayton Valley, Alberta

Temporary Emergency Mat Programs

Peace River opens first overnight homeless shelter

Rural homelessness an issue often unseen, unacknowledged

Stephen Cook · CBC News · Posted: Jan 12, 2020 6:00 AM MT | Last Updated: January 12, 2020

At times, people with nowhere else to go sleep in the Peace River post office. (Marc Boychuk)

The small northern Alberta town of Peace River will open its first overnight winter shelter on Sunday.

The volunteer-run operation will open its doors every night until late April from 10 p.m. to 7 a.m.

Marc Boychuk, one of the organizers, said homeless people often go unseen in smaller communities, with people sleeping in cars, in back alleys, or in tents out of the eye of the public.

"Two, three years ago I didn't even know we had homeless in our community, and I think the vast majority of our community didn't," Boychuk said Friday. "And the vast majority, like myself, are quite appalled and shocked at what some people have to put up with and how they're living.

"And they want that to end, now."

Canmore pilot project offering shelter from the cold

"They may be going through a rough patch, or may have suffered some kind of traumatic event. This gives them the opportunity to be safe and hopefully we will be able to connect them through the various helping agencies in the Bow Valley to accommodation that meets their needs."

Tanya Foubert
Feb 4, 2021 7:00 AM

Sean Krausert, left, Kayla Eykleboom, Michelle Rhode and Lisa Brown stand outside St. Michael's Anglican Church in Canmore on Tuesday (Feb. 2). Krausert and Rhose are launching the REST Program, a pilot to offer shelter from the cold. Eykleboom and Brown, who work in with Community Social Development at the Town of Canmore, are assisting the project. EVAN BUHLER RMO PHOTO

CANMORE – A new pilot project in Canmore will provide shelter from the cold for those who are struggling with finding affordable and available housing in the community.

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO

Developing Temporary Emergency Mat Programs

JUNE 2021

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Download:
https://www.ruraldevelopment.ca/publications/emergency-mat-programs

01 Purpose

02 Goals

03 Response

Linda Bernicki
lindab@ruraldevelopment.ca

Mat Program Guide

Funded in part by the Government of Canada's Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy

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Mat Program Guide

Developing a Mat Program - Key Considerations

- Organizational capacity
- Funding
- Location
- Community engagement and consultation
- Cultural considerations
- Policies and procedures
- Program evaluation and data collection

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Project Overview

Figure 1. Coordinated Entry System

Without CES   With CES

Assign (w/ choice)

Assist
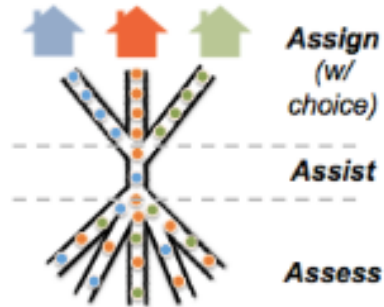
Assess

Note. Image retrieved from The Center (2014).

Research:
- Literature review
- Pilot communities
- Focus groups

Deliverables & Goals:
- Training materials
- Systems mapping tools
- Assessment tool
- Step-by-step guide

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Interested in participating in a focus group and/or becoming a pilot community?

Please email Emily at:
emilym@ruraldevelopment.ca

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Conclusion

How is your community addressing rural, remote and Indigenous homelessness?

What resources do you have?

What responses is your community engaged in?

Thank you!
Any questions?

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