

WHOLE WAY HOUSE

2 0 2 5



## Building Healthy Communities in Housing

H e y   N e i g h b o u r   H o u s i n g   S y m p o s i u m   2 0 2 5

# Introducing the Whole Way House Model

- Whole Way House partners with non-profit landlords to provide onsite community building programs and tenant support services in order to build healthy communities in housing. We support low-income veterans, seniors, and people with disabilities to create a sense of home and belonging as well as the support to age well in place.
- Our program adapts based on the needs of the seniors, ranging in support from 3-7 days per week onsite.
- By creating a safe and welcoming community, at-risk seniors are empowered to have successful tenancies, access to community healthcare resources, higher quality of life and thrive with the dignity and support they need and deserve.





WHOLE WAY HOUSE  
RECONNECT. REBUILD. RECENTER

# Our Model

## Key points:

- Onsite, multi-unit buildings
- As needed services
- Based on trust
- Third party support provider

## Two-Pronged Approach

### Response to Homelessness

1. We bring homeless or inappropriately housed seniors and veterans off the BC Housing waitlist into our supported model to ensure successful tenancy
2. We have a 97% retention rate for those we bring into housing

### Prevention of Homelessness

1. We support those who are currently housed but are at-risk of decline and homelessness
2. Non-profit housing providers are facing a crisis with seniors who are declining in independent housing
3. Seniors who don't qualify for assisted living are being hospitalized or facing crisis evictions



# Current Overview



**1100+ Residents**



**11 Sites**



**7 Housing Partners**














**20 Staff**



**4 Municipalities**



**\$1.5M ANNUAL BUDGET**

 <p>In partnership with BC Housing</p> <a href="#">LEARN MORE</a>	<p>in the DTES</p>  <p>In partnership with Union Gospel Mission</p> <a href="#">LEARN MORE</a>	<p>and/or with disabilities in the DTES</p>  <p>In partnership with Union Gospel Mission</p> <a href="#">LEARN MORE</a>
<p><b>Alexander House (AHS)</b></p> <p>Affordable housing for low-income seniors in the DTES</p>  <p>In partnership with BC Housing and Coastal Church</p> <a href="#">LEARN MORE</a>	<p><b>Chelsea Tower (NCS)</b></p> <p>Affordable housing for low-income seniors in Mount Pleasant</p>  <p>In partnership with BC Housing</p> <a href="#">LEARN MORE</a>	<p><b>Chelsea Terrace (NCS)</b></p> <p>Affordable housing for low-income seniors in Burnaby</p>  <p>In partnership with BC Housing</p> <a href="#">LEARN MORE</a>
<p><b>Granville House (AHS)</b></p> <p>Affordable housing for low-income seniors in Vancouver (Granville Bridge)</p>  <p>In partnership with BC Housing and Coastal Church</p> <a href="#">LEARN MORE</a>	<p><b>The Orchard (UGM)</b></p> <p>Permanent, affordable, townhouses for low-income families and single moms in Surrey</p>  <p>In partnership with Union Gospel Mission</p> <a href="#">LEARN MORE</a>	<p><b>Shiloh Place</b></p> <p>Low income housing for seniors in Chinatown and the DTES</p>  <p>In partnership with Reaching Home</p> <a href="#">LEARN MORE</a>
<p><b>The Pendrellis</b></p> <p>Affordable housing for low-income seniors in the West End of Vancouver</p> 	<p><b>Campbell Lodge (CVHS)</b></p> <p>Low-income housing for seniors and people with diverse abilities in the heart of Victoria.</p> 	

## How we work

### RE | CONNECT

**ReConnect** by building meaningful relationships where we can combat loneliness and isolation in a safe and supportive community

### RE | BUILD

**ReBuild** a sense of belonging and purpose through opportunities to contribute, education and training

### RE | CENTER

**ReCenter** around a meaningful and purposeful life through one on one tenant support services and connecting to community resources

# OUR PROGRAMS: PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL & FINANCIAL WELLNESS



RECONNECT	REBUILD	RECENTER
<b>Coffee Club</b> A great way to start the day, have a reason to get ready and get out of isolation and into a relaxed and positive community setting	<b>Food Bank Rides/Food Security Programs</b> Providing transportation and assistance getting to the food bank. Free shopping programs. Grocery delivery assistance. Meal delivery coordination.	<b>One-on-One Tenant Support</b> Open office hours onsite for various types of support and navigation (English & Chinese)
<b>Games/Puzzles/Drop In</b> Ice breaker to connect in a healthy way and have fun	<b>Special Outings</b> Walking clubs, city exploration, museums, picnics, beach days, forest walks	<b>Financial Support</b> Budgeting, banking assistance, taxes (more on next slide)
<b>Family Dinner/Holiday Meals</b> Building a sense of belonging and family by sharing a sit-down meal that is served with a smile to celebrate together	<b>Hearing Tests/Foot Care/Haircuts onsite</b> Coordinating hearing test providers to come onsite to give free hearing tests & hearing aid fittings	<b>Hospital Visits</b> Emotional and practical support, coordinating with hospital staff for discharge and follow up
<b>Art &amp; Music Therapy</b> Art Hour, Music Trivia, Karaoke and our Listening Stations, seniors are invited to engage, reminisce and share laughter across cultures and language barriers	<b>Educational Workshops &amp; Tax Clinics</b> Scams and fraud prevention, technology classes and more for life-long learning, seniors safety with the VPD. Onsite tax clinics to ensure seniors don't lose their benefits & can complete rent review	<b>Move in/out Support</b> Welcome Home package, monthly home success checks, home set up, door tags for safety checks
<b>Birthday Parties</b> Celebrate so they know they are valued	<b>Seated Exercise Class</b> Stay physically fit, active and engaged (all levels)	<b>Clean Units</b> Teams of volunteers come to clean homes for a full reset and easier upkeep
<b>Light Lunch/Super Soups</b> Enjoying a casual meal together at a table with friends and neighbours – Food Security	<b>Community Committee</b> Tenant-led committee to provide input and activity calendar planning	<b>Health Care Coordination/Home Support</b> Advocating for assessments, coordinating treatments, appointment accompaniments

# Vital Tenant Support Services: One on One Support



## Coordinating Health Care

- Requesting case manager assessments (for home support, OT, higher care, early identification of dementia, stroke, etc)
- Medical appointment reminders
- Requesting medical appointments
- Providing more insight into baseline behaviour and changes
- Requesting a case manager to assess needs for higher care

## Coordinating Health Care Continued...

- Ensuring tenant is aware/understands their follow up
- Coordinating pharmacy deliveries/pick up
- Work closely with Home Support team for basic home and care needs (supplying personal hygiene items, cleaning supplies, snack for meds, etc)

## Financial Support/Housing

- Pension/SAFER/OAS/GIS application assistance
- Annual rent review assistance
- Tax clinics
- Provide safe escorted trips to bank
- Budgeting assistance
- Coordinating rent payment
- Coordinating access to free tax services
- Accessing Bloom Group Adult Guardianship Program

## Housing Applications & Government Forms

- Applying for Government ID
- Bank account assistance
- Income Assistance/Disability/Pension/SAFER/OAS/GIS application assistance
- Assistance with housing applications for appropriate housing along the continuum

## Food Security

- Assistance with groceries
- Coordinating meal delivery services
- Rides to the Food Bank

## Hospital Care & Coordination

- Ensuring rent is paid during extended hospital stays
- Coordinating with hospital staff before discharge to ensure after care is in place

## Clean Units

- Regular home wellness checks to identify any potential issues
- Help residents, especially those with mobility issues, maintain clean rooms by providing shared supplies, volunteer groups, light support

## Reduce Vulnerability/ Heighten Safety Measures

- Ensure their funds are safe
- Identify elder abuse
- Community Meetings/Open Forums
- 24 hour tenant checklist



WHOLE WAY HOUSE  
MEAL DELIVERY PROGRAM  
OVERVIEW 2020



## EXTREME HEAT

Some people are more affected by the heat than other people. Those who should take extra care: people over 65, people with multiple health conditions, people who use substances, people on certain medicines, people who are pregnant, and young children.

Signs of Heat Exhaustion	Signs of Heat Stroke
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>in Rash</li> <li>Heavy Sweating</li> <li>Feel Dizzy</li> <li>Feel Sick or Throw Up</li> <li>Rapid Breathing</li> <li>Weak Heartbeat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Headache</li> <li>Trouble Concentrating</li> <li>Muscle Cramps</li> <li>Extreme Thirst</li> <li>Dark Urine and Urinate Less</li> </ul>

**Anyone with these signs:**

- Move to a cool space.
- Give plenty of water.
- Cool the skin down with water.

**Anyone with these signs: Call 9-1-1**

- Submerge all or part of the body in cool water.
- Remove their clothes and cover them with wet towels.

**The best way to prevent a heat-related illness is to spend time in a cool space.**

**Turn Off**

- Appliances with air conditioning such as a library, community centre, cafe, or someone else's home.
- Turn off with water. Take a cool shower, bath or put your feet and legs in a cool tub. Wear a wet shirt. Put damp towels on your skin.
- Never rely on fans as the only way of cooling your body during extreme heat. Fans cannot lower your body temperature or ward off heat illnesses.

**Prepare the space cool**

- Close shades and blinds closed during the day.
- Turn on air conditioning, keep doors closed to trap cooler air inside.
- If you don't have air conditioning, open doors at night to let cooler air in.
- Use fans in front of open windows to pull in cooler air from outside into your home.

**Check-In**

- Notice how you feel and watch for signs of heat illness in those around you.
- Monitor the indoor temperature.
- At least 2 times a day, check in on those at risk for heat-related illness.

**Dress for the heat**

- Wear clothing that is loose-fitting, light-colored, and breathable.

**Hydrate**

- Drink plenty of water.
- Offer water often to those in your care.

**Plan ahead Stay informed**

- Check the weather forecast and latest heat alert information. Take it easy during the hottest times of the day.

## Onsite Emergency Response

### COVID-19 Response

Meal Delivery Program started within 48 hrs of Pandemic, scaled to serve over 800 vulnerable seniors, veterans, residents with disabilities in 19 buildings across 6 housing providers, delivering over 300,000 meals generously funded by BC Housing

### Extreme Weather Response

Immediate heat dome response with onsite chill zones  
Cold weather provisions provided onsite for safety

**Elevator Breakdowns** food and medication coordination, relocation support, calls to first responders when needed

# The Results



- Natural community of support amongst neighbours
- Early intervention and care coordination, less crisis reports
- Overall less days in hospital with discharge support
- Less returns to hospital with aftercare coordination at home
- Less eviction due to decline, hoarding, financial scams and more
- Less “early” admission to higher care facilities
- Higher quality of life and overall wellness
- Higher rates of care plan adherence and home support cooperation



# Martin's Story



Martin, an 82 yr old, third generation veteran who served for 33 yrs found himself in a homeless shelter after his home was torn down.

Due to dementia, he was not able to find housing for himself and had nowhere to go. We were able to bring him into the Veterans Manor, but shortly after moving in, Martin was facing loss of home support and potential eviction due to hoarding issues. Our staff and a team of volunteers stepped in to clean his unit, display his priceless memorabilia and ensure Martin had a safe and secure home to stay in with the care and dignity he deserves. Thank you for your service Martin CA

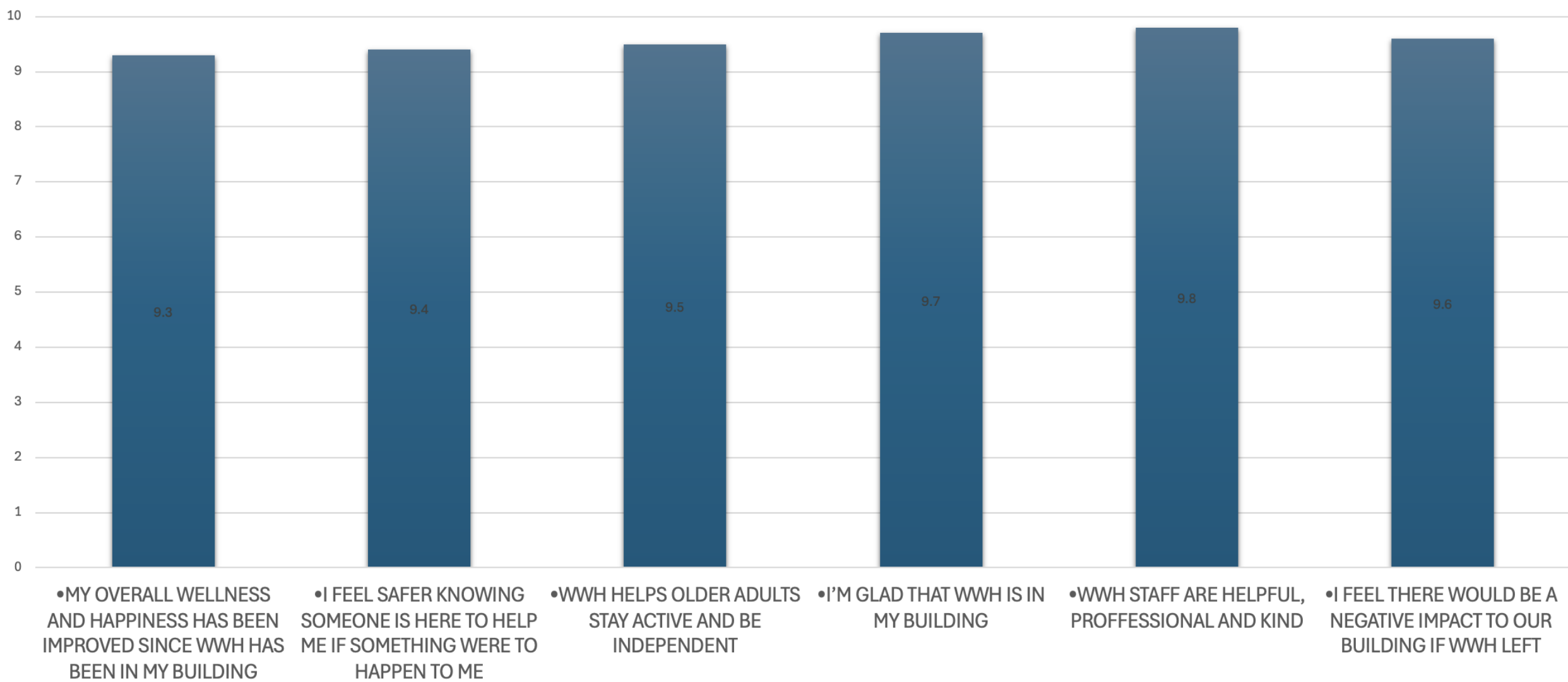


# What does it accomplish?

- Mitigating risk factors to prevent homelessness
- Supporting seniors to age well in the *right* place
- Allowing the landlord to focus on their primary work
- Bridging the gap between housing and health



## Pilot Project Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2024/25



# Research & Recommendations

01

Recommended as a promising practice in the **Aging in the Right Place Study** as an innovative solution to supporting older adults who are experiencing homelessness

<https://www.sfu.ca/airp/research/ConferencePresentations/promising-practices-for-aging-in-the-right-place--airp--for-home.html>

02

Recognized as an effective model in our province for addressing the seniors housing crisis in **United Way Seniors Housing Crisis Report**

<https://uwbc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/uwbc-seniors-housing-report-hi-res.pdf>

03

Recommended model in **City of Vancouver's Seniors Housing Strategy** (p28) to help seniors age in place

<https://www.sfu.ca/airp/research/ConferencePresentations/promising-practices-for-aging-in-the-right-place--airp--for-home.html>

04

Recognized by **BC Housing** as a scalable model and solution for seniors housing crisis –Pilot Project with case for support underway

05

Sector expert for supporting seniors, community building & staff wellness modules at **BCNPHA RENT & Housing Central Conferences** across BC since 2019



# Support for this Model

*“Having Whole Way House onsite reduces the risk of crisis evictions, emergency responses and premature moves to higher care. They improve overall quality of life and more low-income seniors are able to age at home with dignity using this partnership model.*

*This model is flexible and adapts to the needs of the seniors as they change over time.”*

-Stephen Bennett, Affordable Housing Societies

*“Their model is scalable and economical, and most importantly, supports seniors in aging in the right place, with the right supports.”*

– Jill Atkey  
CEO, BC Non-Profit Housing Association

*“Taking a proactive approach to preventing homelessness among seniors is not only compassionate but also fiscally responsible, helping to reduce costs associated with healthcare, emergency services, and other social supports. Our city has seen firsthand the positive impact of this program.”*

-Ken Sim  
Mayor, City of Vancouver

*“I have personally visited Whole Way House and witnessed how providing community building programs and onsite tenant support services creates a sense of belonging, home and healthy community... we must support them with the care and dignity they deserve.”*

– Rebecca Bligh,  
City Councilor, City of Vancouver

## AVERAGE COST ESTIMATE



Hospitalization

**\$1500/day**



Assisted Living

**\$450/day**



Homelessness

**\$245/day**

Being proactive is 95% more cost effective and 100% more dignified, than being reactive and allows our seniors to age well in place as long as possible.



Whole Way House Support Services

**\$3-15/day**

**As little as \$1000 per senior per year!**

\*Average cost of homelessness in Vancouver is \$74,000 year according to the Metro Vancouver Homelessness Count



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# THANK YOU

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More info [www.wholewayhouse.ca](http://www.wholewayhouse.ca)

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[https://www.vancitycommunityfoundation.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/HC2020\\_FinalReport.pdf](https://www.vancitycommunityfoundation.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/HC2020_FinalReport.pdf)
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