

To: Homes First Society Board of Directors
From: Patricia Mueller, Chief Executive Officer
Subject: HFS Annual Resident Survey
Date: October 5, 2021

Recommendation:

That this report be received for information.

Background:

My past practice has been to oversee an annual client survey to determine potential services, client satisfaction, areas of focus, potential areas for improvement, and key support opportunities.

Comments:

This year, 599 completed resident surveys were collected from all Homes First sites; just over a 42% response rate from all our residents. The number of respondents this year has more than quadrupled compared to the 2020 Annual Resident Survey results with only 123 respondents. 2021 brought a greater population to Homes First than last year, but the ratio of return this year is still notable.

This year, we held multiple focus groups at each site to discuss the Survey with all our residents. We collected feedback and made some appropriate changes for this year's resident survey.

As a result of the feedback we received, we have created two different surveys: one for permanently housed residents, and another for residents staying in our shelters and hotels.

Housed residents were asked to rank their satisfaction across 5 prominent program elements at Homes First, including: (1) Intensive Case Management Workers; (2) services provided by partner organizations; (3) appearance/ condition of the building; (4) maintenance issues/repairs; and, (5) ongoing internal programming at each site.

Shelter residents were asked to rank their satisfaction across 6 prominent program elements at Homes First, including: (1) Intensive Case Management Workers; (2) Housing Help Workers, (3) services provided by partner organizations; (4) appearance/condition of the building; (5) maintenance issues/repairs; and, (6) ongoing internal programming at each site.

All residents were also given the opportunity to mention further programming they would like to see at the site, or any other concerns they would like to include.

SHELTERS

We received a total of 230 completed surveys from the HFS shelters; a 64% response rate, including:

- Bathurst Lake Shore: 43 completed surveys out of a possible 125 (including the co-ed, couples, and lower level);
- Better Living Centre: 60 completed surveys out of a possible 147 (including all three floors of the Shelter.
- Kennedy Women's Shelter: 24 completed surveys out of a possible 47 (four more than collected last year);
- 4117 Lawrence: 29 completed surveys out of a possible 50;

- St. Clair Shelter: 18 completed surveys out of a possible 31 (beds at the St. Clair Shelter are still reduced in response to Covid physical distancing); and,
- Willowdale Welcome Centre: 62 completed surveys out of a possible 146.

SUMMARY:

Overall, the majority of respondents indicated they are “completely satisfied” and “mostly satisfied” with the Intensive Case Management Workers and are “completely satisfied” with the Intensive Case Management staff availability and frequency of contact and communication.

This is the first year that we surveyed our shelter residents on services received by Housing Help Workers (an addition to allow better feedback mechanisms for specific staff roles that arose from suggestions brought up during a focus group meeting). The majority of residents are either “overall satisfied” or “mostly satisfied” with their Housing Help Workers, some statements that received high scores were their ability to respond to needs and knowledge of services and resources in the area. 4117 Lawrence had a couple “partially satisfied” scores, which will be followed up on as this location had only recently opened, and processes and activities are still being developed.

Also because of feedback we had received from the focus groups, we have added to the survey a section about partner organizations’ services being implemented at our sites (such as physicians, nurses, peer support workers, and harm reduction supports). The results indicated that almost all sites are either “completely satisfied” or “mostly satisfied” with the partnership services. There were a couple respondents at the Better Living Centre and the Kennedy Shelter that indicated partial satisfaction, and this too will be followed up on.

A high majority of shelter respondents are “overall satisfied” with the condition of the buildings, as well as the maintenance and cleanliness of common areas. Most respondents indicated that the exterior lighting, sleeping area comfort, and bathrooms are in generally in good condition by rating “mostly satisfied”, and most are "overall satisfied" with general maintenance of common areas.

With regards to programming and meals, the majority are “mostly satisfied”. At most shelter sites there are now Community Engagement Coordinators t running recreational programs for residents during the week. Residents have commented on the need for motivational trainings and food literacy programs (i.e., how to eat healthier on a budget).

HOTELS

We received a total of 398 completed surveys from the three HFS operated hotel programs; this is the first year these sites have been surveyed. Results were as follows:

- Delta: 117 completed surveys returned out of a possible 280;
- Esplanade: 199 completed surveys out of a possible 300; and
- Strathcona: 62 completed surveys out of a possible 88.

SUMMARY:

Overall, most respondents at the hotels indicated they are “completely satisfied” and “mostly satisfied” with their Intensive Case Management Workers. Many gave feedback of being “completely satisfied” with the Intensive Case Management staff’s ability to assist and resolve problems and their willingness to respond to needs.

At the Esplanade, there were some “partially satisfied” and “not satisfied” responses, which will be followed up on. There were a couple of surveys returned from the Esplanade with only half the surveys completed, so this will be taken into consideration.

Most of the residents are either “overall satisfied” or “mostly satisfied” with their Housing Help Workers, some statements that received high scores was their availability and frequency of contact and communication. Again, at the Esplanade there were some “partially satisfied” responses, which will be followed up on.

In terms of partner organizations’ services being implemented at our sites (for example, physicians, nurses, peer support workers, and harm reduction supports), the surveys indicated that both the Delta and Strathcona sites are either “completely satisfied” or “mostly satisfied” with the services being provided by our partners. There were a couple respondents at the Esplanade that indicated “partially satisfied” which will be followed up on.

A high majority of respondents are “overall satisfied” with the condition of the buildings. Many respondents gave feedback that the visual appearance of the building, maintenance of common areas, and landscaping were all very satisfactory. Most respondents indicated that the exterior lighting, sleeping area comfort, and bathrooms were generally in good condition by rating “mostly satisfied” and many were “overall satisfied” with any maintenance issues that arose at their respective site during the past year.

With regards to programming and meals, the majority are “mostly satisfied” or “partially satisfied”. There is less space at hotel sites to run community engagement programming and many activities have been run have been run outdoors. Space is a factor relating to the running of extra programming requested by residents. Residents have commented on the need for more onsite identification clinics, programs to reunify families, and Indigenous-focused programming; we are continuing to explore opportunities to increase programming in these areas.

HOUSING

As in previous years, the number of surveys returned varied from site-to-site. In total, 71 surveys were received from housing properties, an increase from last year’s 41, a 20% increase. The response rates for the survey also varied dramatically from building-to-building as it has in previous years.

EAST SIDE HOUSING:

Responses from our East Side housing included the following totals from each site:

- Huron: 4 completed surveys out of a possible 10;
- Jarvis: 9 completed surveys out of a possible 22;
- Pleasant Manor: 4 completed surveys out of a possible 16;
- Sheila Miller: 4 completed surveys out of a possible 22; and,
- Shuter: 28 completed surveys out of a possible 77.

SUMMARY:

In total, 46 surveys were returned from a possible 127 from our East Side Housing. This was a significant increase in respondents compared to last year’s 16 completed surveys.

Responses indicated satisfaction with the Intensive Case Management Workers teams, noting almost all are “completely satisfied” with the overall quality of the support they are receiving. They also

reported having good relationships with Intensive Case Management Workers, and that it is easy to contact Intensive Case Management Workers when problems arise. One area identified for improvement, is some lack of satisfaction with the hours Intensive Case Management Workers are available, as most work Monday through to Friday, from 9-5 with some starting earlier or ending earlier.

We also surveyed our housing residents for the first time on the following topics: partner organizations' services being implemented at our sites (like physicians, nurses, peer support workers, and harm reduction supports). Responses from the returned surveys indicated that almost all sites are either "completely satisfied" or "mostly satisfied" with these partnership services. There were a couple respondents at Jarvis and Shuter that stated they were "partly satisfied" and we will explore these areas further.

Regarding the overall appearance and condition of the buildings, respondents reported being "mostly satisfied" with the maintenance of common areas, and mailbox areas receiving high scores, Sheila Miller and Jarvis rated certain services such as landscaping and lighting being only "partly satisfied", which will be followed up on; however, at these sites, there is limited space for landscaping, but developing the roof into a green space for recreational activity is a priority of the Property Department. With general maintenance issues such as plumbing and pest control, respondents again reported being "mostly satisfied".

Responses about programming ranged from "completely satisfied" to "mostly satisfied" to "partly satisfied" with community meals and tenant meetings. The range is likely tied to the undermining nature of the pandemic and necessity to follow public health guidelines. Some programs were able to start again in small ways, and then had to be closed again. Others have not been able to begin again due to a lack of volunteers. Scores showed that third-party programs such as hiking trips received a lower score again as a result of the cancellations of such programs as a result of Covid.

WEST SIDE HOUSING:

Responses from our West Side housing included the following totals from each site:

- Bellevue: 6 completed surveys out of a possible 28;
- Meegwetch: 1 completed survey out of a possible 64;
- Spadina Houses: 3 completed surveys out of a possible 11;
- Vaughan: 7 completed surveys out of a possible 29; and,
- Wales: 1 completed survey out of a possible 5.

No responses were received from Brandon (out of a possible 5) and Northcote (out of a possible 6).

SUMMARY:

Responses for the west side locations totaled 25 surveys, which was the same rate of return as that of last year's survey.

Overall, respondents are satisfied with the Intensive Case Management Teams. In particular, respondents reported they feel they are treated with respect and courtesy, and that Intensive Case Management Workers are clear in their communication. Areas for improvement included the availability of staff in the office, and the frequency at which staff connect and communicate with residents, which was similar to last year's responses, as this is an area impacted by the ongoing pandemic.

Regarding partner organizations' services being implemented at our sites, it was indicated that almost all sites are either "completely satisfied" or "mostly satisfied" with partnership services. There were a couple respondents at Bellevue that stated they were "partly satisfied", which we will follow up on.

Concerning the overall appearance and condition of the buildings, respondents are "mostly satisfied" with maintenance of common areas, and mailbox areas receiving high scores, Huron and Vaughan rated certain services such as landscaping and lighting being only "partly satisfied", which will be followed up on. The general maintenance issues (such as plumbing and pest control) were again scored as "mostly satisfied".

Responses about programming range were also similar to that of the East Side, from "completely satisfied" to "mostly satisfied" to "partly satisfied" with the timing of programs and recreational opportunities. The range is likely related to the start and stop nature of programming during the different waves of the pandemic. Scores also showed that volunteer-led programs received a lower score again as a result of the cancellations of such programs due to Covid.