

In 2024, Housing NWT will be hosting a series of workshops through the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH) for front-line NGO staff working with vulnerable populations.

Below are summaries of each session.

To learn more and register, please e-mail [Renay\\_Ristoff@gov.nt.ca](mailto:Renay_Ristoff@gov.nt.ca).



## Housing and Recovery Focused Thinking

New date: April 22-23 2024

It is best practice in addressing homelessness, to shift from a focus of "managing" it to one of "ending" it. We have all heard this quote, or at least some variation of it, "We cannot solve problems using the same thinking as when they were created." One way to define "managing" homelessness is doing whatever possible to help people experiencing homelessness and those around them to be more comfortable and/or safe while people remain in their homeless state. That thinking must change if we are going to actually reduce and eventually end homelessness. Instead, we have to incorporate a focus on recovery and helping people move toward stability while providing opportunities for those experiencing homelessness to believe it is possible which in turn reaps actions that mirror that belief. We must continually work to assist and support people in that shift to situations and thinking more conducive to recovery. And this is only possible if those providing the support also think, communicate, and act with the same focus. Instead of a short-sighted goal of clean socks and access to shelter and a soup kitchen, we enter each relationship with those experiencing homelessness with thoughts of how we can support them to move away from these homeless vacuums and toward things like housing and other person-centred goals. All levels of engagement should include language, tools, and a belief that these things are not only beneficial but possible.

This training will provide participants with the understanding and tools to get started making this paradigm shift and therefore, helping people to have a better quality of life and progress on the path of whatever recovery looks like to them. To do this we will first help to dispel some of the more common and barrier-creating myths about homelessness. To have the appropriate thinking focus, it is necessary to have an understanding of the

actual picture of homelessness including root causes which helps to erase popular yet harmful stereotypes about people experiencing homelessness. Participants will explore what we suggest are important support perspectives to challenge personal beliefs and understanding. Learners will then delve into what we believe is a solid "Housing Focused Framework" which contains various examples of tools and practices that assist support people, organizations, and systems to be recovery-oriented in their approach.

Core elements of this framework include:

- Harm Reduction
- Trauma-Informed Practice
- Assertive Engagement
- Housing First Philosophy
- Diversion

Each of these will be discussed in greater detail which aids in developing a clearer understanding of what is required to work from a recovery-oriented, housing-focused mentality, which then results in those you support moving toward recovery as opposed to stagnating longer in their homeless state. We know that the minute people enter a shelter the more likely they are to remain homeless and the longer they are homeless the more difficult it is to leave that state. A recovery-oriented approach serves as an antidote to that.

**Diversion** is a specific strategy and best practice within homeless serving systems designed to prevent people from entering that system, or more importantly, a shelter system, in the first place. It is solution-focused and centres on finding support for those on the doorstep of homelessness. It would be our recommendation for organizations or systems wishing to bolster or integrate a diversion practice, that a full diversion training be added to this one which would then make this a two-day training. You can learn more about [Diversion training here](#).

### **Training Audience:**

This training is appropriate for:

- Organizational and system leadership supporting a systemic approach to ending homelessness.
- Front-line staff and organizations

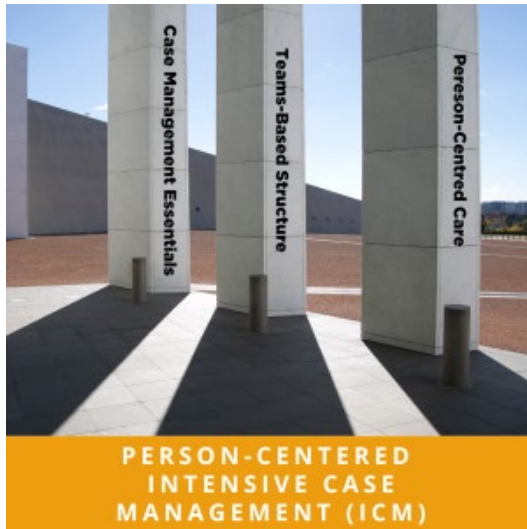
Training can be tailored according to attendees and the community or system involved.

**Note - The TTA requests that all training includes at a minimum, one member of management from each organization/agency represented, be present as a learner.**

## Training Objectives:

In this training, participants will:

- Understand the picture and roots of homelessness.
- Understand the difference between managing and ending homelessness and why that matters.
- Learn a recovery-oriented way of thinking and feeling about homelessness that validates a shift in how support is provided.
- Develop an understanding of the basic philosophy of Housing First including the five principles and how they apply in all support environments including shelters.
- What it means to be housing-focused on their thinking, values, and engagement with participants through an understanding of the Housing Focused Framework
- Understanding of the basics of Harm Reduction and Trauma-informed care and why they are important in properly supporting those experiencing homelessness.
- Understand the importance of Assertive Engagement and the practices associated.
- Be better equipped to support change in people experiencing homelessness as opposed to managing people in homelessness.
- Understand the role of Diversion and the basics of how it is incorporated into a system of care and its benefits.



## Person Centered Intensive Case Management

February 27-28, 2024

Intensive Case Management (ICM) is seen as a best practice related to supporting those experiencing homelessness as they transition to being housed, and then working on "recovery" and making desired change. A key component to this is ensuring that the participants themselves are the driving force behind those areas of focus. It is often challenging for communities and/or organizations within a community to refrain from seeing themselves as "the experts" and the ones directing the best possible route. This happens for various reasons which this training discusses. The training will focus on the reasons for the "expert" confusion. It will also delve into the key elements associated with case management evidence-based practice as well as specific tools that can be incorporated into a case managers "toolbox" for ensuring they stay strength-based and participant-focused and to better support the participants in being able to have the confidence and partnership necessary to make their own decisions and guide their own recovery process. Participants will gain an understanding of how working in this manner will help them move or refrain from working primarily in crisis focused manner, to one where growth and progression for participants occur.

This training provides learners with an understanding of how to manage the support being offered. This includes specifics related to day-to-day activities, managing meetings with participants, appropriate tracking of their efforts, and ensuring the presence of effective service planning and team support. Trainees will be taught about and provided with specific person-centred tools and strategies by a certified person-centred trainer that will assist in maintaining a participant-driven approach and enhance their case management practice. Additionally, learners will be equipped with an understanding of the essential

principles of "housing-focused thinking" which increases the likelihood that participants will move forward and not get stuck in the vacuum of the homeless lifestyle. This involves learning the basics of the Housing First philosophy.

Being person-centred means understanding the existing and past circumstances of those being supported including the impact of the trauma that exists for the vast majority of people experiencing homelessness. Touching on trauma-informed principles allows both the individual practitioner and the organization to be better positioned to support their participants and themselves. One cannot be trauma-informed if they do not focus on self-care. Likewise, they cannot properly care for themselves if they do not understand the impact of trauma. Therefore, along with highlighting some of the basics of trauma-informed care, this training will also instill the importance of staff self-care. This allows both the individual practitioner and the organization to be better positioned to support their participants and themselves.

## **TTA Approach**

Through practical experience, researching best practices, and training across the country, the TTA has developed a three-pillar approach to effective case management training.

### *Pillar 1: Case Management Essentials*

Basic Case Management is our foundation, it is a Housing First-focused case management component that provides all of the required basics for the important work of providing housing and then supports within the context of a Housing First team in order to achieve greater fidelity to the Housing First model. It is strength-based, includes goal-setting strategies, and advice on structures regarding home visits, and even breaks down all of the required meeting components for effectively managing a Housing First team and staff supervision.

### *Pillar 2: Teams-Based Structure*

Teams Based Structure is an effective and evidence-based means of approaching the delivery of case management supports within the context of a Housing First team. It does away with the "old-school" approach of discrete distinct caseloads which lead to increased anxiety, trauma, and lack of positive outcomes in a trauma-informed way. The traditional approach often results in staff becoming swamped, overworked, and subject to burnout – which translated into high levels of staff turnover and less effective work being done with participants. Instead of a single case manager working alone with their caseload, this structure allows the team to work collaboratively with participants, which lessens the pressure on individual case managers and allows participants to feel supported by a team

of people invested in their success as well as lessens the trauma of continually starting over with new workers.

### *Pillar 3: Person-Centred / Housing and Recovery Focused Support*

Person-Centred Care is both an approach to practice and a set of tools that promote greater case manager and participant success in a trauma-informed and strength-based way placing the participant at the heart and head of their own support. It uses a number of person-centred specific approaches and tools to effectively support people who are often neglected by the systems that are meant to serve them. This approach includes tools such as One Page Profile, Work Timeline, Relationship Circle, Donut, Working Not Working, and more to ensure the participant is able to take the lead on their recovery and the case manager allows and supports this to happen which generates more sustainable outcomes.

**The TTA has been certified to use and teach person-centred tools and practices through the Helen Saunders Institute.**

This training provides trainees with an understanding of how to manage the support they are charged with offering. This includes specifics related to day-to-day activities, managing meetings with participants, appropriate tracking of their efforts, and ensuring the presence of effective service planning and team support. Attendants will gain familiarity with the basic principles of Housing First that provide its foundation, gain an insight into not just the "how" but the "why" of this intensity of service, and be able to identify their roles within an ICM team.

#### **Training Audience:**

This training is appropriate for:

- Existing case managers
- Those interested in being case managers.
- Anyone who would like to better understand the case management function.
- Team leads of case management teams.
- Management of case management teams

**Note - The TTA requests that all training should include at a minimum, one member of management from each organization/agency represented be present as a learner.**

#### **Training Objectives:**

Attendees will:

- Understand basic Housing First principles and philosophy.

- Learn how Housing First principles are incorporated into their practice.
- Understand what ICM is.
- Understand how ICM in the homeless serving sector is important and different.
- Identify the key components of quality ICM.
- Understand the importance of being participant-driven in their work and what that is effective.
- Gain access to, learn about, and practice specific person-centred tools that will be helpful in their work.



## Assertive Management

March 20-21, 2024

Assertive Engagement (AE) is a model of practice that includes full Motivational Interviewing (MI) training. This is a robust training which, in addition to the full MI On the Fly training, additional knowledge and understanding of the skills of strength-based practice, assertive outreach, and Trauma Informed Care (TIC) are discussed amid the three-tier framework of the Mind Set, Skill Set, and Heart Set of AE. AE allows trainees to build a fulsome set of skills that are geared toward working with marginalized and complex individuals with compassion and understanding but also in a way that reinforces the idea of the possibility and hope of change. MI, which also includes content regarding the understanding and practical use of the Transtheoretical Model of Change (Stages of Change), grew out of the work associated first with addiction support and recovery and has since been established as a best practice related to all aspects of work associated with anyone in a position of considering a change in their lives. MI has been noted as effective in the homeless-serving sector, including assisting those with the highest levels of complex

needs. This includes the support of youth. See the link to a video providing additional context. <https://invisiblepeople.tv/ken-kraybill-on-motivat...>

## The Three "Sets" of AE

*Mind Set:* This category is about how we think about the people we work with and approach all people as inherently capable, while focusing on their individual strengths and how to identify them, including hidden and cultural strengths.

*Skill Set:* This section focuses on how we actually do our work with people. We highlight the specific skills essential to best-supporting people as well as adjusting our skills to meet people where they are at including cultural perspectives.

*Heart Set:* This area refers to how we feel about and how we treat the people we work with. This translates to being able to identify and address our own biases and judgments as well as understanding the impact of the trauma of others and our own.

## MI On the Fly Component

MI training with the TTA has been adapted specifically for those working with complex and marginalized individuals, particularly those experiencing homelessness because of the unique nature of the working environment. These practitioners are not working with 50–60-minute planned sessions in an office. Instead, they are supporting people on the street, in parks, in apartments, and under bridges, utilizing exceedingly small windows of time and opportunity, often with people that are thinking primarily of survival and trying to manage multiple complexities. Therefore, the TTA MI training (**MI On the Fly**) provides added context to the use of the skills and adaptations for that type of working environment. Generally, MI also requires those you are working with to have some level of abstract thinking ability. Because many experiencing homelessness, suffer from cognitive and developmental challenges, and because many youths vary in both levels, this training also gives participants some additional understanding and adaptations for using MI in these situations.

## Training Audience:

This training is appropriate for:

- Any front-line staff supporting those experiencing homelessness.
- Staff working people who would benefit from behavior or lifestyle change.
- Organizational and Management leadership supporting people in the above environments.



Note - The TTA requests that all training includes at a minimum, one member of management from each organization/agency represented, be present as a learner.

### **Training Objectives:**

Attendees will:

- Understand and learn to incorporate the stages of change in practice.
- Understand and state what Motivational Interviewing (MI) is.
- Learn the importance of MI in the Homeless serving services.
- Be able to identify the components of MI.
- Be able to incorporate the MI components into case planning and active engagement with participants.
- Be able to demonstrate and practice the skills associated with MI.
- Understand how MI and the Stages of Change work together for both case planning and supporting someone through change.
- Use MI at a basic level.
- Understand and know how to incorporate a strength-based perspective into their work.
- Understand the importance of assertive outreach and addressing difficult topics without damaging the relationship.
- Understand basic concepts of trauma and how it affects those experiencing homelessness.
- Understand essential concepts for responding to and working with those experiencing trauma.
- Understand basic concepts for ensuring your system and organization are trauma-informed and what that means.