ORGANIZING COLLABORATION:

OTTAWA'S ROLE IN HOMELESSNESS INITIATIVES

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ABSTRACT

Organizing Collaboration: Ottawa's Role in Homelessness Initiatives

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Master of Arts in Public Policy and Administration, Ryerson University, 2019

On any given night in Canada, 35,000 individuals experience some form of homelessness and between 136,000 and 156,000 Canadians access emergency shelters each year. Homelessness is a daunting policy and administrative challenge that requires the concerted collaboration of a diversity of public and private sector players to tackle. I argue that the Canadian federal government's leadership prompted the cooperation between the different orders of government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in St. John's, Newfoundland and that its administrative and collaborative governance approach has generated impressive outcomes in responding to the complicated issue of homelessness. The community-based, shared funding model used by Ottawa has proven effective in harmonizing homelessness programming, data collection, indicators of success, and objectives and outcomes between governmental and non-governmental partners.

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Introduction

On any given night in Canada, 35,000 individuals experience some form of homelessness and between 136,000 and 156,000 Canadians access emergency shelters each year (ESDC, 2018). In recent years, the demands on Canada's homeless-serving sector have increased, particularly on emergency shelters. As of 2014, the average occupancy rate in Canada's emergency shelters climbed to over 90% (ESDC, 2018). Gaetz et al. (2014) estimate that homelessness costs the Canadian economy $7 billion annually. Across Canada, many government officials, journalists, academics, activists, and social service providers are calling the present housing and homelessness situation a "crisis" (Collins, 2010; Osman, 2018; Blanch, 2019; Moore, 2019; Stratton, 2019; McLaughlin, 2019). Confronting the challenge of homelessness is more than finding homes for people experiencing homelessness. The causes of homelessness can be diverse, complicated, and intersecting, including, but not limited to, poverty, lack of housing supply, sudden family changes, and mental illness. In addition, the nature of homelessness makes defining the size and scope of the issue difficult. For these reasons, homelessness is a daunting policy and administrative challenge that requires the concerted collaboration of a diversity of public and private sector players to tackle.

The federal government was not active in the area of homelessness until the late-1990s, when homelessness became a significant social problem and economically powerful cities pressured the Government to act. While the provinces have constitutional jurisdiction over social welfare and municipalities, the Government released the first national homelessness strategy, the National Homelessness Initiative (NHI), in 1999. The federal government's homelessness strategy has evolved over the past 20 years. Following the NHI, the Government launched the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) that ran from 2007 to 2019. In 2019, the Government

replaced the HPS with Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy. Using the example of St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador under the HPS from 2014 to 2019, I observe that Ottawa has emerged as a direction-setter in a domain in which it is a comparably small funder who historically has had relatively limited involvement and constitutional jurisdiction.

I argue that Ottawa's leadership prompted the cooperation between the different orders of government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in St. John's and that its administrative and collaborative governance approach has generated impressive outcomes in responding to the complicated issue of homelessness. The community-based, shared funding model used by ESDC has proven effective in harmonizing homelessness programming, data collection, indicators of success, and objectives and outcomes between governmental and non-governmental partners. Under this model, communities must match every dollar invested by the federal government. They do so by pooling contributions from public and private organizations. While federal funding does not represent all funds directed towards addressing homelessness in these communities, Ottawa has nonetheless led in bringing together various partners and pointing them towards a common direction.

Using a case study of St. John's, I examine the activities of the community-based non-NGOs and the different orders of government involved in the implementation of the HPS from 2014 to 2019. I analyse documents from a variety of sources connected to the HPS during this time period to paint a picture of the federal homelessness program in a local context. My document analysis includes the End Homelessness St. John's (EHSJ) Community Plan 2014-2019, which establishes the community's priorities, outcomes, and planned implementation of local homelessness initiatives. I also examine Community Progress Indicators (CPI) reports from 2011 to 2016, complied by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) with data

provided by St. John's shelters and service providers and other provincial and federal bodies. Further, I survey the development and implementation of two national Point in Time (PiT) counts coordinated by the federal government and conducted by community organizations. Using Kernaghan's (1998) definition of partnership to analyse these documents, I argue that the partnership under the HPS has been a successful collaborative one. The initiation of community planning and coordinated data collection are some of the methods the federal government has employed to harmonize the efforts of numerous and diverse stakeholders towards preventing and reducing homelessness.

St. John's is the capital city of the province of Newfoundland and Labrador in Canada. In 2016, the city had a population of 205,955 (Statistics Canada, 2017), a midsize Canadian municipality. Like many Canadian municipalities, St. John's has a portion of its residents who experience some form of homelessness. The most recent PiT count found that 165 people experienced homelessness on a single night in St. John's (EHSJ, 2018). Every year, approximately 800 people experience some form of homelessness in the city (EHSJ, 2018). St. John's first received federal funding to address homelessness with the introduction of the NHI in 1999. Responding to Ottawa's prompt, a St. John's Community Advisory Committee on Homelessness was created in 2000 (it was renamed to End Homelessness St. John's in 2014). EHSJ has provided steadfast leadership, coordination, and resources towards the goal of ending homelessness in the city (EHSJ, 2018). St. John's was prompted by the federal impulse. It secured matching funds and cooperation from external public and private sources. As well, the community's alignment with the HPS mandatory requirements, data collection methods, and performance management processes prove the success of the community-based, shared funding model. The partnership has also yielded promising progress towards the achievement of shared

objectives and outcomes. However, NGOs and other governments are not solely passive

followers of federal government programs. As the St. John's example shows, the federal

government has adopted best practices from communities in the newest homelessness program,

Reaching Home. Within this partnership model, other players besides the federal government

share power through the contribution of their own financial and non-financial resources.

Literature Review

  The literature on the Canadian federal government's involvement in homelessness initiatives encompasses the NHI and HPS since 1999. Many works analyse the implementation of federal homelessness initiatives at the individual community level. A smaller number of works broaden their scope to the national level to compare the Canadian experience to other countries. These studies are mainly evaluative in nature, assessing the effectiveness of homelessness policy and programs using a variety of theoretical frameworks, methods, and criteria. Other works do not focus on the federal government, but look to the approaches of smaller, municipal contexts. As ESDC recently released the newest federal homelessness strategy, no scholarly and peer-reviewed work on this topic currently exists.

  Using a case study of the implementation of the NHI in the Canadian city of Winnipeg, Leo and August (2006) find that the federal government recognizes the importance of local homelessness initiatives conceptually, but has difficulties in relinquishing control of these initiatives to local representatives. The authors argue that the creation of the NHI demonstrated the federal government's recognition that the causes of homelessness differ across Canadian cities and that individual communities require different solutions to homelessness. The authors also suggest that the designation of a single program within the NHI to leverage local capacity, the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI), demonstrates the federal government's hesitancy to engage individual communities.

  The authors' evaluation of the SCPI in Winnipeg finds that the community's ability to direct SCPI funds was hampered by the program's narrow focus on absolute homelessness, failing to take into account the needs of the relatively homeless. Leo and August support this assertion by compiling figures that reveal the largest proportion of SCPI funds (47.9%) were

directed towards remedial solutions targeting absolute homelessness (i.e., emergency shelter and

support facility projects). Drawing from literature on urban planning, the authors argue that a

performance approach would have enabled the federal government to materialize their

theoretical commitment to responsiveness to local conditions. This approach would involve

articulating the program's objective as "addressing homelessness through the application of a

plan formulated by local stakeholders, in cooperation with federal officials" (Leo and August,

2006).

Doberstein (2012) likens the federal government's involvement in the domain of

homelessness since the introduction of the NHI to a European governance model called the Open

Method of Coordination (OMC). Doberstein sees the transition from the NHI to the HPS as

merely a change of name, maintaining the underlying likeness to the OMC model. Launched at

the European Council in 2000, the OMC model provides a "framework under which member

states work together to define and achieve shared policy goals, yet does not compel them to

abandon preferred or traditional policy approaches or institutions" (Doberstein, 2012). Rather

than using coercive measures to compel European Union (EU) member states to coordinate

social policy, European Commission employs "soft" or voluntary methods to achieve

coordination of social policy. The Canadian federal government still exercises authority in the

domain of homelessness through a traditional use of spending power (e.g., substantial transfers to

provincial governments), but is fundamentally based on the principles of the European OMC

model. Doberstein sees the federal government's approach as a hybrid of traditional spending-

power model of federalism and the EU OMC method to multilevel governance.

The author points to the emphasis on partnerships between governments and local

community organizations to alleviate homelessness, explored in case studies of Vancouver and

Toronto, as evidence of the federal government embodying principles of OMC. Doberstein suggests that the application of more principles of the OMC model could improve on the shortcomings of the federal government's hybrid approach. These principles are direct comparison of cities' strategies; information sharing among cities; and enhanced local influence on the national strategy. The comparison of cities would institutionalize performance measurement, which Doberstein argues is practised in a marginal manner in the NHI and HPS. Likewise, information sharing is only practised half-heartedly in the NHI and HPS. Another feature of the OMC model that is absent from the Canadian version is local influence on national policy; Doberstein finds little evidence that the mandated community evaluations influence decision-makers in the federal government with regards to the overarching policy and direction of the program. The incorporation of the missing OMC features currently missing would result in more effective policy and decision-making.

Kading (2018) explores the experience of the city of Kamloops, British Columbia in working with the federal government to tackle homelessness through the NHI and HPS beginning in 2001. Using government documents, local plans, press reports, interviews, and firsthand observations, Kading finds that the Kamloops case study demonstrates the worst and best parts of new models of governance and "governing through community". Initially, the federal homelessness initiative fuelled an unprecedented level of collaboration between local community organizations; government-led "coercive collaboration" was effective in creating a local network and leadership structure. However, the terms of the NHI and HPS constrained efforts to end homelessness in the municipality to the objectives set from the federal government. Thus, the initial coercive collaboration led by the federal government was effective at

"managing" homelessness, but limited in its ability to put into action research findings on poverty and affordable housing and achieve transformative change.

The emergence of a local "mimetic collaboration" of local community organizations, the Changing the Face of Poverty (CFP) network, was necessary to expand the "participation of community groups and local organizations, foment the level of local planning and coordination of services, develop new initiatives, and advance the agenda to end homelessness" (Kading, 2018, p. 59). This initiative has demonstrated considerable community will to end poverty and homelessness, but has been unable to secure enough resources to put local knowledge into action. And while there are many strengths of this leadership initiative, it faces many challenges stemming from the larger federal and provincial partnership that generated it in the first place. Unlike the CFP, which is committed to ending homelessness through affordable housing, the federal and provincial governments do not share the same outcome. The provincial level prioritizes affordable housing, but does not have the commitment of ending homelessness. The federal government however does not have a clear understanding of the number of homeless in Canada, or if multi-year funding has achieved substantive reductions in numbers of homeless individuals. As well, the federal government has adopted the role of a facilitator in this area, but is reluctant to relinquish control over the amount of funds available, timelines for renewal, and the criteria and requirements for accessing support. Overall, Kading concludes that centralized forms of government impede and undermine local initiatives, inhibiting the creation of effective horizontal and vertical governance and leadership structures that are required for transformative change.

Canadian scholarship has studied other federal government-led initiatives to tackle homelessness. Authors have studied At Home/Chez Soi, a five-year research demonstration

project with the aim of generating knowledge about Housing First as a means of ending homelessness for individuals living with mental illness (Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2014). The Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC), a non-profit organization funded by Health Canada, implemented a randomized control field trial of Housing First in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montréal, and Moncton (MHCC, 2014). Beginning in 2008, the project cost the federal government $110 million and involved over 2,000 study participants (MHCC, 2014). The MHCC (2014, p. 6) claims At Home/Chez Soi was designed to "help identify what works, at what cost, for whom, and in which environments". Housing First provides homeless individuals with immediate access to permanent housing and community-based supports (MHCC, 2014). Since the project, Housing First has become a cornerstone of the federal government's homelessness initiatives. As stated in the Terms and Conditions of the HPS, the adoption of Housing First by local communities in their plans to address homelessness is integral to the goals of preventing and reducing homelessness (ESDC, 2018b). Reaching Home also includes Housing First as a cornerstone of its approach, using coordinated access as a process to matching clients to housing and other supports.

Collins and Anderson (2016) argue that the At Home/Chez Soi project is a site of problematization whereby the issue of homelessness is rendered visible in terms of economic costs. The authors suggest that the project itself is a series of translations that culminated in this practice of costing homelessness. To support their argument, the authors draw from the At Home/Chez Soi final report. Evans, Collins, and Anderson construct their theoretical framework using the concepts of "problematization" and "translation". The first concept, "problematization", is associated with the work of Foucault, and occurs when a domain of experience becomes unfamiliar and uncertain, creating a challenge for the practice of

government. Through the second concept, "translation", the authors focus on the practices of human and non-human actors that facilitate the rendering of a difficult situation, namely homelessness, intelligible through numerical representations.

The At Home/Chez Soi final report reflects this particular understanding of homelessness. The authors find four "translations" in the project that linked homelessness to economic costs: 1) the selection of study sites; 2) the development of site-specific interventions; 3) the recruitment of participants and collection of data; 4) and costing service use. This experimental intervention translated the complexity of homelessness into the structure of economic rationalization. On one hand, the authors suggest that the articulation of homelessness into numerical representations has made the issue a matter of wider societal concern. On the other hand, problematizing homelessness as costs rather than values (i.e. individual rights) makes homeless groups vulnerable if a cost analysis does not come out in their favour.

In another study on Housing First in the Canadian context, Nelson et al. (2008) examine the changes in the homelessness system resulting from a training and technical assistance (TTA) initiative to scale up Housing First in six communities over three years, following the conclusion of the At Home/Chez Soi project. Drawing from focus groups and interviews with stakeholders and field notes gathered over three years, the authors find two system changes in regards to: 1) the capacity of the service delivery system at multiple levels; and 2) the coordination and collaboration among different parts and stakeholders of the service delivery system. The transition to a Housing First approach necessitates both programmatic and systemic change. Additionally, the authors argue that the larger context of evidence, climate, policy, and funding enabled or restricted the changes in the service delivery system.

In regards to the system changes that occurred in the context of TTA efforts to scale up Housing First, the authors find changes on both individual and organizational levels. Across sites, participants noted a change in mindset among service delivery stakeholders. However, they also noted that those outside of the program staff and supporters do not always share the Housing First "mindset". Changes also occurred at the organizational, community, and policy levels; as well, changes were observed in the coordination and collaboration among different parts and stakeholders of the service delivery system. In regards to how evidence, climate, policy, and funding facilitated or prevented change, Nelson et al. find changes at both the federal and provincial levels. The shift towards Housing First in federal homelessness initiatives contributed to the rapid implementation of Housing First programs across Canada. However, constraints on the timing and amount of funding attached to federal programs limited their scale and impact. As well, the program did not address the structural inequalities that cause homelessness. The authors find that Housing First provincial policies were more variable in nature and in impact. For instance, some provinces lacked a clear and consistent policy across ministries for rent subsidies. In studying the implementation of Housing First through a system change framework, the authors aim to identify the key components contributing to the successful scaling up of Housing First.

Drawing from a comparative urbanism framework, Collins (2010) provides an analysis on homelessness policies in Canada and New Zealand, focusing on three urban regions (Auckland, Vancouver, and Edmonton). The author uses document analysis, key informant interviews, and participant observation to document homelessness, evaluate the usefulness of enumerating homelessness, and identify common and divergent policy approaches across chosen cities. Rather than a national approach, the author looks to specific regional responses in each

municipality. Collins finds that the Canadian cities are experiencing a crisis in homelessness unparalleled in New Zealand. In Auckland, the homeless presence is not highly visible and there are no clusters of facilities catering to the needs of the homeless. Inner-city homelessness, as well as suburban homelessness, is becoming increasing widespread in the Canadian cities. While homelessness exists in suburban and rural New Zealand, it takes on less visible and private forms (such as household overcrowding or couch surfing) that do not require emergency shelters or soup kitchens.

Collins identifies a strong cultural expectation around households taking in family and friends lacking secure housing and New Zealand's robust national social housing program as explanations for the low levels of absolute homelessness in the country. In contrast, the federal government in Canada largely retreated from this domain in 1993, thereby contributing to the significant homelessness crisis in cities across the country. Because the New Zealand government focuses on social housing, rather than homelessness, municipal councils have autonomy over how they choose to approach homelessness in their jurisdictions; Collins finds that these community plans are brief and modest in their aims. In Edmonton and Vancouver, regional homelessness policies articulate a key role for local authorities in increasing housing supply. Further, given significant and visible homeless populations, governments are highly motivated to act on the issue. Collins concludes that despite rising housing prices in New Zealand, the combination of a social safety net and cultural factors have prevented a homelessness crisis comparable to the one Canadian cities are presently experiencing.

Homelessness as a Policy and Administrative Challenge

Defining and enumerating homelessness is challenging due to the variety of forms homelessness takes. While governments and social service providers find homeless counts useful in planning for service provision and funding, the estimated number of homeless individuals in the same geographic area can greatly differ depending on the definition of homelessness and method of enumeration used (Collins, 2010). The definition of a problem has significant policy implications, influencing the perceived extent of a problem and circumscribing potential solutions (Echenberg and Jensen, 2013). Further, it is inherently difficult to arrive at an accurate count of a population that lacks a permanent address (including the "hidden homeless") and is constantly in flux as individuals move in and out of homelessness (Echenberg and Jensen, 2013). Despite the challenges of enumerating homelessness, the federal government has made efforts to understand the scope of the issue in Canada.

The first National Shelter Study (NSS) was published in 2013 and examines the period from 2005 to 2009. The second NNS extends findings from 2005 to 2014, using data provided by 200 emergency shelters across Canada. To address the methodological challenges of enumerating homelessness, the NSS uses emergency shelter use as an indicator of absolute homelessness and the shelters themselves as points of access to a difficult to reach population (NSS, 2017). However, determining the size of the homeless population using shelter counts over time can only reveal the minimum number of people who have experienced homelessness during that period. Studies of this nature fail to capture individuals experiencing homelessness outside of shelters (e.g. the "hidden homeless" and homeless individuals who do not use emergency shelters). Furthermore, this particular study does not count the women and children temporarily staying in Violence Against Women (VAW) shelters.

Keeping in mind its methodological limitations, the most recent NSS presents a contemporary description of the nature of homelessness and the demographic groups that make up the homeless population in Canada. One of the key findings is that the number of beds in emergency shelters did not change very much between 2005 and 2014, but demand for shelter beds increased. In 2014, the average occupancy rate at shelters was 92% and the average number of individuals who slept in shelters each night was 14,000. For comparison, the average occupancy rate in 2015 was just over 80%. Moreover, although fewer people are using shelters in 2014 than in 2005, they are using shelters for a longer period. Across demographic groups, the typical length of stay in a shelter increased by 4.5 days from 2005 to 2014.

The NSS also reveals trends in the demographic make up of individuals experiencing homelessness. While the number of shelter users below 50 years of age decreased, the number of shelter users over 50 increased by 58%; this increase was even larger for those aged 65 and over. The NSS also found that Indigenous people were ten times were likely to use shelters than non-Indigenous people. Elderly and female Indigenous people were especially likely to access shelters. In each of the communities, Indigenous people were also overrepresented in shelters compared to their percentage in the general population. Overall, Indigenous people made up 30% of the shelter population, compared to just 4% of national population in 2014. Further, family shelters, excluding VAW shelters, continued to operate at high capacity. Between 2005 and 2014, the occupancy rate in family shelters rose 19 percentage points (from 67.3% in 2005 to 86.3% in 2014). In summary, demand for shelters continues to rise while shelter capacity is static and although the number of individuals using shelters fell, those who use shelters use them more intensively.

Statistics Canada (2016) has reported on homeless populations that the NSS studies have not, including women and children living in VAW shelters and individuals experiencing hidden homelessness. Hidden homelessness refers to provisionally accommodated individuals who access housing with no prospect of permanent accommodation, including individuals who reside in interim housing, temporary rentals without security of tenure, institutional care, transitional housing for recent immigrants and refugees, and temporary living situations with others. The 2016 Statistics Canada report, drawing from data collected through the 2014 General Social Survey on Canadians' Safety (Victimization), focuses on the hidden homeless (Rodrigue, 2016). The report finds that 2.3 million Canadians (or 8% of the population over 15 years of age) have stayed with friends, family, in their car, or anywhere else because they did not have a place to live at some point during their lives. Over half of those reporting hidden homelessness experienced it from between one month to less than one year. Indigenous individuals were twice more likely to experience hidden homelessness than were non-Indigenous individuals. Those who identified with disability also experienced hidden homelessness more than non-disabled individuals and those who reported having mental illness or a learning disability had the highest likelihood of hidden homelessness of all groups.

Women experiencing or who have experienced violent abuse are the focus of a 2015 Statistics Canada publication, which draws from data collected from 627 women's shelters through the 2014 Transition Home Survey (THS) (Beattie and Huchins, 2015). In this study, the term "shelter" refers to all residential facilities for abused women (e.g. transition homes, women's emergency shelters and centres, second stage housing, and other residential facilities). On a single day in 2014, there were 7,969 women and children staying in shelters across Canada: 56% were women and 44% were their dependent children. On that day, 133 women and 90

accompanying children departed shelters. Of these women, 21% indicated they were departing to new accommodations without their spouse or common-law partner; 17% were departing to live with friends or relatives. Another 13% were returning home without their spouse or common-law partner; 8% were going to another shelter; 7% were returning to their spouse or common-law partner; 4% were departing to a hospital; and 6% were returning to other locations. For 24% of women, it was unknown where they were going following their departure from the shelter. On the snapshot day, 338 women and 201 accompanying children were turned away from shelters, mostly because the shelters were full.

Defining and enumerating homelessness poses challenges to researchers, governments, and social service providers. The definition of homelessness determines the nature and scope of the issue, as well as the possible responses to the problem. In the abovementioned studies, it is clear that researchers, governments, and social service providers understand homelessness to be a multi-faceted issue with a variety of forms. The methods used to quantify homelessness, such as shelter counts over several years or in the same day, also affect the numbers. In Canada, there is no single widely accepted way of defining or enumerating homelessness. It is evident from the different definitions that homelessness takes on several forms and impacts people from diverse backgrounds. The research reveals that certain people are more vulnerable to homelessness than others, particularly people with disabilities, Indigenous people, women, and the elderly. Furthermore, while demand for emergency shelters is increasing, shelter capacity remains static. In this context, the federal government attempts to find its place and address a pressing and persistent problem on a national scale. As the St. John's case study will show, Ottawa has attempted to guide communities across the country to common definitions of homelessness and shared methods of enumerating homeless populations on both local and national scales.

The most recent homelessness data from St. John's comes from PiT counts conducted in 2016 and 2018. On November 30, 2016, EHSJ, its partners, and over 100 volunteers conducted St. John's first biennial homeless PiT count. On the night of the count, there were at least 166 people experiencing homelessness. However, EHSJ estimates that over the course of a year, approximately 800 people experience homelessness in the city (EHSJ, 2016a). Of the 166 respondents, 84 people (approximately 51%) experienced absolute homelessness (e.g., emergency shelters and unsheltered locations). The rest were provisionally accommodated (e.g., transitional housing, someone else's place, and institutional settings). Many respondents (nearly 40%) had experienced chronic homelessness (i.e., six or more months of homelessness in the past year). The St. John's PiT count echoed the national trend of overrepresentation of Indigenous people among homeless populations; Indigenous people were 7.7 times more likely to experience homelessness than were non-Indigenous people. Almost half of respondents (47%) reported previous involvement with child protection services during their lifetime and the median age of respondents' first experience of homelessness was at 19 years of age. Notably, 22% of respondents were youth between the ages of 16 and 24.

The 2018 count determined that at least 165 people were experiencing homelessness on the night of April 11, 2018 (EHSJ, 2018). Of the 165 respondents, 102 experienced absolute homelessness (approximately 62%). Ninety-eight of the 102 individuals experiencing absolute homelessness were staying in emergency shelters with the remaining individuals staying in unsheltered locations. Of the 165 respondents, 63 individuals were staying in transitional housing, someone else's place, or institutional settings. While the overall number of homeless people identified in the 2018 count was nearly the same as the 2016 count, a higher proportion of homeless individuals in the 2018 count reported experiencing absolute homelessness –perhaps

due to increased shelter use among the city's homeless population. Compared to the 2016 count, a lower proportion of respondents were chronically homeless in 2018 (40% and 37% respectively). Similar to findings in 2016, Indigenous people were overrepresented in those surveyed on April 11, 2018. Many respondents reported past involvement with corrections and child welfare system. The majority of respondents in the 2018 survey identified low income (58%) and the high cost of rental units in St. John's (43.5%) as the top barriers to obtaining housing. The results speak to the need for a shared understanding of the causes of homelessness and horizontal collaboration within and across multiple areas of federal and provincial governments and NGOs. As the following case study will show, the community-based, shared funding approach also shows promise in this area.

The Federal Government's Involvement in Homelessness

The federal government was not attentive to the issue of homelessness until the late 1990s. Within the senior ranks of the Government of Canada in the mid to late-1990s, the prevailing opinion was that the Government had no role in responding to the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness and that leadership on this issue should come from the provinces, who were responsible for welfare, social services, and housing programs (Smith, 2004). By the late 1990s, however, the federal government found it increasingly difficult to ignore the crisis of homelessness becoming visible on the streets of Canada's largest cities. Powerful cities and organizations, including Toronto, Edmonton, Calgary, and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), brought attention to the issues of housing and homelessness and advocated for more government support in these areas (Smith, 2004). In the spring of 1999, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien appointed the Minister of Labour Claudette Bradshaw as Federal Coordinator on Homelessness. She quickly established the National Secretariat on Homelessness and began touring cities across the country to talk about homelessness with politicians, organizations, and people experiencing homelessness (Smith, 2004).

Provinces were initially suspicious of the new federal homelessness program for two primary reasons: provinces have constitutional jurisdiction over their municipalities; and federal withdrawal would leave provinces with financial responsibility over additional homelessness projects and services (Smith, 2004). Provinces believed the federal government to be presumptuous in implementing a program of this nature, given that cities created by provincial legislation do not have authority to enter into bilateral agreements with the federal government without provincial approval. Further, provinces were still recovering from large cuts in federal transfers in the early to mid-1990s and would have preferred that the federal government restore

provincial funding. They were also fearful a change of government priorities or ruling party would leave them with an extraordinary bill and more responsibility.

Despite provincial scepticism, the Government launched the NHI in 1999 as a three-year, $753 million initiative to "help ensure community access to programs, services, and support for alleviating homelessness in communities in all provinces and territories" (ESDC, 2008, p. i). The initial phase of the NHI ran from 1999-2003 and focused on addressing emergency needs (ESDC, 2008). The program was housed within ESDC, then named Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC). The federal government initially selected ten cities (which was later expanded to 61) to be eligible for funding calculated using a formula that took into account the local poverty rate, rental vacancy rate, and population (Doberstein, 2012). In 2003, the Government announced a three-year extension of the NHI, with a further one-year extension announced in 2005. The second phase continued to focus on addressing emergency needs and implementing longer-term solutions, such as transitional and supportive housing. Since the inception of federal homelessness programming, the Government has invested in community-based initiatives, identified and administered at the local level.

In 2008, the Government of Canada published the results of a summative evaluation of the NHI conducted during 2006-2007 (ESDC, 2008). The evaluation addressed the relevance and rationale of the NHI and its success in meeting its objectives and expected outcomes. In terms of relevance and rationale, the report concludes that the NHI addressed some of the needs of communities and individuals regarding homelessness. Evaluation respondents reported that they saw a need for continued federal government involvement and additional and enhanced coordination between various orders of government in homelessness initiatives. As for success, the NHI increased awareness of homeless issues among various groups and increased

communities' capacity for planning. Additionally, the community-driven model, developed and adopted by the NHI, increased communities' capacity to assess, prioritize and react to the contextual factors for homelessness. According to respondents, one of the major successes of the NHI was the positive impact on the lives of those who were homeless or at-risk of homelessness. However, the continued lack of affordable housing, which was outside the NHI mandate, limited the success of the NHI in addressing homelessness. The report also concluded that performance measurement should include ongoing measurement of medium- and long-term outcomes, rather than only including performance measurement at the end of projects.

The HPS took effect on April 1, 2007 to build from the strengths of the previous NHI (ESDC, 2014). The HPS included an increased emphasis on transitional housing and housing supports and moving people out of emergency shelters and into stable housing. In September 2008, the Government announced the extension of the program for the period from April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2011. In October 2010, the Government once again announced the extension of HPS until March 31, 2014 at a yearly funding level of $134.8 million. From 2014 onwards, the HPS adopted a Housing First approach that focuses on stable housing for those experiencing chronic or episodic homelessness. While some communities had already adopted a Housing First approach prior to 2014, most communities had not (ESDC, 2017). HPS implemented funding changes that represented the larger shift in direction towards Housing First, but continued to address short-term and provisional homelessness through non-Housing First programs.

The HPS required larger communities to allocate 65% of federal funding towards Housing First activities targeted at chronically and episodically homeless individuals by 2015 to 2019. Other participating communities and Indigenous communities with allocations over $200,000 had to allocate 40% of federal funding towards Housing First activities by 2016 to

2017. The HPS did not set targets for partnered communities in the Territories receiving less than $200,000 in funding. An evaluation of the HPS, conducted between 2014 and 2016, recommended that the Government: increase flexibility of funding allocation requirements to enable the provision of Housing First interventions to reach beyond the episodically and chronically homeless; further promote participation of diverse stakeholders on CABs; and, review reporting requirements to reduce burdens on communities (ESDC, 2017).

ESDC launched Reaching Home on April 1, 2019 and describes Reaching Home as a "community-based program aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness by providing direct support and funding to Designated Communities (urban centers), Indigenous communities, territorial communities and rural and remote communities across Canada" (ESDC, 2019, n.p.). The current federal homelessness program was developed following nationwide consultations with experts, communities, people who have experienced homelessness, Indigenous organizations, and others. Submissions included suggestions on how to improve the Housing First policy orientation, such as expanding the definition of chronic and episodic homelessness to include more of the homeless population. Respondents also suggested more funding for homelessness prevention and programs focused on Indigenous homelessness. In addition, organizations expressed that they would like to see an expansion of the program to more communities. Communities also expressed the desire to see the federal government support the move towards a systems approach, meaning different service providers coordinate activities and resources towards the common goal of ending homelessness. More planning and decision-making at the local level, as well as more efficient and less burdensome reporting requirement were also common responses.

The HPS used a community-based, shared funding model to implement programming and administer funding. Reaching Home maintains this governance and funding structure. The federal government, through ESDC, provides funding to a single organization in the community called a Community Entity (CE) (e.g. municipalities or NGOs). Community Entities distribute and manage funding. Federal funding flows through national and regional funding streams, each dedicated to a specific type of homelessness or activity. Under the HPS model, communities must invest in projects that address priorities identified in the Community Plan. The Community Advisory Board (CAB) helps guide the development of the Community Plan. The local CAB is comprised of a variety of stakeholders, including governmental and non-governmental partners. Communities receiving funding from the Designated Communities funding stream, including St. John's, have to match every $1 of federal funding with contributions from other partners. It is important to note that the federal government administers funding to the province of Quebec through a Canada-Quebec Agreement that determines how Quebec will administer and implement the various national and regional funding streams within the province.

While the governance and funding structure under Reaching Home is nearly identical to the one under the HPS, Reaching Home differs in several ways from the previous HPS. The HPS between 2014 and 2019 focused on a Housing First model and prioritized chronic and episodic homelessness. While Reaching Home continues to promote a Housing First approach, the new program does not prescribe Housing First investment targets with the intention of giving communities more flexibility to address local needs and priorities (ESDC, 2019). Under Reaching Home, communities must move towards an outcomes-based approach. Currently, ESDC is developing community-wide outcomes and indicators that will track communities' progress towards preventing and reducing homelessness on a local scale. In addition, Reaching

Home introduces new funding streams and the expansion of the program to up to four to six new Designated Communities.

As well, Reaching Home has adopted a "coordinated access" approach to addressing homelessness. According to ESDC (2019, n.p.), the goal of coordinated access is to "help communities ensure fairness, prioritize people most in need of assistance, and match individuals to appropriate housing and services in a more streamlined and coordinated way". The shift to coordinated access includes the adoption of "necessary information infrastructure" (i.e., an electronic database of information on homeless individuals and housing and supports in the community) to better assess individual needs and refer them to the appropriate resources at the appropriate time. Reaching Home requires communities who do not already have such an electronic database to adopt the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS), a homelessness information management system developed and supported by ESDC. Because some communities across Canada are at varying levels of coordinated access implementation, all communities have three years to develop their coordinated access systems. Reaching Home requires all Designated Communities to adopt a coordinated access approach by March 31, 2022. Additionally, communities can take a "phased approach" to reporting outcomes (ESDC, 2019). To support communities' transition to the new requirements under Reaching Home, ESDC provides communities with training and technical support (ESDC, 2019).

A Collaborative Partnership: The Case of St. John's

In the early 1990s, "partnership" became a leading buzzword in the field of public sector management (Kernaghan, 1998). The importance of partnerships echoes across the various versions of the federal government's homelessness programs since the launch of the NHI in 1999. In the study of public sector management and in public organizations, it is widely recognized that empowering both government employees and clients is an effective means of providing the best possible service (Kernaghan, 1998). According to Kernaghan (1998, p. 60), empowerment is a "process of enhancing feelings of personal effectiveness by removing barriers that create a sense of powerlessness". The internal dimension of this process involves efforts within a public organization to foster a sense of organizational commitment and job ownership among its employees by enabling them to make decisions. The external dimension of this process involves a public organization's efforts to promote a sense of self-efficacy among individuals, groups, and organizations outside itself. According to Kernaghan (1998), employees who are empowered are more likely to have the authority and inclination to empower their clients. It follows that partnerships between public organizations and external entities are one means to empower external entities. Kernaghan (1998, p. 60) defines a partnership as a "relationship involving the sharing of power, work, support and/or information with others for the achievement of joint goals and/or mutual benefits". The aim of the HPS is to "support Canada's communities, including 61 designated communities, as well as Aboriginal and rural and remote communities, in their efforts to prevent and reduce homelessness" (ESDC, 2018, n.p.). In the partnerships between the federal government and external entities, including other orders of government, NGOs, and the private sector, the federal government views itself as having a supporting and helping role. Through its community-based approach, the HPS "supports the

Government of Canada's goals of helping local communities to overcome their unique challenges" (ESDC, 2018, n.p.). The HPS arrangement has elements of Kernaghan's description of a typical "collaborative partnership", wherein each partner exercises power in the decision-making process and involves the pooling of resources (e.g. money, information, and labour) to meet shared or compatible objectives.

In St. John's, the CAB has high degree of autonomy over decision-making and funding allocations, as evidenced in the Community Plans they develop and in the CE role that the CAB will take over from St. John's municipal government in 2019. Other orders of governments also share in the power as they pool their resources and align their objectives with those of the HPS and non-governmental partners. It appears that the partnership between the federal government and stakeholders external to it under HPS has been successful in St. John's because it has unified various partners and their resources under a set of shared goals, namely preventing and ending homelessness. While the federal government plays an important role in guiding combined efforts in one direction, it does not have complete control over funding; nor is it vested with constitutional power in this policy area.

Community Planning

In St. John's, the federal government acted as the initial catalyst for partnership development with the NHI's requirement of a Community Plan. The federal government is the champion of the HPS in St. John's, but relies on other local partners to implement and operationalize its broad requirements and objectives. Under HPS terms and conditions, that came into effect on April 1, 2014 and expired on March 31, 2019, communities receiving greater than $200,000 and communities receiving over $200,000 in Aboriginal Homelessness funding must develop a five-year Community Plan that includes a description of Housing First and non-Housing First activities and key performance indicators with targets. In 2014, EHSJ released Ending Homelessness in St. John's: Our 5-Year Plan (2014-2019). The HPS also requires partnered communities to follow specific governance and funding structure, including a CE and a CAB. As the CE, the City of St. John's is responsible for implementing the Plan (EHSJ, 2014). As the CAB, EHSJ is responsible for developing the Plan and overseeing the implementation of the Plan.

Reaching Home, introduced on April 1, 2019, also requires Designated Communities to develop a Community Plan, including but not limited to, indicating funding towards various program areas (housing placement, prevention and shelter diversion, client support services, capital investment, and coordination of resources and data collection). As the previous Plan ends, EHSJ will be releasing its next Community Plan during 2019, according to Reaching Home requirements. In 2018, EHSJ completed a review of its governance and CE operations. As a result, EHSJ approved a recommendation to transition EHSJ into an incorporated non-profit community-based organization with a new governing Board (EHSJ, 2018). As of 2019, EHSJ Board Members come from a variety of governmental (e.g., Government of Newfoundland and

Labrador, Service Canada, and the City of St. John's) and non-governmental organizations (e.g., Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Social Workers, Memorial University, and private business). In 2019, EHSJ will replace the City in fulfilling the CE role and assuming fiduciary responsibility over future Plans.

The 2014-2019 Community Plan outlines the community's guiding principles, approach, outcomes, and implementation strategy (EHSJ, 2014). The Plan's main goal is to end chronic and episodic homelessness in St. John's by 2019. According to EHSJ, a collectively developed and implemented coordinated homeless-serving system is central to the achievement of this goal. The Plan stipulates that a "systems approach", grounded in a Housing First philosophy, will guide St. John's towards such a homeless-serving system and the eradication of homelessness in the community. EHSJ defines Housing First as a "person-centred approach where housing is a right, rather than a privilege" that focuses on "getting people housed quickly, with the right supports, at the right time" (EHSJ, 2014). Implementing a Housing First philosophy requires a systems approach wherein governments, non-profits, businesses, and the academic and faith sectors work in a coordinated manner towards the common objective of ending homelessness in the city (EHSJ, 2014).

EHSJ began development of the Plan in 2013. Between 2013 and 2014, EHSJ engaged more than 150 participants from public systems from all orders of government, faith and business sectors, and a multitude of service providers at 35 separate engagement sessions. EHSJ also included people with lived experience of homelessness, including youth, adults, seniors, and shelter users, in several focus groups. In addition, EHSJ hosted a Community Forum attended by participants from various sectors to discuss the Plan's priorities, strategies, and focus. To assist in the development of the Plan, EHSJ procured the technical expertise of an external consultant,

Dr. Alina Turner, who had previously worked with other Canadian communities in addressing homelessness. The consultant also assisted EHSJ shift to a systems approach to Housing First. Further, in 2014, EHSJ reconstituted its membership and subcommittees to align itself with the then-newly introduced HPS and its Housing First focus. Based on community research and consultations with community members and stakeholders, the Plan identifies four priority areas for 2014-2019: system coordination, integrated information system and research, housing and supports, and leadership and resources (Table 1).

Table 1: *EHSJ 2014-2019 Community Plan Priority Areas*

Priority area	Priority area in detail
System coordination: a coordinated approach to housing and supports, guided by the Housing First philosophy	1. Organize the homeless-serving system: define the basic system and understand how they relate to each other 2. Implement coordinated access and assessment: coordinate access points and standardize referral processes and prioritization criteria 3. Develop discharge/transition planning: integrate homeless-serving system with other public systems
Integrated information system and research: supports ending homelessness efforts	1. Implement information system: locally administered electronic data collection system; expand HIFIS beyond shelters 2. Build partnerships with the research community: leverage local and national partners in academia to create new research priorities to ensure the Plan is a "living document"
Housing and supports: meets diverse client needs	1. Support measures to increase housing affordability: encourage the development of policies that reduce risk of homelessness 2. Implement Housing First programs: in particular, implement case management, permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing, and prevention; support from partners is necessary 3. Tailor supports to diverse groups: address the specific needs of youth, families, Aboriginal people, newcomers, and seniors, and persons with complex needs, disabilities, corrections backgrounds, or fleeing domestic violence 4. Support the enhancement of service quality and impact: develop service standards

	1. Develop infrastructure: strengthen implementation bodies
Leadership and resources: leadership necessary to support the Plan	1. Develop infrastructure: strengthen implementation bodies 2. Coordinate funding: leverage funding from different sources towards a common goal 3. Champion an end to homelessness: ramp up awareness about homelessness to keep the issue on the political agenda and top of mind for the broader community

The estimated cost of implementing the measures outlined in the 5-year Plan is approximately $7.7 million, with $3.5 million in federal funds and the rest coming from other government partners and private investors (Table 2). At the time of the publication of the 2014-2019 Plan, EHSJ had identified the sources of matching contributions for the first year of the Plan (EHSJ, 2014). EHSJ had secured financial and non-financial (e.g. hours of work) contributions of $72,720 from the City of St. Johns (municipal government), $625,000 from Newfoundland and Labrador Housing (provincial government), and $27,000 from EHSJ members (multi-stakeholder organization) (EHSJ, 2014). The community contribution for Year 1 of the Plan ($724,720) exceeded the HPS funding allocation ($697,425) by $27,295 (EHSJ, 2014). EHSJ had not secured all of the contributions necessary to match the HPS investment beyond Year 1. However, previous Community plans between 2000 and 2013 had been consistently backed by contributions from external funders that matched or exceeded the total HPS allocations (EHSJ, 2014).

Table 2: *EHSJ 2014-2019 Community Plan Investment Projections: 5 years*

	HPS ($)	Matching funding ($)	**Total**
Housing First system coordination	1,099,123.75	1,099,123.75	2,198,247.50
Permanent supportive housing capital	697,425	802,575.00	1,500,000.00
Permanent supportive housing operations	-	600,000.00	600,000.00
Intensive case	1,097,765.00	1,097,765.00	2,195,530.00

management			
Rapid rehousing/prevention	592,811.25	592,811.25	1,185,622.50
Total	3,487,125.00	4,192,275.00	7,679,400.00

In the Plan, EHSJ (2014, p. 44) states:

The St. John's CAB's previous Community Plans (2000-2013) have demonstrated Community Contributions which match or exceed the total HPS Allocation. It is anticipated that this pattern will continue under the 2014-2019 Plan given the alignment between community and government Housing First directions, and the Plan's investment priorities which are based on broad stakeholder engagement and consensus.

It is evident from the preceding statement that based on previous cooperation from multiple local and provincial stakeholders, EHSJ is confident that the community will be able to match the federal government's HPS investments. Since the publication of the Plan, the Government of Newfoundland has been especially financially supportive of the HPS and has highlighted homelessness as a priority. In 2015, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador announced it was developing a ten-year housing and homelessness plan (Newfoundland and Labrador, 2015). Newfoundland (NL) Housing aims to have developed and partially implemented a Provincial Housing and Homelessness Plan by March 31, 2020. According to NL Housing's 2017-18 Annual Report, NL housing will align its provincial plan with the federal National Housing Strategy, of which Reaching Home is a component.

Also in 2015, the province announced funding of $88,000 for EHSJ to support initiatives outlined in the 2014-2019 Community Plan. Further, the province allocated one case manager and two housing coordinators to implement EHSJ's Plan. To align with the Housing First approach taken by the HPS, the province also announced a funding allotment of $20,000 for a

province-wide workshop on Housing First. In 2018, the province announced an additional

contribution of $240,000 to EHSJ to assist in the delivery of rent assistance for clients, the

implementation of coordinated access, and improve data collection and information sharing on

the homeless population (Newfoundland and Labrador, 2018).

The Plan identifies several programs that are central to ending homelessness in the

community: intensive case management, permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing, and

prevention (Table 3). Under a coordinated homeless-serving system, clients are matched to

program type and housing according to their level of need (EHSJ, 2014). For instance, those

individuals who have low acuity and who are likely to be transitionally homeless would be

matched with rapid rehousing and prevention programs, while those individuals who

demonstrate high acuity and who are likely to be chronically homeless would be matched with

permanent supportive housing. While HPS required communities to allocate a certain percentage

of federal funds to Housing First programs, HPS did not require the development and

implementation of a coordinated access system. St. John's CE and CAB adopted a system-wide

approach to Housing First and coordinated access independently of HPS requirements.

Table 3: EHSJ 2014-2019 Community Plan Programming

Program	Description
Intensive Case Management	Longer-term case management and housing support to high acuity homeless clients
Permanent Supportive Housing	Long-term housing and support to homeless individuals experiencing complex mental health, addiction, and physical health barriers
Rapid Rehousing	Targeted, time-limited financial assistance and support services for those experiencing homelessness in order to help them quickly exit emergency shelters and then retain housing
Prevention	Programs, particularly Eviction Prevention and Diversion, provide assistance to individuals and families at risk of becoming homeless

The Plan outlines the investment plan and key activities for each year of its five-year scope. The first year of the Plan (2014-2015) focuses on increasing Housing First readiness and infrastructure to prepare for launching programming in the second year. The majority of the first year's budget (75%) is towards the construction of 7-10 permanent supportive housing units targeting chronically homeless shelter users. The remaining amount (25%) is towards Housing First System Coordination Initiative (HFSCI) activities, including the creation of a service inventory and coordinated intake and assessment tools, the development of a consistent PiT count, and training partner agencies and public systems on Housing First.

The second year of the Plan (2015-2016) involves ramping up Housing First programs to end chronic and episodic homelessness. This year's investment plan allocates the largest proportion of funds (42%) towards intensive case management targeting 70 chronically and episodically homeless individuals. In addition to HPS funding, EHSJ will pursue matching provincial funds for program operation and clinical supports for clients (9%). EHSJ will continue HFSCI activities started in the previous year (21%). During the second year, partners focus on building effective discharge planning protocols with public systems (e.g. health, corrections, and youth and family services) in tandem with Housing First and permanent supportive housing programs. Further, the completion of the 7-10 new units of permanent supportive housing may require additional HPS funds in the second year (28%).

The third year of the Plan sees the continued implementation of Housing First intensive case management programming (45%). The construction of permanent supportive housing capital wraps up by the third year and provincial investment continues permanent supportive housing operations (10%). EHSJ expands on system planning work by engaging stakeholders in upstream prevention work (22%). This work begins to focus on lower acuity populations with

shorter lengths of homelessness. Rapid rehousing and diversion strategies aim to serve at least 60 transitionally homeless households (approximately 90 individuals) using funds to match HPS investments (23%). Further, EHSJ recommends a strategic review of the Plan in the third year, the halfway point, including a formal assessment of the Plan's implementation with a consultation process and performance analysis.

The allocations for the final two years of the Plan (2017-2019) are the same. With the anticipated graduation of individuals from intensive case management programs in earlier years, repurposed funds support lower acuity, transitionally homeless groups. The reduction of intensive case management programs to 40-client capacity enables rapid rehousing and diversion programs to increase capacity to 70 households (approximately 105 individuals). Ongoing policy and partnership development supports homeless prevention upstream. As a result, intensive case management programs make up a significantly smaller proportion of funds than in the previous year (26%) and rapid rehousing and prevention increase from the previous year (27%). Permanent supportive housing operations maintain a similar proportion of annual funding (10%) and HFSCI activities make up the largest proportion for the final two years of the Plan (37%). According to the Plan, a strategic community planning process to develop the next Plan beyond 2019 is currently underway.

Data Collection and Performance Management

In addition to a Community Plan, HPS required recipients of grants and/or contributions to submit information on progress and results. Grant recipients must submit information on results achieved where required for the performance measurement strategy and departmental reporting. For contribution recipients, each contribution agreement specifies the nature and frequency of reporting. Recipients must submit progress reports that detail the activities completed and progress made towards achievement of results. According to section 2.4 of the HPS Terms and Conditions, key performance measures "measure relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of programming" and "support progress monitoring, reporting by management and evaluation". HPS also required that contribution recipients provide financial reports accounting for the use of funding and funding towards eligible costs from all other sources. As well, contribution recipients must submit final reports on results achieved.

The Plan addresses these requirements in its final section. According to the Plan, the implementation of HIFIS, a web-based data collection and case management system developed and maintained by ESDC, has enabled St. John's to participate in consistent reporting and performance management (EHSJ, 2014). According to the Plan, EHSJ plans to work with ESDC and Newfoundland Statistics to expand HIFIS to extend across the homeless-serving system. In addition, EHSJ plans to develop and conduct a PiT count on an ongoing basis. Lastly, the CE and CAB will work together to develop a "comprehensive performance management process" to fulfill HPS reporting and data collection requirements; EHSJ will be using the CE Guide to Performance Management in a Housing First Context, an online resource to assist CEs in performance management funded by ESDC (EHSJ, 2014, p. 45). The Plan also includes several indicators and targets with which to measure the outputs and outcomes of HPS funding. The

planned expansion of HIFIS beyond some homeless shelters in St. John's through the joint efforts of federal, provincial and municipal governments and local NGOs, as well as the use of common assessment tools, demonstrates the success of the community-based, cost sharing model in unifying various governmental and non-governmental stakeholders under a shared direction. In the St. John's example, stakeholders agreed to work towards the accomplishment of preventing and reducing homelessness by using the same methods of data collection and performance management.

Besides requirements tied to funding agreements between the federal government and CEs, ESDC has implemented other methods of data collection and performance measurement under HPS. Beginning in 2011, ESDC developed and piloted Community Progress Indicators (CPI) Reports in six Designated Communities, including St. John's. ESDC developed CPI Reports to "allow communities to better assess the progress of their collective efforts to reduce and prevent homelessness" (ESDC, 2012, n.p.). CPI Reports use a standard set of indicators to measure progress in working towards outcomes. The intent of CPI reports is to standardize data collection and performance measurement across the many communities that receive federal funding. In another instance of collaboration between partners, various governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in St. John's and the province worked with ESDC to provide information for the various CPI Reports. ESDC compiled the 2011 CPI Report using data from Statistics Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), HIFIS, Homelessness Electronic Reporting Information Network (HERIN), and participating St. John's shelters. In 2015 and again in 2016, ESDC released CPI Reports for St. John's. Shelters in St. John's used HIFIS to collect local data on homelessness. CMHC and Statistics Canada also contributed data to these CPI Reports.

ESDC has also collected data with the help of partners external to the federal government through PiT homeless counts. Between January to April 2016, ESDCs invited 32 HPS Designated Communities, including St. John's to participate in the first nationally coordinated PiT count. Prior to this PiT count, few Designated Communities had ever conducted counts and those that had used different definitions and methodologies (EHSJ, 2017). This made data inconsistent, not comparable, and difficult to aggregate (EHSJ, 2017). ESDC and the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (COH) released a national PiT count methodology. A PiT count has two primary purposes: to count the number of people experiencing homelessness in shelters and on the streets at a given time; and to collect information on the demographics and service needs of the homeless population (ESDC, 2019). There is a strong relationship between PiT counts and the CE's role in performance management at the system-level (Turner, 2015). This is because a PiT count may be the only system-level data the CE has to assist with developing community plans, reviewing trends and progress, designing the homeless-serving system, and changing policy (Turner, 2015). On a broader scale, the goal of a coordinated PiT count across communities is to create a national picture of homelessness (ESDC, 2019).

To participate in national counts, ESDC required communities to include core populations and screening and survey questions. The HPS PiT count approach includes people who are experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness. In addition, the HPS PiT count requires communities to certain methodological standards and recommends the use of additional standards. The HPS methods include a minimum number of data elements that communities must collect, but communities can collect additional data elements to meet their needs (Table 4). The standardizing of data collection and enumeration methods through PiT counts in HPS

funded communities represents another attempt by the federal government to "champion" a

shared direction between various partners in working towards a common goal.

Table 4: *Mandatory and Supplementary Data Sets for the National PiT Count*

Mandatory	Supplementary
3 screening questions 12 HPS core questions about: - Family status - Age - Gender - Indigenous identity - Military service - Migration - Immigration status - Experience of homelessness in the past year - Emergency shelter use - Loss of housing - Income	11 COH Optional Questions about: - Gender - On- and off-reserve migration - Residential schools - Military service - Citizenship - First age of homelessness - LGBTQ2 identity - Education - Foster care - Language preferences - Racial identity - Service use - Desire for housing - Barriers to housing - Contact information

One of the key deliverables for the HFSCI during 2014-2016 was the development of a

PiT count implementation plan. To adapt the national count methodology to local needs, EHSJ

procured the assistance of an external consultant, the COH, and the HFSCI Local Coordinator to

work alongside a PiT Count Advisory Committee, formed by EHSJ in 2015. The Committee

planned and implemented the project and included a diversity of representatives from service

providers, funders, and government. Throughout October 2015 and May 2016, key stakeholders,

including service providers, public system partners and individuals with lived experience of

homelessness, provided feedback on the community's interest in conducting a count and

recommendations on how to capture numbers of individuals experiencing homelessness (EHSJ,

2016b).

The Advisory Committee met on March 4, 2016 to review early consultation findings and local conditions and considerations. Prior to attending this meeting, the Advisory Committee participated in a PiT count webinar, developed by the expert consultant and the COH, to learn about national standards and proposed local adaptation. The Housing First Provincial Conference (March 3-5, 2016), co-hosed by EHSJ and the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing and Homelessness Network (NLHHN), and Review Sessions (May 4, 2016) served as additional opportunities to develop the final PiT model (EHSJ, 2016b). EHSJ received the final PiT count model for approval on May 31, 2016. In consideration of the local context, the count focuses on enumerating those in emergency shelters and transitional housing with targeted efforts towards including the hidden homeless and rough sleepers (EHSJ, 2016b). On November 30, 2016, EHSJ, its partners, and over 100 volunteers conducted St. John's first biennial homeless PiT count. In 2018, EHSJ conducted the second biennial PiT count. Along with the federal government, the development of the PiT count including St. John's local stakeholders evidences the power sharing that exists between partners in the HPS model.

Discussion

I argue that the federal partnership model described above has proven effective at empowering other orders of government and non-governmental organizations in St. John's to address the issue of homelessness in the community. The relationship between the federal government and its partners has many elements of what Kernaghan (1998) calls a "collaborative partnership". In the section that follows, I suggest that this collaborative partnership is also successful overall. Kernaghan (1998) identifies six characteristics of successful partnerships: 1) the partnership includes all stakeholders whose contribution is necessary for achieving the partnership's goals; 2) there is a high degree of mutual dependence between partners; 3) the partnership creates a high degree of empowerment among partners; 4) partners pool resources; 5) the partnership has limited objectives; and 6) the partnership is grounded in formal agreements. The intergovernmental and non-governmental partnerships in the federal homelessness strategy are not perfect collaborative partnerships, but they have accomplished the difficult task of aligning multiple stakeholders in the same direction.

As the results of the 2016 and 2018 PiT count reveal, the individual experiences and behaviours and systemic and structural factors that are associated with homelessness (e.g., Indigenous identity, unemployment, unaffordable housing, and involvement with corrections and/or the child welfare system) are multi-faceted and complex. To successfully prevent and reduce homelessness, many stakeholders from a diversity of public and non-governmental organizations will need to work in partnership. As outlined above, a variety of federal, provincial, municipal, and non-governmental entities have combined efforts in working towards the goal of addressing homelessness in St. John's. Although St. John's is the only Designated Community in Newfoundland and Labrador, the provincial government has committed to

creating its own homelessness strategy and expanding efforts to address homelessness and housing issues beyond the City. These efforts are in alignment with federal homelessness and housing initiatives. However, stakeholders from outside the homeless-serving and housing sectors, both internal and external to government, will need to be included in this partnership if the partners seek to tackle broader issues associated with homelessness. In the Plan, the EHSJ (2014, p. 39) states: "To mitigate the discharging into homelessness from public systems, we will need to work much closer to develop zero discharge protocols from health and correctional facilities. Further engagement of provincial child, youth and family services will also be required to implement our priority focus on youth homelessness". It is evident that the Government of Newfoundland will continue to be an important partner.

The federal government's community-based model empowers local governments and organizations to influence policy and program development and direction. While HPS required communities to allocate a certain percentage of federal funds to Housing First programs, HPS did not require the development and implementation of a coordinated access system. The CE and CAB in St. John's adopted a system-wide approach to Housing First and a coordinated access process, independently of HPS requirements. With respect to coordinated access, the federal government adopted the practices of communities, such as St. John's, in the latest iteration of the national homelessness program. St. John's had identified a coordinated approach to housing and supports, guided by the Housing First philosophy, as a priority in 2014 with the publication of the 2014-2019 Community Plan – five years before the launch of Reaching in April 2019. As well, communities and other stakeholders had previously suggested that the federal government adopt a coordinated access approach to addressing homelessness. A consultation process with Canadians across the country during the summer and fall of 2017 on how to improve the HPS

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included a recommendation to work towards a systems approach involving different service providers coordinating activities and resources. The federal government responded to this feedback by officially requiring communities to adopt a coordinated access approach.

Overall, however, partners do not share power equally amongst each other, largely due to the nature of Canadian federalism and the disadvantaged position of individuals experiencing homelessness. The federal government cannot enter into agreements with municipalities created by provincial legislation without the approval of the provinces, lacking constitutional jurisdiction over municipal matters. Furthermore, NGOs do not have the same authority and spending power as governments. Lastly, individuals experiencing homelessness do not play a substantive role in decision-making processes over the policies and programs that directly affect them. In such a partnership of diverse stakeholders, equal power sharing may not be attainable. It follows that a high degree of dependence amongst all partners also may not be possible.

Through the HPS, the federal government is a significant funder of programs to address homeless in St. John's. HPS funding makes up $3.5 million of the $7.7 million EHSJ estimates for the implementation of the 2014-2019 Community Plan, representing less than half (45%) of total funds. While Ottawa contributes a large proportion of funds, it is not the community's only source of money. EHSJ anticipates that other government partners and private investors will provide the remaining $4.2 million. According to the HPS Terms and Conditions, Designated Communities must match every $1 of HPS funding, identify a strategy for procuring matching contributions, and report on the amount of external contributions received at the end of each year. Since the federal government requires Designated Communities to match HPS funding, the federal government cannot solely rely on spending-power to exert authority in the domain of

homelessness. The community based, cost-sharing model requires the financial and non-financial resources of multiple stakeholders, dividing power more equally amongst partners.

Kernaghan (1998) suggests that successful partnerships have limited objectives. As stated by the Government, the goal of the HPS is to "prevent and reduce homelessness across Canada". In terms of outcomes, the federal government expects to develop and integrate comprehensive Housing First programs; address community-level priorities in the area of homelessness; encourage partners to maximize and coordinate collective efforts; and enhance the understanding of homelessness at the local and national level. St. John's community-level outcomes align with the federal outcomes. The Plan stresses the necessity of coordination within the homeless-serving sector and among other partners from diverse sectors and public systems to realize specific outcomes related to addressing homelessness in the community (EHSJ, 2014). These outcomes are to end chronic and episodic homelessness, rehouse and support 460 homeless persons, and reduce the average length of stay in emergency shelters to 7 days. The aim to reduce, rather than eliminate, shelter use means that the community does not expect to end homelessness. The elimination of homelessness is also not a goal of the federal government. As the provincial government has announced its soon-to-be released plan to address homelessness in Newfoundland and Labrador will align with the federal government, it is likely that ending homelessness will also not be one of its objectives. These shared objectives are specific and will be measured using common performance measures. Lastly, to be successful, partners must ground their partnerships in formalized agreements. Such agreements exist in the form of contribution agreements between the federal government and the St. John's CE. However, partnerships between the provincial government and the CE and CAB are not as formalized and

rely on voluntary participation by both parties. In St. John's, the province has been supportive of the HPS in St. John's.

Using Kernaghan's description, the community-based, shared funding model of the HPS, particularly from 2014 onwards, is a successful partnership. Nevertheless, what does "success" mean in the context of homelessness? In other words, what does a partnership have to produce in order to be successful in this policy area? Given the complicated nature of homelessness, there can be many answers to this question. As aforementioned, the community-based, shared funding model has accomplished the difficult task of unifying a diversity of stakeholders towards the same broad goals. In addition, partners have co-developed and adopted the same data collection methods and metrics of evaluation to assess their progress in addressing homelessness. However, St. John's began biennial PiT counts in 2016. Further, St. John's implemented HIFIS in its shelters in 2009, so shelter data is only available from 2011 onwards.

According to PiT counts, the number of individuals experiencing some form of homelessness in St. John's on a given night remained stable between 2016 and 2018. According to the most recent shelter data, collected by shelters using HIFIS and published in the 2017 CPI Report in 2019, 825 individuals used shelters that year. While the number of shelter users between 2011 and 2017 averages at approximately 757 individuals annually, the shelter occupancy rates have been steadily increasing since 2014. This suggests that the number of homeless people is relatively stable, but homeless individuals are accessing services at a higher rate. The homeless-serving system placed 53 people in stable housing between 2016 and 2017 with 71% of those individuals in stable housing or exiting the program 12 months following placement. This success rate is on the way to reaching the Plan's target of 80% of Housing First clients who remained housed 12 months following placement. The percentage of chronic shelter

users declined from 9.1% in 2014 to 6.7% in 2017. The average length of shelter stay in 2017 was 22 days. While far from the Plan's objective of seven days, the 2017 average length of stay is at its shortest since 2013. Overall, the combined efforts in have resulted in modest successes in achieving the objectives of the partnership. It is important to note that the most recent figures reflect the progress of the Plan was in its third of fifth year. Housing First infrastructure and programming were also new to St. John's with the revamp of the HPS in 2014. The Plan's full output will be available at the end of 2019 when the 2014-2019 Plan concludes.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have argued that the community-based, cost-sharing model used by the federal government to address the issue of homelessness has proven effective at mobilizing diverse partners towards a common goal. The federal government initiated this particular model of partnership through the launch of the NHI in 1999. Following the launch of the first federal homelessness strategy, the federal government continues to "champion" the program through financial (e.g. grants and contributions to communities) and non-financial supports (e.g. PiT count methodology). Under the HPS, ESDC also piloted CPI Reports in certain communities, including St. John's. ESDC compiles the CPI Reports with information collected from the community as well as information collected from other federal departments, namely Statistics Canada. Using its policy and data collection capacity, ESDC incentivizes collaboration with national homelessness programs by assisting communities in gathering information on their homeless populations.

In the same way, the provision of PiT count methodology and funding to conduct the counts in partnered communities by ESDC provides communities with the tools to collect local information that they might not have had the capacity to develop on their own. In providing these services for communities, as well as requiring performance reporting in funding agreements, ESDC receives a wealth of information. ESDC can use community and nation-level data to establish benchmarks for performance targets for participating communities. As well, the federal requirement that communities create Community Plans allows community-based organizations (i.e. CEs and CABs) to have real decision-making power and solicit the collaboration of local provincial and municipal partners. Although based on federal program requirements,

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communities have the freedom to develop the Plans according to their local needs and identify other homelessness-related goals that are important in their own contexts.

As with any case study, the findings of this research can only be applied to other contexts with difficulty. While St. John's has demonstrated progress in reducing homelessness through participation in the federal government's national homelessness strategy, other federally-funded communities may not yield similar results. Big cities in big provinces, such as Vancouver and Toronto, with more numerous and diverse stakeholders may experience more difficulty in bringing all partners together than midsize cities in small provinces, such as St. John's. Further, the number of people experiencing homelessness and the demand for housing and services in these larger cities is higher than in St. John's. Collaboration is made more difficult in these contexts and the federal strategy does not directly address these challenges. Furthermore, the federal approach hinges on the participation of other governmental partners. EHSJ received large amounts of financial and non-financial support from the Newfoundland and Labrador government. The Government cannot mandate the participation of the provinces in a national homelessness program so the responsibility of creating the bureaucratic relationships needed to secure collaboration and resources falls to communities. This means that the success of the national program can vary depending on the capacity of a community to form these linkages. As well, shifts in provincial priorities can mean more or less provincial attention and financial resources devoted to homelessness, which can directly impact the efforts and outcomes of partnered communities. St. John's may owe much of its progress to adept and committed public servants at the municipal and provincial levels and members of the homelessness-serving sector. Furthermore, the coordinated efforts of multiple public systems (e.g. corrections, child welfare, health) to address the many complex and interrelated causes of homelessness. The provincial

government has thus far shown support for homelessness initiatives in St. John's, but federal

government's strategy can never guarantee the participation of partners external to itself

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