
4.0 Edmonton's Top Five

There were many pieces of advice and sage wisdom generated during the consultation. In addition to the overwhelming support for Housing First, the top five messages are:

1. We are all in this together. Everyone wants to see themselves in the solution. Only by working together - government, agencies, business, organizations, communities, citizens - can we hope to end homelessness. But we need a leadership face as well as leadership, enthusiasm, and commitment. We need an implementation framework that outlines the essential steps to implementation for all of us.
2. Wrap around service delivery is the key to success. Wrap around service was seen as the most critical piece by all consultation participants. Planning should include an assessment of the current service level framework, and a projection of future service level needs.
3. Landlords are a significant factor in the success of Housing First. Landlords repeatedly said “don’t just abandon them in our buildings.” Landlords must feel comfortable with housing people who are homeless. Wrap around service delivery that addresses landlord-tenant relations is crucial to resolving landlord concerns.
4. We need to build in a social marketing strategy as part of the implementation process. We must get from NIMBY to ‘what a great idea. I’d like that in my community’. We need buy-in from the entire city. The biggest problem is that no one “owns” homelessness - but the problem really “belongs” to all of us.
5. Let’s bust some myths. We need to clear up any misunderstandings between Housing First and affordable housing. Many people still believe that the only way to end homelessness is to build new buildings.

We have the opportunity to end the misery that blights the lives of too many in our city. We can put a Circle of Hope around Homelessness. As the participants have said:

 ***“We have the money. We have the resources. We have the will. Let’s challenge our community and do the right thing.”***

