

October 20, 2008

Anuradha Dugal  
Director, Violence Prevention Program  
Canadian Women's Foundation  
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Toronto ON, M5H 2L3

Dear Anuradha,

Enclosed please find:

- ✿ 3 copies of our second stage toolkit, entitled *Second Stage Shelters: Closing the Gap*
- ✿ Our final report
- ✿ Media clips relating to identifying the need for second stage housing during the project

Thank you for your patience throughout this project. As you know, the changes in the Alberta economy presented considerable challenges to us as well as the workload we experienced due to the World Conference.

However, I believe we have developed an important resource that will benefit shelters – and the women and children they serve – in making second stage housing a reality.

Yours truly

ALBERTA COUNCIL OF WOMEN'S SHLETTERS



Jan Reimer  
Provincial Co-ordinator

### Second Stage Housing Project

Over the last two years, the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters has been working with shelters across Alberta to realize an expansion of second stage housing for women and children leaving emergency shelters. To do this we have:

- Developed support materials (Toolkit)
- Provided advocacy support to shelters
- Participated in the Premier's Task Force on Housing to bring second stage housing to the fore
- Met with Provincial Ministers (Housing, Treasury Board, Alberta Children's Services, Justice, and Solicitor General).
- Obtained information from women in shelter upon exit from shelter (6,044 women in 2007; 6,900 in 2006 and 6,840 in 2005)
- Developed outcome measures for second stage shelters
- Released shelter statistics on the relationship between lack of access to affordable housing and return to the relationship
- Intervened with Ministers spearheading the Crime Prevention Initiative to address the need for specialized supports for abused women.
- Supported shelters at the local level to access Affordable Housing Funds for second stage shelters.
- Provided support to on reserve shelters, who continue to advocate for second stage funding support from INAC and an evaluative model developed with them. (Note: we have received a significant breakthrough for emergency shelters but not for second stage).
- Ensured that second stage housing was addressed in the Minister's Shelter Review.
- Briefed funders on the need for second stage housing.

Is second stage needed? Most definitely! Many of our clients need the opportunity for longer term accommodation. The Toolkit will assist existing shelters to develop plans for second stage housing in their local community.

- Emergency Shelter Director

The highlight of the project was an announcement during the course of our work that transitional housing (including second stage shelters) was included as part of a major funding announcement made by the province. Work did not unfold quite as planned due to the following changes and obstacles that we encountered along the way, including:

- The Alberta boom placed significant strain on shelter staff, resulting in high turn over and a reduction in disposable time to devote to this project from a shelter level (For instance, since last August, there has been more than a 20% turnover of shelter executive directors, alone).
- Difficulty in recruiting project staff to undertake the project (for the same reason – staffing challenges created by the Alberta boom).
- A housing crisis in Alberta

As a result, we had a number of different contractors who worked on the project, supplemented by ACWS staff.

91.5% increased their ability to deal with the effects of family violence...

During the course of the project 10 second stage apartments were added in Medicine Hat and Sonshine Community Services opened a new building with 24 apartments in Calgary (an increase of 14 apartments). Support was provided to both shelter agencies during the course of this development. However, one second stage had to temporarily close due to a major fire.

93 % of children six and under demonstrated positive progress in developmental gaps...  
Discovery House  
2008 Annual Report

During the course of the project we worked with our member shelters (41 shelter directors, and in particular the 8 directors of second stage shelters). Other stakeholders who were contacted include the members of the federal government Alberta Caucus, MLA's and mayors throughout Alberta and government administrators.

Second stage shelter capacity remains a huge issue for women leaving emergency shelters. However, the number of women who were referred to second stage has slightly increased; and with an increase in second stage capacity occurring during 2007, more women actually resided in second stage in that year. The following statistics are based on data gathered from 6,840 women resident in shelter in 2005; 6990 in 2006 and 6,444 in 2007.

Referral from emergency shelter	2007	2006	2005
Referred to second stage	391	374	404
Resided in second stage	166 (42%)	131 (35%)	142 (35%)

It should be noted that referrals to second stage are only made when emergency shelter workers are aware that there may be an upcoming vacancy in second stage shelters. If a vacancy is not imminent, no referrals are made.

Through work with second stage shelters, we have found that the number of women who self identify as aboriginal has increased in the last year.

Shelter	Aboriginal self - identified		
	2007	2006	2005
Emergency	56%	57%	53%
Second Stage	46%	34%	39%

Women in second stage housing continue to score higher on Dr. Campbell's danger assessment score than women in emergency shelters, reinforcing the need for the supportive, secure environment provided by second stage housing.

Danger Assessment	Emergency Shelter 2007	Second Stage Shelter 2007
at further risk or serious risk of assault or homicide	88%	90%
perpetrator has used or threatened them with a weapon	35%	55%
perpetrator owns a gun	15%	29%
perpetrator has threatened or believe is capable of killing them	58%	64%

Upon exit from shelter, respondents who *have stayed in the shelter in the past* told us that:

- **56%** returned to the same relationship (58%), with the majority expressing as compelling reasons for return:
  - hope for the relationship **68%** (70%)
  - lack of money **45%** (43%)
  - lack of affordable housing **42%** (42%)
  - my family **40%** (40%)
  - fear **34%** (36%)
- Concerning respondents who identified where they will go *after this most recent shelter stay*:
- **14%** identified that they will return to the same relationship (15%), with the majority expressing as compelling reasons for return:
  - hope for the relationship 67% (72%)
  - my family 44% (48%)
  - lack of affordable housing 31% (72%)
  - lack of money 27% (30%)
  - fear 16% (14%)

*(Note the number in brackets reflects the 2006 experience).*

We have used this data to reinforce the need for affordable housing and in particular, second stage housing.

Second Stage residents continue to have a steadily increasing and higher level of involvement with Police than women resident in emergency shelters. This again reinforces the need for the safe, secure environment provided by second stage shelters.

Type Of Shelter	Police Service							
	Assault Charges laid	Arrested batterer	Inform About shelter	EPO Inform	EPO Obtained	Follow-up	No Response	Needed but not available
Emergency								
2007	30%	24%	34%	7%	6%	4%	3%	11%
2006	28%	24%	x	4%	4%	4%	2%	8%
2005	28%	23%	x		(8%)	.05%	2%	x
Second Stage								
2007	51%	38%	18%	22%	13%	0%	0%	0%
2006	40%	33%	x	9%	13%	5%	3%	0%
2005	21%	17%	x	(12%)		0%	3%	x

Over the course of the project,

- Support was provided to member shelters (this included letters on the need for second stage shelters and general advice to shelters on accessing government funds). One shelter opened a second stage housing project, another significantly expanded their services, and three shelters were supported by ACWS in accessing a newly announced provincial government affordable housing program. Two of these shelters were successful in obtaining funding. Advice was also provided to two communities considering development of second stage housing that currently do not have an emergency shelter.
- Supporting materials were developed to assist in approaching municipal and band councils to discuss the need in this community (see attached toolkit)
- The Provincial Government was given the ACWS position statement, and ongoing requests made for a provincially funded second stage housing program (with this activity still continuing).
- The Minister responsible for domestic violence was given the first copy of the Toolkit.
- Outcome measures for shelters were developed.
- Letters were written to municipal councils, local MLA's and MP's and Ministers responsible for First Nations (federal and provincial) encouraging them to support second stage women's shelters in their communities.

The Second Stage Toolkit was circulated to second stage shelter directors for their review and comment, and their feedback incorporated into the attached toolkit. The toolkit was then disseminated to the membership and placed on our website.

## Closing the Gap: Evaluative Framework

Evaluation indicators (contribution)	Programme Hypothesis	When abused women and their children receive safe housing and a supportive environment, they will be empowered to make successful choices for themselves and their family.
	Project goal	To make progress on a provincially funded second stage housing program that supports both existing and new second stage shelters in Alberta.
		<b>Outcomes<sup>1</sup> contributing towards the Goal</b>
	Outcomes	Develop supporting materials for shelter use in addressing the lack of second stage housing and programmes in Alberta
		Provide support and guidance to shelters and agencies who are considering second stage housing development.
Provide information to local and provincial decision makers on the need for second stage housing.		
Develop and track outcome measures for second stage shelters.		
Monitoring	Outputs	<b>Outputs<sup>2</sup> contributing towards Outcome 1:</b> Develop supporting materials for shelter use in addressing the lack of second stage housing and programmes in Alberta. Second stage toolkit developed and circulated.
<b>Summary of objectives</b>		<b>RESULTS</b>
	1.1 Contract project staff.	Contract staff hired at different points in the project. 5 of the 8 shelters worked actively on developing the Toolkit. 2 shelters provided input during the review of the draft. 70 Toolkits disseminated to shelters and community decision makers as well as being made available electronically.
	1.2 Work with existing second stage shelters to determine content.	
	1.3 Review draft with second stage shelters.	
	1.4. Disseminate.	

<sup>1</sup> Benefits and changes

<sup>2</sup> The tangible products and services delivered as a consequence of implementing one or more activities

<b>Outputs contributing towards Outcome 2: Provide support and guidance to shelters and agencies who are considering second stage housing development.</b>		
<b>Summary of objectives</b>		<b>RESULTS</b>
	<p><b>2.1</b> Second stage housing issues discussed at all shelter directors meetings.</p> <p><b>2.2</b> Letters of support written to funders, province, etc.</p> <p><b>2.3.</b> Government informed of women's needs for second stage shelters for themselves and their children.</p>	<p>Second stage issues addressed at all shelter director meetings. Letters were sent to funders upon request (on behalf of Odyssey House and Sonshine). Meetings held with Minister responsible for the Treasury Board, four meetings with Minister responsible for Children's Services, raised at two administrative level meetings with government; raised with meeting with Alberta Conservative Caucus MP's, key component as part of Women's Shelter Program Review and three meetings with Deputy Minister. Letters sent to MP's, MLA's and local mayors.</p>
<b>Outputs contributing towards Outcome 3: Provide information to local and provincial decision makers on the need for second stage housing.</b>		
<b>Summary of objectives</b>		<b>RESULTS</b>
	<p><b>3.1</b> Develop fact sheets to inform decision makers at the local and provincial level</p> <p><b>3.2</b> Meet with decision makers</p>	<p>Fact sheets provided to decision makers and circulated to all ACWS members to use at the local level. See above for meeting list. ACWS provides ongoing support to individual shelters and provides information on funding sources.</p>
	<p><b>3.3</b> Support individual shelters and agencies in contacting local and provincial decision makers</p>	
<b>Outputs contributing towards Outcome 4: Develop and track outcome measures for second stage shelters.</b>		
<b>Summary of objectives</b>		<b>RESULTS</b>
	<p><b>4.1</b> Information systems committee works with second stage shelters on developing outcome measure</p> <p><b>4.2.</b> Second stage shelters use outcome measure and track on HOMES data base</p> <p><b>4.3.</b> ACWS analyses outcomes and data from HOMES</p>	<p>The Information Systems Committee met with second stage shelters to look at their specific needs. Initial outcome measures included in the Guide. Second stage shelters using outcomes in their annual reports. 2of the ten second stage shelters are now on HOMES. one will be joining at the end of the year, and a third is transitioning to HOMES from another data base over the next year and a half. ACWS uses data for our own analysis and is part of media releases.</p>