Creating Safe Housing for Abused Seniors:

The Edmonton Model

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Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired
Edmonton Meals on Wheels
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Executive Summary

The Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing service provides accommodation and support for a period of 60 days to Edmonton seniors: men and women, 60 years of age and older, who are leaving an abusive situation.

Report Purpose

The report entitled, "Creating Safe Housing for Abused Seniors: The Edmonton Model", describes the project from its inception to the end of the two-year pilot phase. The report was prepared to meet the requirements of the funder, to document the process and the resulting service for those who participated and to offer information to others that may wish to replicate the service.

Report Components

The report is divided into four sections:
1. History and Context of the Pilot
2. Conceptualization of the Pilot
3. Implementation of the Service
4. Experiences of Those Interviewed

The information was gathered using primarily a qualitative methodology. This included one-to-one, face-to-face, tape-recorded interviews. In the case of client interviews, detailed notes were taken and analyzed. As well, meeting minutes, other notes, the evaluation framework, grant applications, and progress reports were reviewed.

Evaluation

In order to document the process and learn about what difference this initiative would make in the lives of the clients it served, the Steering Committee incorporated an evaluation component early in the project.

Because the service provision in this project was innovative, the evaluation focused on learning:
✓ What was working and what was not working at specified points throughout the project?
✓ What were those involved learning as they proceeded?
✓ What barriers were encountered?
✓ What improvements and changes were required as the pilot proceeded?

The Need to Address Elder Abuse

It is estimated that approximately 7% of the senior population suffer from some sort of physical, emotional, sexual, financial abuse or neglect (Statistics Canada, 2002). Utilizing these statistics, there were a possible 5,600 'at risk' seniors in Edmonton at the time of this report.

Formation of the Steering Committee

During the Fall of 1998 and into early 1999, a series of meetings and events reinforced the need for accommodation for seniors wanting to leave abusive relationships. A City of Edmonton Community Services Department social worker who was also an Elder Abuse Intervention Team member, had been spearheading the drive to raise awareness about elder abuse and provide some type of service for these seniors. Utilizing a community development model, this social worker formed a committee to design a service to provide safe housing for abused seniors in Edmonton.

Key Features of the Service:

➢ Seniors enter the service after a thorough screening and risk assessment.
➢ Those accepted are accommodated in a safe housing suite within a senior's housing complex for up to 60 days.
➢ The suite is fully furnished, stocked with staples, and daily meals are provided.
➢ Clients are connected to an array of existing community services as their needs are identified. Among others, these include DATS (Disabled Adult Transit System), ESL (English as a Second Language), community nursing, and other medical services.
➢ An "intense case management model" is utilized. The Project Coordinator assists the client in every way possible towards self-reliance.
➢ Assistance is provided in finding accommodation, furnishings and household supplies for the new accommodation.
➢ The service is offered free of charge, donations are accepted.
➢ Follow-up services are provided as needed for approximately six months.
➢ The service began with one suite and expanded to two. Currently seven suites are in operation.

Uniqueness of the Service:

• The service created connected safe housing suites with an array of existing community services under the supervision of a Coordinator.
• The pilot utilized existing resources rather than duplicating services which was seen as a major strength.

- The responsibility for the project was shared by a variety of agencies, strengthening those agencies and decreasing competition for funding.

Demographics

By the end of the two year Pilot Phase:
- 22 seniors had used the service at an over 90% capacity
- 2 were male
- All had suffered emotional abuse. In addition, 5 suffered physical abuse, 2 neglect, 2 threats of physical violence, and 4 financial abuse
- 50% had been abused by their spouse, 50% by another family member
- 19 of the 22 were living safely and self-reliantly in the community
- 1 person left safe housing without advising where she was going, 2 returned to their former living situations and 1 of those clients re-entered the program and has since moved into her own apartment.
- 46 seniors were referred to alternate accommodation due to lack of space and of these, 5 were deemed "high risk" and referred to other more secure locations (e.g. Kerby Shelter in Calgary, women's shelters etc.)

Public Awareness/Education

One of the greatest challenges identified by the Steering Committee during the first year of the pilot was attempting to reach older adults who need the service.

Actions that were taken to address this challenge were:
- Provision of public presentations and displays describing the safe housing service.
- Provision of information on Elder Abuse
- Work to obtain funding for an information/crisis line for abused seniors. Rather than create a new service, the Committee has applied for funds to expand existing crisis line services.

Key Features of the Steering Committee

- The process by which this effective service was designed was seen as equally important as the actual service. The people who came together to develop the pilot were professionals accustomed to directing existing programs, not creating new ones. A tremendous amount of work was involved in thinking through the implications of each decision with respect to the safety and security of clients, other tenants and agency

personnel.

"The Right People Were at the Table"
Factors identified as crucial to the success of the Committee:
- Members were leaders in their individual fields.
- Members had the authority to make decisions for and take action on behalf of their organization.
- Members had respect for each other's expertise.
- Members were deeply committed to designing the best service possible with the resources at hand.
- The leadership within the group was both formal and informal.
- Creativity and flexibility were essential attributes of members.

Funding

One of the biggest drawbacks identified by Steering Committee members is the lack of second stage and permanent funding for projects past the initial pilot phase. Members suggest exploring all funding options prior to starting and being sure that appropriate funders are identified early to incorporate necessary requirements and to avoid wasting limited resources.

Comments

Clients:
"I left with one overnight bag not knowing what I would do or where I would stay. I had no idea who to call. I had taken lots of dimes and quarters so I went to the mall and phoned everywhere in the phonebook."

About the Program:
"You have saved my life. I don't know what I would have done... without this program."

About the Project Coordinator:
"I don't know what I would have done without the Coordinator. She was my Rock of Gibraltar. She was always there for me, she is so special."

The Coordinator about the Steering Committee:
"We are fortunate that the people on the Steering Committee had so much dedication and commitment because many of these people are not involved in the field of social work. They worked hard together and were supportive of one another. Each one had something really important to offer to the program and that is what makes this service so unique, each brought expertise from her/his own area."

Key Learnings/Important Features

Creation of a Legal Entity
- *"The creation of a legal entity limiting the liability of each agency was an excellent learning which has proven relevant in other endeavors."*

Safe Housing Suite with Arrayed Services
- The service was designed to provide safe housing suites with an array of support services available to clients as needed. This design utilized existing resources rather than duplicating services and created a program whereby responsibility was shared among a number of agencies.

Intense case management model
- Intense one-to-one case management is a vital aspect of the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing service and one which all involved believe enables clients to make quick progress towards their goals and contributes to seniors' greater success in remaining self-reliant once they leave the safe house.

Multiple safe housing locations throughout the city
- A model utilizing suites in a variety of locations would not be feasible for two main reasons:
    1. Inability to keep suites available throughout the city all year round
    2. Lack of resources – both financial and Project Coordinator's time

Funding
- It is important for pilot projects to know ALL potential funders early in the planning stages. Preliminary meetings with these potential funders will focus the area of funding application and predetermine the collection of evidence needed to help funders make their decisions.

Community Awareness/Public Education
- One of the greatest challenges for the Committee during the first year of the pilot was attempting to reach older adults who needed the service and making the community aware that the service existed. They recognized the need to develop a Communication Plan and to allocate resources to raise awareness.

Crisis Line
- A variety of circumstances led the Committee to investigate provision of a crisis line for seniors; the evidence to support the need for this service was compelling. Rather than create a new service, the Committee applied for funding to augment existing services to better meet the needs of seniors in crisis.

Need for housing contacts
- A major area of work for the Coordinator has been forging relationships with managers of apartment complexes throughout the City to build a network of resources to meet the needs of a wide variety of clients.
- There is particular difficulty for those aged 55-65 to access subsidized services.

Peer support workers need to be trained
- Peer support works best if volunteers have some formal training and are subject to a degree

of supervision. Training should involve instruction in issues of confidentiality and be accompanied by prescribed procedures and established guidelines.

Steering Committee
"The right people at the table"
- Organizations involved had the necessary services for seniors
- Committee members had the following:
  - ✓ a sense of purpose and desire to create a program for abused seniors
  - ✓ strong personalities, negotiating skills, expertise in their individual fields, and were motivators and "doers"
  - ✓ authority on behalf of their individual organization to make decisions
  - ✓ a degree of trust in each other
  - ✓ willingness to take a risk

Leadership
- The Committee had formal and informal leadership, which was flexible, respectful, and open to creative ideas, and change, which contributed to a creative atmosphere.

Project Coordinator
All clients in one location
- Having all safe housing clients together on the same floor of a building provides opportunity for clients to informally support each other, helping them to be less lonely and less dependent on the Coordinator

Clients
Service
- Clients believed the service was effective in assisting them to live self-reliantly in the community free from abuse
- Clients had overwhelming praise for the work and support of the Project Coordinator
- Clients expressed the desire to have peer support from a volunteer of the same gender
- Clients expressed the belief that changes should not be made to the program

Safety
- Clients differentiated between safety within the suite, in the building and in the neighbourhood reinforcing the Committee's belief in the importance of the appropriateness of the match between client and location.

Introduction

This report documents the process, design and implementation of the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing Pilot Project developed to address the issue of elder abuse in the City of Edmonton. The report is divided into four main areas. The first part of the report provides the context and rationale for the pilot initiative. This section contains a discussion of the Community Development Model that underlies the approach used to develop the service, as well as a history of the formation of the Steering Committee. The second part of the report outlines the conceptualization of this pilot. It includes an evaluation component, the process by which the service was designed and key decisions that shaped the service. The third part of the report describes the implementation of the service. It includes demographics, plans for sustainability of the service and the ongoing need to raise public awareness regarding elder abuse. The fourth part of the report chronicles the significant experiences of those interviewed – the Steering Committee members, the Project Coordinator, the Safe Housing Building Manager, and safe housing clients.

The findings contained in the report are based on:
1. Review of meeting minutes and meeting notes
2. Review of the evaluation framework and grant applications
3. Progress reports prepared for the Muttart Foundation who funded the pilot initiative
4. Review of the evaluator's notes and recollections
5. Individual, face to face, tape recorded interviews with core members of the Steering Committee, and the Project Coordinator, detailed field notes from face-to-face interviews with safe housing clients and a written response submitted by the location #1 Building Manager.

How the Information will be used This final report describes the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing Pilot Project from its inception to the end of the two-year pilot phase. This report was prepared as part of the funding agreement, to document a process and the resulting service for those who participated and to offer information to others that may wish to replicate the service.

PART 1 – HISTORY AND CONTEXT OF THE INITIATIVE

Rationale for Pilot Project

Elder abuse is a rapidly growing issue that requires community involvement along with appropriate professional action. It is a complex problem that involves health care, social, law enforcement, legal and housing issues. It is often hidden in the shadows of other forms of family violence, which makes it

Over 3500 Edmonton seniors are at risk of being abused

difficult to obtain accurate prevalence statistics. The National Survey on Abuse of the Elderly in Canada conducted by the Ryerson Institute in 1989 revealed that a minimum of 4% of the elderly population that live in private homes have suffered from one or more forms of abuse (Podnieks, 1990). In 1996 there were 91,108 residents of Edmonton 60 years or older. Utilizing those statistics, approximately 3,644 Edmonton seniors are or have been, in an abusive situation. Statistics Canada (2002) reports elder abuse rates as high as 7% currently representing potentially 5,600 Edmonton seniors.

Elder abuse is broadly defined as any action or inaction by self or others that jeopardizes the health or well-being of an older adult. Specific categories of elder abuse include physical, emotional/psychosocial, financial, sexual, or medication abuse and neglect. A brief description of each category appears in Appendix I.

While there have been a number of committees and discussions about elder abuse in Edmonton since 1988, there have been few initiatives that provide actual resources to address the abuse. Social workers of The City of Edmonton Community Services Department were aware of this gap and in 1995 began to work on the establishment of an Elder Abuse Intervention Team. In 1998, after several years of advocating and planning, these social workers gained sufficient support to put an Elder Abuse Intervention Team in place. The Team is comprised of a social worker with City of Edmonton Community Services Department, a detective with the Edmonton Police Service and a seniors' resource coordinator from Catholic Social Services. The detective and the seniors' resource worker primarily follow up on individual cases of elder abuse, the social worker is involved in community development and public education initiatives.

Since its inception in 1998, the Elder Abuse Intervention Team has responded to over 1,100 cases of elder abuse. These cases have proven to be very time intensive and complex. A factor contributing to the complexity is the involvement of adult children and other family members, at times resulting in the need for mediation services. In addition, a number of agencies and services are often involved providing support unrelated to abuse. Systemic barriers such as long waiting lists to access continuing care facilities or affordable housing alternatives have been identified as challenges to a quick, effective response to elder abuse.

The experience of the Elder Abuse Intervention Team led some City of Edmonton Community Services Department social workers to contemplate the need for accommodation for abused seniors. When this was discussed, the question naturally arose

Existing shelters may not be suitable for abused older adults

regarding the use of existing shelter services for abused women. Based on their experience, social workers who had worked in the area of spousal violence knew that the number of older women in shelters was small. In order to confirm this experience, studies on use of shelter services by seniors were sought. Empirical data (Kappel Ramji Consulting Group, 1998) suggested that existing emergency shelters for victims of abuse do not address the specific needs of abused seniors. It also indicated that reliance on shelters would not meet the needs of older men seeking refuge. Older adults face particular challenges and therefore do not tend to utilize existing emergency shelters for the following reasons:

- The maximum length of stay allowed is too brief to find safe appropriate housing alternatives and to organize financial support including the transfer of pension cheques
- Second stage shelters only accept women and their children
- Older women struggle with different issues than younger women including dealing with adult children, lengthier relationships, and issues of competence-incompetence
- Older women do not tend to stay in shelters for abused women. They report feelings of shame and embarrassment and a sense that they stand out among the younger women
- There are few spaces for single women in emergency shelters for women
- There are few resources for women facing elder abuse and even fewer for older men facing abuse

In Edmonton there had been little documented demand for a unique housing service for abused elders. There was, however, an acute awareness on the part of the social workers who had advocated for the Elder Abuse Intervention Team that intervention in cases of elder abuse would lead to some older persons deciding to leave abusive relationships. Appropriate housing for those who chose to leave was a primary concern. In Calgary a shelter specifically for abused seniors had opened and there was some discussion of attempting to develop a similar project. Since it had taken three years of work to garner enough support to initiate the Elder Abuse Intervention Team, it was believed the chances of getting a shelter for seniors were considered *"slim to nil"*. Interested parties determined other avenues would need to be explored.

The City of Edmonton Community Services Department social worker working on the Elder Abuse Intervention Team (referred to throughout this report as 'social worker') was involved in raising community awareness surrounding the issues faced by abused elders in Edmonton and the concerns of the Elder Abuse Intervention Team in attempting to help these seniors. In particular, this social worker was interested in pursuing

community action in the area of housing for abused elders. Social workers in the City of Edmonton Community Services Department were and are oriented towards working in the community, based on a "Community Building" approach. It is important to review this orientation since it fundamentally affected the unfolding of events that led to the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing pilot project.

Community Development

For more than fifteen years Community Building has been the collaborative model endorsed by the City of Edmonton Community Services Department. This collaborative model mobilizes community strengths to help communities respond to local issues. It is an integrated service model, which maximizes the resources of the community, the Community Services Department, and ultimately other levels of government. It is a fluid, on-going process where all stakeholders assume responsibility for their part in creating a strong, sustainable and caring community. At the time the Elder Abuse Intervention Team was formed, the term 'community development' was commonly used to describe a particular orientation to the work of community building. More recently, the terms 'Community Development' and 'Community Building' have been used interchangeably. For the purpose of this report, the term 'community development' will be used to describe the process whereby the seniors' safe housing pilot was developed, since this was the language used by those interviewed.

The approach works from a strengths and capacity building perspective. Within the community development process, community members identify issues and strengths in the community, explore and understand those issues and plan and develop community based, community driven and community controlled actions. The community development approach emphasizes relationship building amongst community agencies. It enhances and mobilizes community resources and capacities. This involves recognizing and supporting the skills, capacities, knowledge and gifts of the individuals, associations, faith communities, businesses and organizations within a community. Social workers providing community development services are involved in an intentional process to support community members in creating individual and community change. Most importantly, social workers work with community members and other community groups and organizations in a collaborative, consultative, 'grass roots approach' which addresses the needs of the neighborhood or responds to an identified social issue, in this case Elder Abuse. (The City of Edmonton, Community Services Department, July 2000)

As concern grew for meeting the needs of seniors in abusive relationships, the social worker working within the community development model pulled together a selected group of retired professionals who had been actively involved in creating awareness on elder abuse. This group met with this social worker in June 1998 to plan a community meeting and focus group for working or retired professionals and interested individuals. This meeting took place in the Fall of 1998. Attendance was excellent. Participants were asked to brainstorm ways that the community could directly or indirectly address elder abuse. Eight broad categories were identified including Legislation, Caregiver Stress, Poverty, Elder Abuse in the Immigrant Community, Elder Abuse in the Aboriginal Community, Housing and Shelters, Peer Education and Support, and Public Education. Participants were asked to prioritize the categories. The top three selected by those in attendance were: Public Education, Peer Support and Housing and Shelters. This information provided further direction to the community development social worker as to where to focus energy to move this complex and challenging issue forward.

Concurrently, an incident presented itself that has been described as the "triggering moment" in developing the seniors' safe housing project. According to the social worker, a woman in her late seventies had heard about a shelter bed in a community program, designated for abused seniors. After a lifetime of experiencing abuse beginning in her childhood, continuing throughout a violent 40 year marriage and then by adult children, this woman became aware for the very first time that she was a victim of abuse. She began making plans to leave. She mapped out bus routes and tucked away money. One day she went to that community program where she was informed that the service no longer existed. Eventually she was given support by a social worker who drove her to the City of Edmonton Community Services Department assessment office to talk to a worker. She did receive assistance from a non-profit agency but for a very limited time. The need for a safe place for older adults was again confirmed.

During this time period, the social worker had been in contact with the President of the Board of a private seniors' subsidized apartment building discussing the problem of housing resources for seniors in abusive relationships. The President suggested that the Board had been looking at ways to support community needs and issues and might be interested in considering the apartment building as a place to accommodate seniors wishing to leave abusive relationships.

Summary of Community Development Approach From a community development perspective the following steps had occurred: first the issue, in this case elder abuse, was

identified as a concern within the community. Second, a group of community people i.e. the focus group, came together to confirm the concern, and to explore and identify specific needs. These needs were further confirmed by a variety of sources including the Elder Abuse Intervention Team and the stories of individuals. Third, members of the community began to respond; i.e. a suite was offered. The next step within the community development approach was to garner support from community agencies with interest and resources suitable to help seniors. Ultimately, the community response would result in the formation of a Steering Committee and the creation of the two year pilot project, Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing.

Formation of the Steering Committee

The following paragraphs describe the actual formation of the Steering Committee responsible for the creation of the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing, the successes and the challenges they faced in implementing this organic model of project development. While certain aspects of the formation of the Steering Committee evolved in a fortuitous manner, it must be emphasized that the formation of a Steering Committee was an intentional aspect of the planning process. It should also be noted that at the time, this desire to create a housing service for seniors was ground breaking thinking in the area of elder abuse. As an issue, elder abuse did not have the visibility, public support or resources it has since acquired.

Keeper of the Keys   Before the Steering Committee for the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing had officially formed, the social worker had taken the initiative to prepare and deliver a presentation to the Board of the aforementioned seniors apartment, requesting their participation in aiding seniors who wished to leave abusive relationships. After some initial hurdles, the Board unanimously offered to provide two suites free of charge but due to City of Edmonton Community Services policy, City of Edmonton Community Services social workers could not keep the keys to the suites. The search for an appropriate organization to hold the keys became the cornerstone in the evolution of the Steering Committee. The social worker began to explore the possibility of soliciting help from organizations that had knowledge and experience with the safety issues involved with abuse. For a variety of reasons including resources, policy and mandates, many organizations were unable to "keep the keys". These organizations, however, were able to offer support in the form of Steering Committee membership. Eventually one organization did volunteer to "keep the keys". The end result of the search was a strong group of interagency partners who came together to develop the project.

Needs Assessment As the members of the newly formed Steering Committee met to discuss the pilot project, the committee expanded. A preliminary needs assessment of potential clients led to a list of additional senior serving organizations. A letter of invitation was drafted and sent to these and other community agencies. The letter requested donation of services required for safe housing but also offered participation in the planning phase of the project for abused seniors and proposed membership on a Steering Committee. Identification of specific agencies and the services they provided can be found in the first section of PART 3, The Model in Action-Pilot Phase.

As part of the planning stage, Steering Committee members created various operational processes. An overall aim was to ensure the service was comprehensive, well coordinated and client focused. Since this project relied on the collaboration of existing resources in the community to provide this service, the time required for the set up and improvement of these processes was significant. During the first several months of this initiative, Steering Committee members met weekly or biweekly. Once the initial processes were developed, meetings took place on a monthly basis. Ongoing review, revision and refinement of processes have been critical to the successful operation of this unique model of service delivery.

PART 2 – CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE PILOT

Evaluation Component

Evaluation Approach In order to document the process and learn about what difference this initiative would make in the lives of the clients it served, the Steering Committee recognized the importance of incorporating an evaluation component early on in the project. To that end, the Steering Committee sought out a new committee member to provide evaluation support. Particularly because the service provision in this project was innovative, the evaluation focused on learning what was working and what was not working at specified points throughout the project. This type of "action oriented evaluation" intentionally captures what those involved are learning as they proceed, it identifies barriers, and it is focused on continual improvement and change (City of Edmonton, Community Services. Innovative Services Section January 1998) rather than one final evaluation of an end process. In this case, the information gained from Steering Committee members and other relevant stakeholders was used to make adjustments to the planned service and to improve the ways in which the Steering Committee worked from the time of the committee formation to the end of the pilot phase.

Evaluation Framework An evaluation subcommittee was created and convened to develop an evaluation framework, which will be described in the following paragraphs. Once a draft framework was developed, it was reviewed, discussed and revised by the Steering Committee. Because the framework was viewed as a work in progress as opposed to a final document, it was reviewed several times throughout the pilot to allow for incorporation of relevant revisions based on the new information. Even though the practical aspects of developing the pilot took precedence in the early phases, the evaluation was considered by those interviewed to be a valuable learning tool.

The evaluation subcommittee discussions resulted in the emergence of seven main areas of focus, which are outlined below. The framework includes a brief description of each evaluation area, expected outputs, expected outcomes and the method/tools by which the data was to be collected. The evaluation consisted of a multi-method design to incorporate both the quantitative and qualitative dimensions. The framework served two purposes: it was a plan to ensure that specified information considered key to the project was captured. It also kept the Steering Committee oriented to the main aims of the project. A chart outlining the framework appears in Appendix II.

The evaluation areas were purposefully separated according to system focus or client focus. Due to the pioneering nature of this project, learnings in both areas were considered important for future development and improvement of service.

The "system-oriented" evaluation areas consisted of
- Demand/Need for Service (See evaluation framework "C")
- Service Delivery Capacity (See evaluation framework "D")
- Participating Agencies (See evaluation framework "E")
- Data Collection Mechanisms (See evaluation framework "F")
- Production and distribution of written materials/public education. (See evaluation framework "G")

The main intent of gathering information in the first two areas was to learn about the need for service - who was using the service/who got turned away and why, and to determine the suitability and adaptability of the model. The purpose of collecting information from participating agencies was to learn about the experience of Steering Committee members. The tools that were developed to collect information were periodically reviewed and refined to ensure the information collected was useful and appropriate to the Steering Committee in making decisions about the best way to provide the service. Finally, outputs in the area of written materials/public education were gathered to gain a sense of community request for and awareness of information about Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing.

In the first year that the Steering Committee met, service delivery design was the main thrust. Time was spent developing the processes that needed to be in place in order to make operationalization both possible and effective. It was for this reason that the evaluation subcommittee deliberately chose to have 4 of the 7 evaluation areas related to the process outcomes rather than client outcomes. Generally, outcomes are defined as statements that describe the difference the activity will make in the short-term, intermediate and long-term. Outputs are defined as the direct products of program activities and are usually measured in the volume of work accomplished. In this case, process outputs and outcomes were the details of the service delivery; how the client would come into the system, how and what services would be accessed for the client, who would provide what for the client and then how the client would move out of the program. Positive and helpful experiences for the client were at the heart of all decisions about the process.

The two "client-oriented" evaluation areas consisted of:
• Appropriateness of match between safe housing client and safe housing setting (See evaluation framework "A")
• Safe housing client's experience of re-entering the community (See evaluation framework "B")
The main intent of gathering information in these two areas was to learn about clients' experiences both during and following their stay at the safe house. This information was gathered primarily through face-to-face interviews with clients following their stay at the safe house and the Coordinator, the Coordinator's care plan and progress notes and informal feedback from family members.

Information was collected in these key areas on a regular basis throughout the pilot phase of the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing. This information was sent to the funder in the form of three separate progress reports. These reports provide a valuable indicator of the model in action.

Outputs were identified for the major processes in each of the seven evaluation areas. Strategies/techniques were developed to aid in obtaining specific results which included:
• the creation of a legal document establishing membership
• articulation and documentation of the roles and liability of participating agencies
• intake and discharge fan-out processes
• development of necessary forms relevant to service delivery
• a new structure for sustaining the service following the pilot

Some of these outputs served the function of documenting and clarifying the need for and the usefulness of the service. Other outputs assisted in helping agencies identify their responsibilities

*The 'dynamic tension'
within the Steering
Committee created an
environment for creative
innovative thinking.*

According to those interviewed, this critical thinking and challenge to each other's assumptions created a *"dynamic tension"* as opposed to conflict. The dynamic tension was described by one member as creating an environment for innovative, productive thinking within the group. The Steering Committee focused on positive outcomes for the good of all members and all clients concerned. The climate of the Steering Committee meetings coupled with the strong sense of collective commitment to providing this service, was a constant driving force in working through issues as they arose.

In the following section of the report, the decisions that shaped the thinking of the Steering Committee will be reviewed. The major area of negotiation was whether to provide a crisis oriented emergency shelter type of service or whether to provide some other type of safe housing arrangement. In trying to make this decision, the Committee considered among other things:
1. issues of accessibility
2. issues of safety and security
3. concern for the liability of those involved.
During these meetings the Committee discussed whether to continue to try to create a new service or to utilize existing services. Each of these will be described along with the conclusion reached by the Steering Committee. The impact of the decision on service delivery will be addressed in the "Implementation of the Service" section.

*Emergency or Safe Housing
- Availability/Accessibility*

Originally the group met with the identified purpose of designing an "emergency older adult housing service" that would be accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from a variety of referral sources. The reality of the resources available caused committee members to revisit this aspect of service provision. Two suites were available and there was a possibility they might both be occupied when another client came forward. After-hours and weekend access were also problematic. With the decision made that the service would not be crisis-oriented, one of the main challenges was to map out options that could respond to a wide variety of client needs, which might occur at "off hours". Considerable time and effort was expended by members to plan these options. The Committee invited Alberta Human Resources and Employment to participate. Alberta Human Resources and Employment offered to provide hotel accommodation to after-hours clients until clients could access the safe housing service.

Safety

During these discussions it became clear that the safety and security of all concerned would be a major consideration given that the accommodation offered for use by abused seniors was in a community setting. The Steering Committee understood that safety and security of both the potential client and the other

tenants in the housing complex could not be addressed as rigorously as would be possible in a women's shelter. Discussion led members to question the ability of the Committee to create an emergency housing service. Some committee members believed there should be no safe housing unless total security could be ensured.

New or Existing Services

The concern over safety led some members to discuss and debate whether to proceed with a new service or focus attention on enhancing relationships with the women's shelters. Certain members were in favour of advocating with existing shelters to designate a bed for the use of seniors in need. Use of existing shelters would have eliminated the safety and security concerns and the liability of agencies involved. However, access would still be problematic if there were a number of clients needing accommodation at the same time. As explained in the rationale, this option would not meet the needs of men and in addition, empirical data strongly suggested that shelters for younger women are not ideal for older women for the variety of reasons outlined.

Due to safety and security issues, the Steering Committee came to the conclusion that the service design should focus on safe housing as opposed to emergency shelter. The need to adjust the Committee's conceptualization to fit reality, or what was actually *"doable"*, would surface several times during the development of the pilot. Through negotiation, members were able to come to agreement that given the community setting, they would put in place the best security features available with the resources they had. To that end they discussed the need for client confidentiality, unpublished phone numbers, special door locks with keys which could not be duplicated, police talks with tenants and client connection with a life line service.

Liabilities of Steering Committee members

Discussions then revolved around risk assessment and development of a screening tool to identify clients where the risk to the client and to other tenants was too high for a suite in a community setting. There was initial hope that a local help/support line would be the organization to do the screening however, the representative on the committee was unable to obtain a commitment from the governing body. As it turned out, a local help/support line was phased out with the creation of a new service and that representative left the Steering Committee. Another local care agency then offered to take on a short pilot to provide the initial screening. This discussion led some members to begin to question their liability should a violent incident occur despite rigorous screening. Legal advice was sought to educate committee members as to their liability should there be a violent incident in the building or the safe housing suite.

One member of the Steering Committee described the liability issue:

> "When groups such as the Steering Committee work together on a common purpose, there is a risk that if something goes wrong the entire group can be sued for everything that is done. One of the areas of concern going into a collaborative effort was how to limit liability as a group, and more importantly, as individuals. Some of the participants would not have been permitted to involve themselves in elder abuse services if it put their organization at an unacceptable level of risk."

"The creation of a legal entity limiting the liability of each agency was an excellent learning which has proven relevant in other endeavors."
(Steering Committee Member)

A lawyer with experience in the charitable sector was contacted. His recommendation was to establish a 'not for profit' limited liability company in which one agency was the primary owner and it contracted services from the other agencies. It was not necessary that the money flow through that agency and in the case of the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing, it did not. The 'not for profit' company had a legal liability that limited the participants' liability to the provision of their contracted services. *"For example, if something went wrong with the housing piece, the food provider didn't get sued and vice versa. Because the company had no assets, in the event of a suit, there was nothing there."*

Having that legal entity in place limited the liability of the service delivery aspects to only what it was that each was providing and no one could be sued for acts or omissions of the other parties. Steering Committee members interviewed stated this structure gave each of the participating agencies a sense of comfort around their exposure to liability. One Steering Committee member described this as *"an excellent learning which has proven relevant in other endeavors"*. Those interviewed felt it was significant that no one left the committee due to liability issues.

Risk Assessment Entry into the safe housing service was determined by a thorough screening process. To aid decision-making, an assessment tool was developed by a sub committee of the Steering Committee. The tool developed (see Appendix III) also served as an intake form and was used for every instance where the caller was a potential client. The assessment process determined among other things, whether or not the senior needed to leave their current accommodation and the degree of physical risk for both the older adult as well as the other tenants of the seniors' facility. The Steering Committee determined that older adults at risk for their own physical safety or possible endangerment of others, *"high risk"* clients, would be referred to other more secure settings such as women's shelters or

Calgary's Kerby Rotary House Shelter for Abused Seniors. In keeping with the action orientation of the evaluation component of the service, this risk assessment form was revised as necessary based on suggestions from those who used it.

Decisions That Shaped the Service

"A collective creativity on the part of participating agencies emerged."
(Steering Committee Member)

Due to these challenges and the "organic" model of decision-making, a length of time passed between the conception of the project and actual implementation of safe housing services. In the discussion and resolving of issues, *"a collective creativity on the part of participating agencies"* emerged. There were differences between the original vision of the program and the actual service which was planned. Some differences were the result of changed thinking and others were the result of the reality of the resources available. Over the course of deliberations the service had changed from the original goal of the providing emergency housing to the planning for "safe housing" suites with an array of services. The Steering Committee entertained the possibility of future provision of multiple safe housing units throughout the city, which could accommodate seniors with a variety of needs. The service had expanded from concern for the housing issues of seniors leaving abusive relationships to include concern for these seniors' emotional, social and recreational needs. These changes led the Steering Committee to begin thinking about the need for a program coordinator. Each of these emergent changes will be outlined in this section of the report.

Type and Number of Safe Housing Suites

Once the decision that the service would provide safe housing for seniors leaving abusive relationships was made, the discussion of location ensued. Originally, the Steering Committee had been offered one location. However, from the earliest discussions, the Committee was cognizant of the importance of providing an appropriate match between the client and the safe housing setting. This thinking, coupled with the following factors, led the Committee to consider the possibility of designing a service with suites in multiple locations. First, the location offered would not meet the needs of several people who had made safe housing inquiries. Second, there were offers of accommodation by other organizations wishing to participate in the project. Multiple suites would allow matching people in different accommodations throughout the city including consideration of ethnic diversity and the physical limitations of some seniors. Some committee members were excited at the thought of expanding the model to be a more *"community driven/community housed"* program. This remained the goal of some members however, it was the reality of the housing market and the resources of the committee that determined the pilot would begin with two suites in a senior's facility in downtown Edmonton. By

the time the Steering Committee was ready to implement the service the vacancy rate for rental housing had declined to approximately 1%.

Safe Housing with an Array of Services

During these discussions, members came to the decision that a safe housing situation connected to an array of services existing in the Edmonton community would best meet the needs of a variety of clients. This was a complex design since members recognized that each client would be unique in their needs and abilities. To plan for potential clients, flow charts were utilized to illustrate how people would come into the service, through the service and out of the service. This technique allowed Steering Committee members to highlight assumptions and to identify gaps in service. One member of the Steering Committee stated that the use of flow charts was intentional *"to take personalities out of the discussion and to say it doesn't matter what each of us thought, what matters is are we delivering the right service for this client. The way to do that is to is to put a model out there that can help people reach new understandings."* It was believed by some that doing the *"process piece"* in flip charts allowed every member the opportunity to be involved, to critique, and to identify strengths and weaknesses. It really *"drew on peoples' expertise, they saw where their organization could fit into that flow chart and they were able to talk about what they could or couldn't do to assist in that process"*. Steering Committee members and the Project Coordinator believed that the time spent developing the array of accessible services has been well worth the effort in enhancing the ability to organize expedient service for abused seniors.

To plan for potential clients, flow charts were utilized to illustrate how people would come into the service, through the service and out of the service.

In addition to agency and professional support during the planning phase, the Tenant Association of the seniors residence was notified of this initiative and their involvement was solicited. There was considerable apprehension from the Tenant Association about having the safe housing suite in their building. The Steering Committee Chair who attended several Tenant Association meetings addressed the initial fear and resistance of the tenants. The Chair. also arranged for Edmonton Police Services Seniors' Resource Officer (Steering Committee participant) to provide safety information and discuss door security with the tenants.

The Steering Committee wanted to have tenant involvement for the following reasons: First, to have tenant support for the project. Second, because a tenant representative would be able to see the Steering Committee was working hard to create the service. Third, the notion of peer support within the building was envisioned. A member of the Tenant Association offered to provide peer support in the form of a tour of the facility,

information on services and activities within the building as well as introductions to other tenants whenever the safe housing resident welcomed such support. This aspect of the program was not as successful as other aspects for a variety of reasons outlined in the peer support comments of the Coordinator's Observations section of the report.

From immediate safety to emotional need of clients

As the Steering Committee resolved these issues and came closer to service provision, concern emerged for the emotional needs of clients once they were living in the safe suites. The committee was working diligently to have the service operating but members agreed that to house a client without adequate emotional support could create harm.

> *You have to do more than put the person in a suite. It is necessary to actually support them and deal with the issues or they are just getting a vacation from the abuse. You can go back to Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs", if the person has shelter and they have food then they could spend time dealing with higher level issues. If they are struggling for shelter and struggling for food, then that is the struggle and they can't look at other aspects of their lives.*

One Steering Committee member interviewed stated that through the discussion of client's emotional needs, members gradually came to believe that *"an extensive case management model"* was required. The question arose as to who would provide the client's emotional support. The option of having Elder Abuse Intervention Team take on this role was discussed, however, this was not the mandate of the Elder Abuse Intervention Team.

> *It seemed at the time that if the Team didn't do it [provide emotional support] the suite couldn't open. That was the only option and we were at a stalemate. In reality, it was understood that the Team could not do it all. The Chair, who was an Elder Abuse Intervention Team member, agreed to provide support to the client until funding and staff could be put in place.*

Pressure to Implement

While the Steering Committee continued to work out the details of the service, as has been mentioned, the rental vacancy rate in Edmonton declined to approximately 1%. When the building manager originally offered the two suites to the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing, the vacancy rate in the building was considerably higher. Due to the change in the housing market and the length of time of the pilot planning process, the building

The Steering Committee decided at this point to take a calculated risk believing that most of the processes had been thoroughly discussed, were in place and the chances of succeeding were high.

manager was under pressure to rent the suites. The building manager continued to hold one suite vacant for the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing pilot and rented the other. With this change the Steering Committee felt pressure to advance time-lines, to finalize procedures and to begin operations or risk losing the remaining apartment. This occurred before all of the procedures were itemized and documented to the satisfaction of all Steering Committee members. The Steering Committee decided at this point to take a calculated risk believing that most of the processes had been thoroughly discussed, were in place and the chances of succeeding were high. *"If we had delayed any longer we could have lost the remaining suite and the support of that organization and been back to square one looking for a venue for Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing. The decision was made with the support of all committee members although some would have preferred a different scenario."* It was agreed that the first safe housing location would open in October of 1999 with the Steering Committee Chair providing support to the resident until a Coordinator could be put in place.

In order to hire a support person as soon as possible, it was agreed that an application for project funding was immediately necessary. In preparation for writing grant applications, the Steering Committee took the opportunity to formally articulate the goals of the pilot project:

1. To accommodate the needs of older adults who want to leave abusive situations through providing them with a safe place to stay as well as providing services to address their social, emotional, health and wellness needs.
2. To develop and promote awareness of elder abuse through the creation of written materials in several languages as well as public education through in-person presentations.
3. To develop a framework and model suitable to Edmonton, which will sustain the safe housing service on a long-term basis past the pilot project phase.

Grant applications were prepared and submitted to such funders as the Edmonton Community Lottery Board, Muttart Foundation, Clifford E. Lee Foundation, Edmonton Community Foundation and Family and Community Support Services.

Role of Subcommittees In addition to preparing grant applications, a great volume of work was required by the Steering Committee to operationalize the service. On the basis of interest, expertise and agency resources, committee members had decided to divide into subcommittees to work more efficiently. The building committee worked on lease agreements and the legal aspects of arranging

housing; the supply committee worked on obtaining funding or donations of furniture, appliances and other household items. A process mapping committee was formed to apply for funding and to develop a job description for the Project Coordinator. The evaluation committee met to develop the framework, establishing outputs and outcomes of the process and the service. The subcommittees produced concrete results and served to move the project forward.

Need for Coordinator As was mentioned, the Steering Committee had developed the model to the point that the need for a Coordinator was considered essential. The resources required to operate the suites, the possibility of multiple suites throughout the city and the desire to ensure clients' practical, emotional and social support were beyond the resources of the Steering Committee and the Elder Abuse Intervention Team.

In May of 2000 the Muttart Foundation granted the Steering Committee funds to operate a pilot service/project from May 2000 to May 2002. A Project Coordinator was hired to work during the day for 3.5 days per week. It was agreed the Coordinator would provide support and practical assistance to safe housing residents (See Appendix III for job description). A more detailed description of the role and experience of the Coordinator appears, in a later section of this report entitled Coordinator's Observations. Unfortunately the first Coordinator chose to leave the project in August 2000 for personal reasons. This Coordinator had served three clients. The Steering Committee again had to take "hands on" responsibility for the service until a new Coordinator could be hired. A new Coordinator was hired and began to work in November 2000.

The time period between Project Coordinators necessitated unanticipated additional support on the part of several participating organizations in order to continue to provide service to those in need. The transition to a new Coordinator had some effect on the continuity in the utilization of the draft tools and procedures, however, several months later, those aspects of the operation were functioning well. Steering Committee members at the time believed meeting this challenge had the unintended benefit of ultimately enhancing the relationship among participating organizations.

PART 3 – IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SERVICE

Model in Action "The Pilot Phase"

After months of meetings, discussions and planning the Steering Committee had developed a service which they believed met the initial goal they had articulated; *"to accommodate the needs of*

older adults who are breaking free of an abusive situation through providing a safe place to stay as well as addressing their social, emotional, health and wellness needs." The following is a description of the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing service as it was implemented in the pilot phase. In keeping with the action oriented evaluation model the Steering Committee had adopted, periodic review led to constant minor improvements in the provision of the service. To the credit of the Steering Committee's intensive planning process, no major changes to the nature of the service were necessary.

The Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing pilot was available to men and women of Edmonton, 60 years of age or older, who wanted to leave an abusive relationship. The pilot was unique in that it utilized existing community resources that were provided by participating organizations free of charge. The service opened with one suite available in the winter of 1999. Based in part on the needs expressed by several people making safe housing inquiries, the Steering Committee decided to explore a different type of location where more on-site services and support were available to the client. A second safe housing suite was opened in December 2000. The residences in the two different safe housing locations were donated. Due to safety issues, the names of the buildings cannot be revealed.

The pilot was unique in that it utilized existing community resources that were provided by participating organizations free of charge.

Good Samaritan TeleCare provided a security device in both safe housing units that clients could access at any time during their stay. The Boyle McCauley Health Centre (BMHC) provided a nurse practitioner to assist with medical problems, referrals, medication concerns and foot and nail care. BMHC was also responsible for ensuring the safe housing locations are clean upon client discharge. Meals on Wheels delivered 3 meals a day to clients and ensured the freezer was stocked upon the client's arrival. The Food Bank provided toiletries, incidentals, dry goods and snack items. As required by clients, interpretive services were provided by a variety of local agencies including Central Interpreting Services. Often the staff of the referring organization served as interpreters.

The Edmonton Police Services Seniors' Resource Officer provided education and information to tenants where the safe housing units were located. They also provided information and guidance on safety concerns and criminal matters for the safe housing residents.

City of Edmonton Community Services provided education on resources and information on elder abuse to tenants where the safe housing units were located. Community Services chaired the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing Steering Committee, coordinated the safe housing units in the absence of the Project

Coordinator and provided a direct link to the Elder Abuse Intervention Team. The Elder Abuse Intervention Team provided expertise to the Steering Committee on the issue of elder abuse. City of Edmonton Community Services also provided evaluation support for this pilot and provided both staff and financial support to enable the creation and printing of brochures.

The Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired housed the Project Coordinator, supervised this position and acted as the fiscal agent. The Society for Retired and Semi-Retired also provided resources for safe housing clients. When requested, The Edmonton John Howard Society Family Violence Prevention Program provided follow-up services to clients upon their re-entry into the community, which included assistance with moves and provision of donated furniture as required.

Alberta Human Resources and Employment (AHRE) provided alternative emergency housing when the apartment was full or after business hours until the senior could be assessed and accommodated as appropriate.

In addition to these agencies, there were a number of interested parties, such as the women's shelters in the Edmonton area, Community Services Advisory Board, and Edmonton Police Services that were deemed affiliates. These people supported the initiative and were kept abreast of the project through reports but weren't official Steering Committee members (see Appendix IV for original list of participating organizations and affiliates).

The "fan out" Process   Due to the multi-disciplinary nature of the service provision, it was both necessary and helpful to have a "fan out" process in place. The "fan out" is a process whereby Good Samaritan Telecare notified the other appropriate support organizations which were required when a client entered and departed the safe housing service. As a result of the 'action' orientation of the evaluation component of the process, changes to the fan out were made as they were deemed necessary during the planning phase. Numerous other changes were made after clients actually began using the service. The fan out process is considered by some to be one of the major successes of the Steering Committee.

There was a strong commitment to ethical practice in every facet of planning the pilot. Especially during the planning phase, there was open discussion of the Steering Committee's obligation to provide a service, which neither intentionally nor unintentionally did 'harm' to the client, other tenants in the building, or service providers. The issues of safety and security were paramount in all discussions. In addition, Steering Committee members were cognizant of issues such as client confidentiality, the rights of

clients to refuse specific services without prejudice, and the right of the client to return to an abusive relationship and re-enter the program, and the need for follow-up services for clients.
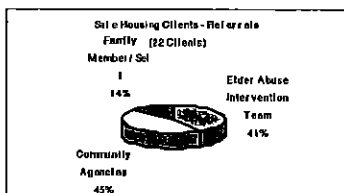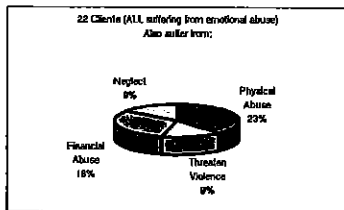
Demographics

In this section, demographic information identified in the Evaluation Framework (See Appendix II) is provided. Data was collected to profile service users and to document the demand/need for service.

Overview of Clients Served

As of the end of April 2002, Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing had been in operation for 24 months. From April to November 2000 one site was available with a second opening in November of that year. These two sites would have allowed for a maximum capacity of 20 individuals to be served. To the end of April 2002, 18 clients had been served. These figures indicate the safe housing at 90% capacity during the first two years of service.

Twenty-two seniors accessed Seniors' Safe Housing to the end of the pilot phase (November 2002). The average length of stay was 52 days and average age 69 years. Two clients were male. All clients entered the program suffering some degree of emotional abuse, in addition, 5 had been physically abused, 2 had been threatened with physical violence, 4 had been financially abused, and 2 were suffering from neglect. Half of all the clients served had been abused by their spouse and the other half, by another family member. Of the 22 served, 9 were referred by the Elder Abuse Intervention Team, 10 through community agencies such as Women's Emergency Accommodation Centre (WEAC), Victorian Order of Nurses (VON), Native Seniors Centre, Home Care, Elder Abuse Resource Services and St. Albert Stop Abuse in Families Society (SAIF). The remaining 3 were by family and self-referral.

22 Clients (ALL suffering from emotional abuse) Also suffer from:

Neglect 9%
Physical Abuse 23%
Financial Abuse 18%
Threaten Violence 9%

Safe Housing Clients - Referrals
Family (22 Clients) Member / Sel

Elder Abuse Intervention Team 41%
Community Agencies 45%
14%

One of the anticipated outcomes articulated in the evaluation framework was that "Safe housing clients re-enter the community into a more safe environment following utilization of the safe housing suite." To that end, 19 of the 22 (86%) were safe and self-reliant, living in the community following their stay at the safe housing. The exceptions were one individual who left without advising where she was going and two others who returned to their former situations. Of those two, one experienced a second stay at the Safe House and has since moved into her own apartment. Clients who return home following their safe housing stay report increased awareness of abusive behaviour, awareness of resources available to them, and awareness that they deserve to be treated with respect.

The allotted funds had not been completely spent by the specified end date. At the request of the Steering Committee, the Muttart Foundation extended the fund expenditure deadline from May 2002 to the end of 2002.

Community Awareness/Public Education

Figures indicate the safe housing at 90% capacity during the first two years of service.

One of the greatest challenges for the Steering Committee within the first months of operationalization was attempting to reach older adults who needed the service. Steering Committee members believed this was due in large part to the community being unaware that the service existed. The Steering Committee recognized the need to allocate some resources to focus on making the service known to both service providers and the general public. As a result, the Committee developed a Communication/Promotion Plan (see Appendix VII). This Plan included presentations and displays describing the safe housing service. These were made available to staff working in shelters, social work departments, hospitals and home care. In addition, several Steering Committee members made presentations to various communities and community organizations. As the Promotion Plan was implemented, the response in the form of referrals was overwhelming and the safe housing was full to capacity.

In the spring of 2002, in an effort to promote awareness of Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing using a different medium, a TV station broadcast a story on Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing on the evening news. This media event succeeded in bringing more attention both to the issue of elder abuse and specifically to the project. Calls were received from many interested groups donating items and small cash contributions. It raised awareness, as all individuals who called were astounded to find out that elder abuse is a prevalent issue. Since that broadcast, both the number of individuals referred and number of referral sources have increased.

In accordance with her job description, the Project Coordinator continues to respond to requests for presentations from a variety of sources such as social work departments in hospitals, colleges, women's shelters, women's support groups and service clubs. Often requests come from those working specifically with the seniors population and/or those whose target populations are connected to the issue of abuse. This includes personnel from educational institutions and/or professionals working in the health and mental health fields. The Coordinator had completed 15 public/in-service presentations to the end of the pilot phase.

Brochure With respect to the articulated goal, *"to develop and promote awareness through the creation of written materials in several*

languages as well as public education through in-person presentations." The Committee developed a brochure advertising the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing Service (see Appendix VIII). Five thousand brochures were printed and 4,000 have been distributed to the following locations:

- Women's shelters
- A variety of doctor's offices
- Agencies participating in the pilot
- North East Health Centre
- City of Edmonton Community Services Department social work offices
- Catholic Social Services
- Hospital social work offices

Currently, brochures have been printed in English only.

Planning for Sustainability of Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing

Much effort and planning were expended on the previously identified Steering Committee goal, *"to develop a framework and model suitable to Edmonton which will sustain safe housing past the pilot project phase".* This was accomplished through the decision to make structural changes, which in turn led to formal preparation of a vision, philosophy statement and new terms of reference. Each will be outlined followed by a brief discussion of the expanded need for service and funding.

Structural/Committee Changes/The Process Involved in Change

Two recurring Steering Committee agenda items, fundraising and marketing/public relations, had prompted Steering Committee members to think about the future of this pilot project throughout the planning process. Recognition of the need for the continuation of this service resulted in a systematic process of decision-making and action. In the spring of 2002, the Steering Committee met to assess the information collected from areas outlined in the evaluation framework, and to research and review structural options for governance. In keeping with the organic model adopted by the committee, members believed the process used to determine the best structure in changing from a pilot project presided over by a Steering Committee to a permanent program was important.

> *"We brought in an independent facilitator and looked at some of the models we could have used. We debated those options and discussed the strengths and weaknesses until we came to a decision of what we as a group wanted to do for the future, what worked best for us. It was a group decision and that was a really appropriate process."*

The use of an independent facilitator and the opportunity to evaluate a number of options led Steering Committee members to a greater degree of surety in their decisions. Some members stated this contributed to a smooth transition. In keeping with the action orientation of the committee, a specific plan was developed.

In an effort to actualize this plan, as of June 2002, the service would reside under the auspices of the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired. The service would be guided by an Advisory Committee virtually identical in membership to the former Steering Committee, i.e. those organizations providing services and/or resources and other relevant associates. Though organizational membership remained much the same, representatives would now meet in an advisory capacity and a member of the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired Board would act as a liaison between the Society for Retired and Semi-Retired Board and the Advisory Committee.

It was decided that the Executive Director of the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired (SRSR representative) would take over the role of Chair. There were two reasons for this decision. First, the Society for Retired and Semi-Retired, (which is where the Project Coordinator's office is located), was to take over responsibility for service provision following the pilot. Second, with few months left in the pilot (officially ending in May 2002), the original Project Chair accepted a different position within her organization and therefore resigned her role. The new City of Edmonton Community Services Department representative was not familiar with the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing project. These circumstances made the decision to have the Executive Director of the Society for Retired and Semi-Retired step into the role of Chair appropriate.

Vision, Philosophy and Guiding Principles

It was imperative to the Steering Committee that the Society for Retired and Semi-Retired Board agree to maintain the service according to the stated vision and philosophy and guiding principles.

To prepare for the end of the pilot phase, the Steering Committee worked on formally articulating the "Vision, Philosophy and Guiding Principles for Working with Seniors Who are Being Abused" by which the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing would be operated. The vision and philosophy had not previously been expressed in written form but had been understood, agreed upon and endorsed by the Steering Committee throughout the pilot project. The Steering Committee wanted to ensure that the nature of the service, as it had been designed in pilot phase, not be lost or changed. It was imperative to the Steering Committee that the Society for Retired and Semi-Retired Board agree to maintain the service according to the stated vision and philosophy and guiding principles (See Appendix V).

Terms of Reference   It was anticipated that the Terms of Reference developed by and for the Steering Committee at the beginning of the pilot would no longer be applicable following the transition of the service to the Society for Retired and Semi-Retired. Therefore, the Steering Committee developed new, more relevant Terms of Reference for what was to become the Advisory Committee. These Terms of Reference were approved by the Society for Retired and Semi-Retired Board (see Appendix VI).

Funding/Service Delivery
Expansion   Not only throughout the pilot, but to-date, the demand for the safe housing service continues to increase. The number of requests from people who meet the eligibility criteria evidences the need for this service. From January 2001 to April 2002, 46 abused seniors were turned away due to lack of space at the time accommodation was needed. Of these, 5 situations were deemed to be of too high risk as well as no space being available. This need prompted the Steering Committee to spend energy and focus not only on securing funding to ensure the sustainability of the service, but to plan for expansion as well. At the end of the pilot, the Committee had a view to expand to seven suites. To that end, funding was secured for the renovation of seven suites and for operations until Sept 2003.

The demand for the safe housing service continues to increase.   As the Steering Committee moved towards the end of the pilot process, the Steering Committee members determined the evidence collected through the evaluation process supported their belief that the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing was a worthwhile initiative. Members did not want to see a gap in the service. " *We didn't think that it was ethically appropriate to create that gap, having created in the community a sense of this service was available to people in need."* During the interviews, several members expressed significant concern and frustration about the lack of second stage funding for successful pilots in transition period between pilot and permanent funding. *"We really had to scramble and use strategies like presenting our concerns to the media in order to get some funds to see us through until we could get the next level of funding."*

According to Steering Committee members interviewed, the Steering Committee had envisioned the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing pilot as a way to deal with a seniors' issue rather than 'emergency shelter' as 24 hour "emergency" access was not being provided. For this reason, the committee attempted to pursue funding from the seniors' ministry. The Minister at the time informed the Steering Committee that the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing was not appropriate for that ministry and suggested they approach Children's Services, as that ministry was responsible for funding emergency shelters, regardless of the age of those accessing the service. *"We had to rethink, were*

we a shelter? And then we had to go and make some inroads with that part of the government." The Seniors Minister was prepared to offer "in-kind" support if the suites were located in a building owned by the seniors' ministry, as well, the Seniors Minister also provided $50,000 in bridging funding.

Several Steering Committee members referred to the difficulties encountered when applying for funding for a new or unusual program. They mentioned the challenge of helping funding agencies to *"think outside the box. The reality is that funders hold specific assumptions and have in their minds specific requirement based on "old" model of approaching an issue."* Steering Committee members point out that it takes time, effort and creative thinking to develop a way of expressing the differences in the "new" model in a manner funders will embrace. The need to find a funder who is willing to *"test out new and untried assumptions"* is a challenge for all innovative programs.

The need to find a funder who is willing to "test out new and untried assumptions" is a challenge for all innovative programs.

The generalized learning observed by members of the Steering Committee was that it is important for pilot projects to know ALL potential funders early in the planning stages. Preliminary meetings with these potential funders can clear up misunderstanding and save time and energy of committee members. Understanding the external funding politics before evidence a pilot project is successful will focus the area of funding application and predetermine the collection of evidence needed to help funders make their decisions.

Crisis/Information Line for Abused Seniors

During contact with the Seniors' Safe Housing Coordinator, several individuals had expressed their upset at having had to call many different numbers until someone could finally help them. After having talked with the Coordinator, some individuals were not ready to leave their current situation when they first called. This is supported by shelter statistics that show individuals in abusive situations may call a crisis line many times to discuss a situation and look at many options before deciding to do anything about their current situation. These factors led to thought and discussion around the need for a crisis line for seniors.

In order to address this need, a request for proposals was tendered to the community to provide a crisis/support line for abused seniors. Though initially several parties had shown an interest in providing these services, only one responded with a concrete plan. Because the evidence to support the need for this service was so compelling, a proposal, based on this agency's plan, was developed to request funds to run a crisis line.

Progress in this area continues. Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing is partnering with the Support Network to find funds to establish and operate a crisis/support line for seniors experiencing abuse. As of this report, funds have been received from the United Way, Clifford E. Lee Foundation and the Edmonton Downtown Rotary Club. Rather than creating a new service, these funds are being used by existing community services to operate the line. The line will include a mechanism to follow-up on incoming calls. This process will serve as a check that resources received were appropriate, and to determine if any further support is required. Safety issues associated with follow-up will be addressed. The sub-committee is exploring a partnership with Senior's Peer Support, a community program operated through the YWCA (Young Women's Christian Association), for this follow-up component.

PART 4 – EXPERIENCES OF THOSE INTERVIEWED

Steering Committee Experiences

Method

Individual face-to-face tape-recorded interviews were conducted with 'core members' of the Steering Committee. This qualitative method was chosen because it allowed for greater exploration of participants' experience as Steering Committee members. This was important to meet the goal of documenting not just the service, but the process by which the service was achieved. Those 'core members' interviewed were chosen based on their intense involvement from inception through the planning phases to implementation. Five guiding questions were established based on analysis of the first interview. On average, interviews were 45 minutes to 75 minutes in length. As part of the analysis, interview tapes were transcribed, categorized and compared to identify the major findings. These interviews served as a primary source of data for this report.

Learnings

In analyzing the interviews, it became apparent that those involved were proud of both the process and the service they had developed. They were unanimous in their agreement that part of the success was due to having the "right people at the table". They were honest in expressing their experience with the organic model, both strengths and challenges. They discussed the role of leadership in the success of the pilot. Finally, Steering Committee members interviewed were also unanimous in their belief that participation in the project had been beneficial to their individual agencies despite the drawbacks mentioned. These findings will be further clarified and supported with quotations from Steering Committee members in the following section of the report.

"The right people at the table"

Without prompting, all of those Steering Committee members interviewed expressed the view that the *"right people were at the table."* In reviewing the interview data it became apparent that the *right people* meant that the people who became involved represented not just the necessary (or right) services for seniors. The strong personalities of the members and the negotiating skills they brought to the table were equally important. The members of the Steering Committee were experts in their individual fields, they were motivators and "doers", they were able to envision something new, they offered their assistance and they followed through with their commitments. Those involved were passionate in their desire to create a program for abused seniors.

Those involved were passionate in their desire to create a program for abused seniors.

> I think another strength is we had the right people at the table. We had people who brought resources with them from their organizations that were appropriate to this. I think everybody at the table really had a sense of purpose. They really personally believed that we needed to do something about Elder Abuse. That was probably the single greatest strength. No matter whether you were working in a seniors' environment or working at a food bank, or where you came from, there was a sense of purpose that this was a valid purpose.

Another important aspect of having the *right people* at the table meant those involved had the authority on behalf of their individual organization to make decisions. *"If I had to think of one thing that made this project successful its that people had the ability to make decisions, to say what they could contribute and make it happen. In other working groups I've been on, people haven't been given that authority to be able to make decisions and so they have to keep taking things back."*

> "Without the person who actually can make the decisions at the table and hearing the discussions, it can be quite frustrating."

Finally, one member commented that the organic approach required there be people at the table who were able to hold a degree of trust in each other and be willing to take a risk. At the time of the search for the 'keeper of the keys' there were many unknowns, *"holes and gaps"* and some people had to be willing to move forward without getting caught up in *"red tape"*. The participants needed to understand that whatever decisions were made were not *"written in stone"*. In analyzing the interviews with

Steering Committee members, it would appear that all of these factors play a role in defining *"the right people."*

Leadership In the community development model, leadership works most effectively if both the formal and informal leadership of the group is shared and adaptable. (City of Edmonton, Community Services. Neighbourhood Social and Recreation Services Branch. Winter, 2003). When asked to describe leadership on the Steering Committee, participants independently identified that the development of the project involved both formal and informal leadership. While the Steering Committee was formally chaired by the same person throughout, at various times and under specific circumstances, different members assumed informal leadership functions. One member commented, *"The people around the table had skills in negotiation so when it looked like there were some opposing views, someone would always act as the facilitator and try to summarize, try to look for a common ground. We had a number of people who had those leadership skills; it didn't matter who was involved in those particular issues. There was always someone outside of it who could facilitate the discussion. I think we shared that role quite well."*

The project was built from the grass root up rather than the top down. Optimal leadership within this model was thus described by one Steering Committee member. *"From a general perspective, leaders of this kind of initiative have to be comfortable with their ideas and bring them forward, but also be tremendously open to moving from that perception based on the new learnings that develop from the rest of the group. That did happen, it took work, but it happened."*

Strengths/Challenges of the The Steering Committee included a variety of people whose
Organic Model customary role was service provision for programs already in existence. According to City of Edmonton Community Services Department social worker, this group included executive directors of community agencies and staff persons accustomed to providing direction and making decisions rather than creating a service from the ground up. A variety of circumstances would, at times bring *"forward movement to a halt"*. The committee was challenged to come to terms with two very different procedural philosophies. Some members were comfortable with the *"get started and create as you go"* while others leaned towards a *"plan every detail before you start"*. To move ahead without issues being totally settled was trying for some and waiting until everything was in place was trying for others. One Steering Committee member emphasized *"Its not that the group who wanted to move ahead weren't planners. We felt that we had a plan but decisions weren't written in stone. It seemed some people needed to anticipate every possibility and get everything*

nailed down. We had a vision and we thought things could be worked out as we went along."

Further interviews with Steering Committee members revealed the dilemma for some at the table was the reputation of their agency and the sense of their agency's ultimate responsibility for successful operation of the pilot. One Steering Committee member expressed this thought;

> "Some people had a need to discuss all the
> details. I think they did because it affected their
> agency and how they could provide that service.
> When the rubber hits the pavement, they are
> accountable to make sure their part goes
> smoothly. Part of their part going smoothly is they
> know who has the keys, how to access those keys
> or phone numbers or whatever, that's important to
> them to make it work. I think it goes back to that
> commitment and I think it was valid and not
> needless discussion for them. We joked about it
> but I think it was important to them and important
> to the project. You need to rehash the details until
> they are worked out to your satisfaction."

The Steering Committee chair had a difficult role during these discussions, a role complicated by also being an Elder Abuse Intervention Team member.

> It was a challenge to honour each member's
> opinion and to have patience while ideas evolved
> in a way that was suitable to all. I had to stand
> back and let the Steering Committee shape the
> ship. As part of the Elder Abuse Intervention
> Team I had a vested interest in the outcome but I
> knew the service would not be controlled by the
> Elder Abuse Intervention Team.

For some there was frustration with the more time-consuming nature of the *"organic"* model and *"having to negotiate every step of the way."* However, a committee member expressed the view that different opinions were openly expressed and *"good for the process"* preventing *"hidden agendas"*. The *"pay off"* was the sense that as the pilot moved towards service provision, everybody had contributed to the project.

Another time-consuming factor observed by committee members interviewed was the need to *"rehash"* decisions for members who were unable to attend all meetings. While all agreed it was important for *"every one to be on the same page with what was decided and why it was decided, sometimes it felt like we were*

decided and why it was decided, sometimes it felt like we were spinning our wheels." Regular attendance at all meetings would have expedited the process. Another aspect of "rehashing" occurred due to changes in committee membership over time. A number of core members remained throughout the pilot phase while other participants joined or left as a result of a staff turnover or changes to the organizational structure within participating agencies. As needs of potential clients continued to be identified, persons from different service delivery organizations were invited to join the Steering Committee.

As explained by one Steering Committee member, the importance of documentation of decisions made and actions required in an organic process cannot be overstated. Notes, charts and meeting minutes served to capture the thinking around a given issue or procedure. When the process was complicated, as was the 'fan out', the written documents helped members to stay organized and helped the process to continue to move forward.

The documents also served to remind members of their commitment and were useful when issues were "rehashed".

While the Steering Committee was diverse in the way members conceptualized the service, one member interviewed lamented the lack of diversity in the Steering Committee group in terms of ethnicity and gender. The difference in perspectives and resources of members were not matched by a variety in representatives from aboriginal or ethnic communities in Edmonton and the majority of Steering Committee members were female. In retrospect, some interviewees speculated that access to ethnic communities could have been facilitated by the inclusion of members of those communities. The focus of diversity in the pilot phase was on diversity of the services offered, not diversity in terms of communities. According to the Coordinator, this has not prevented the service from meeting the needs of several clients from a variety of cultural backgrounds. The use of translators has allowed the Coordinator to serve clients who do not speak English. Cultural consideration is given to accessing community resources, medical treatment, the food made available, and links to spiritual and recreational needs of clients. When questioned, Steering Committee members suggested that as the service grows and adapts, greater opportunities for cultural diversity would be investigated.

Benefits to participating agencies

As has been stated, all of the Steering Committee members interviewed were proud of their involvement in the project and believed they had created a service of great benefit to the seniors of Edmonton. The following quotation summarizes the sentiments of those interviewed.

"The benefits far outweigh any drawbacks. The benefits are that it expands the array of services that we can offer to seniors. It adds another very practical and important way for us to meet our mission. It provides a program, which has an emotional appeal to our members, our donors, our stakeholders, our staff. People feel good about being involved in addressing Elder Abuse. I think there's a tremendous emotional benefit to us of being able to offer this process. I think it's strengthened our position as a significant senior social service agency."

"Another great thing about the service was that it gave us a resource we could use for the benefit of our clients."

In addition to the service meeting the needs of seniors and having public appeal, the design of the service was lauded. The fact that the service utilized existing resources rather than duplicating services was seen as a major strength. *"It strengthens the participants [agencies] hopefully and doesn't add yet another small agency to compete for funding and to dissipate energy".* Another Steering Committee member phrased it this way, *"We have the ability to meet the need as it changes. I like the model. I really do. You don't have expensive overhead. The overhead is being taken by whoever has the rooms. So it's a shared responsibility. Shared everything."*

One member explained that part of the satisfaction was derived from the process of evolving the service specific to Edmonton rather than replicating existing centers in other Canadian cities. *"We took the resources we had here in Edmonton and were able to weave the form. We did not have the form then look for the pieces. We were outside the norm because we did not have a set plan to follow."*

Drawbacks   Steering Committee members were very brief in their individual discussions of the drawbacks to participation. Most answered with one word, *"resources"*, and left it at that. That said, in different ways, the issue of funding was raised by some as a drawback. The lack of permanent funding has been a *"worry"* especially since the members believe so strongly in the worth of the service and the need in the community. *"The biggest drawback is that it hasn't been fully funded and it has drawn on the resources of our agency to keep it going until such time as we have complete funding. We haven't received any significant funding for the administrative oversight in this program and that's fine but it's a drain on resources."* With respect to resources, the

only drawback included the cost of the actual service provided by the agency to the safe housing client and the time of the Steering Committee member on the committee. *"I can't think of anything other than the time commitment. It was quite a large time commitment. That is a drawback I guess if you can look at it that way."* One member summed up agency involvement with this statement, *"I'd do it again. There is a critical social need, regardless of whether or not we knew we could get long term funding. I would just jump and do it because it is the right thing to do."*

Coordinator's Experience

Coordinator Role in Serving Clients

Data related to achievement of individual client goals established in the care plan, client awareness of the issue of elder abuse and client knowledge of resources in the community were gained primarily through numerous lengthy tape recorded, face to face interviews and follow-up phone conversations with the current Coordinator. Several attempts were made to contact the first Coordinator to arrange an interview, however, these attempts were unsuccessful due to her personal circumstances. The following findings are a result of interview analysis and the Coordinator's review of her care plan/progress notes. In addition, many clients made direct or indirect comments during the follow-up interviews, which confirm these observations.

Intense Case Management

Interviews revealed the Coordinator provides practical assistance to clients in a manner that educates the client and contributes to clients' improved emotional and physical health. Practical assistance includes the following:

- addressing physical health needs
- establishing safety plans
- banking
- shopping
- doctors appointments
- medication usage
- access to English as a Second Language programs (ESL)
- access to support groups
- use of City transportation
- finding accommodation

In assisting clients with these practical activities, the Coordinator teaches individual clients, to the degree necessary, how to take care of themselves, how to access services, and how to look after their own safety needs. During the course of care plan development, the Coordinator identifies options for clients and assists them in making choices, which enable client independence. Education regarding abuse issues is also involved. The ability to function in a safe environment and to

achieve success in activities of daily living improves clients' emotional health, self-esteem and feelings of worthiness.

This intense one-to-one case management is a unique aspect of the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing service and one which the Coordinator believes makes the seniors' recovery from abuse in safe housing so successful. Within this approach the Coordinator is able to spend time and pay attention to meeting the needs of each individual client. The ratio of clients to Coordinator and funding dollars per client has been an issue for funders. The Coordinator, however, explained that she believes this model enables clients to make quick progress towards their goals and contributes to greater success in remaining self-reliant once they leave the safe housing.

Intense case management enables clients to make quick progress toward their goals.

The Project Coordinator uses a variety of forms to ensure procedures are followed and the needs of clients are identified and followed up on. In keeping with the action-orientation of the evaluation, forms have been modified and adapted as necessary changes have been identified. Forms such as the Intake and Risk Assessment form and Care Plan were developed by the Steering Committee, other forms such as the Departure Summary and Release of Information were developed by the Coordinator. One form, Notification of Move and Change of Address, was developed by a safe housing client for her personal use and has since been adopted by the program (see Appendices VIIII – XII).

All clients are connected to resources to assist them with their identified needs. The Coordinator noted that assistance is available whether or not the client decides to return to their previous living situation. In addition, the Coordinator explained, the service is offered free of charge. There are no financial means tests since those of means may or may not have access to funds. Elder abuse occurs at all income levels and all those abused need the resources offered regardless of means. Those who wish and are able to pay for the service may make a donation to the program if they so desire.

According to the Coordinator, clients come into safe housing in a very vulnerable state. Not all have been physically abused but all have suffered emotional trauma, which leaves them unsure of themselves and those around them. The Coordinator begins her role as a caring, understanding, respectful and non-judgmental person. As clients gain a degree of trust in the Coordinator and comfort with their new surroundings, the Coordinator takes on the role of teacher and counselor. Some clients have never had access to their own money, used a bank machine, or made financial decisions. Some clients have never been allowed to make choices for themselves or felt in control of their own

destiny. Each client has unique needs. The Coordinator must analyze each new situation, discover the best ways of relating to the client, assist the client in assessing their needs, and then work with the client to establish a plan for eventually leaving safe housing. The Coordinator must interact with the client in a manner that fosters self-reliance and the acceptance of other resources so the client does not become dependent on the Coordinator.

The aim of having more than one safe housing suite was to be able to match the needs of the individual client to the most appropriate environment for that client. The Coordinator reported that the reality of the space available at the time the client enters the service *"drives the housing assignments more than a match between the client and the environment."* Again circumstances and resources affect the difference between the conceptualization of the service and the implementation of the service.

Client Response to Coordinator

The Coordinator has found this to be a challenging and rewarding role. These quotations are a few examples of the type of comments clients have made to the Coordinator after experiencing the safe housing program.
"You have saved my life, I don't know what I would have done without you and this program."
Another client related that she had been told for so many years that she could not survive on her own that initially she did not believe she could do it. She told the Coordinator, *"It's your belief in me that has allowed me to be able to live on my own."*
One woman expressed herself in this quotation, *"I am absolutely doing things I never would have done before. I can say 'no' to my husband and now I believe I have the right to make choices for myself."*

"You have saved my life, I don't know what I would have done without you and this program."

Another client was being interviewed by a student for a university project, *"I never would have been able to talk on tape before I came to the safe house, I never would have felt I was important enough to be interviewed."* From the perspective of the Coordinator, the main outcome for clients as a result of the support and connection to services is clients' increased self-reliance, confidence, and feelings of empowerment. That most clients who have come through the safe housing program are eventually living independently and free from their abusive relationship indicates the achievement of the outcome.

Need for Follow-up Services

Through her experience in serving abused seniors the Coordinator has found that one complication of the process of leaving an abusive relationship is that often the family resources utilized in other circumstances may not be available. Even when children are supportive, choosing between parents can be

conflicting. When there is family support, the client may not be safe in the homes of family members. Some family members of clients are estranged and others may be living in distant parts of the country with few resources available to help each other. For these reasons, searching out other appropriate, accessible support options is necessary.

Due to the stress of leaving an abusive situation and the need for a recovery period, the Coordinator has discovered that most often the seniors served are not ready to look at their social and recreational needs while in safe housing. This is an important area that is addressed in follow-up once the individual has moved into a more permanent location. By this time the Coordinator has also had an opportunity to gather necessary information from the client as to the safe emotional support available to the client prior to the move.

The Project Coordinator emphasized that the provision of follow-up services has been essential for clients to enable the successful transition to their own living accommodations. The Coordinator reported that many of the seniors the program has served felt overwhelmed by all they needed to accomplish and learn when moving to a new space and/or a new community. Staff work with these individuals to assist in the logistics of establishing a new home. This often entails assisting clients in obtaining furniture and household items, helping clients learn their way in a new neighborhood as well as accomplishing tasks identified in the care plan but not completed at the time of leaving the safe house. Generally the follow-up service continues for approximately 6 months. Either the Coordinator is with the client when the client moves, or she visits the client within a day or two of the move. The Coordinator then visits every two weeks for 3 visits moving to 2 or 3 monthly visits followed by intermittent phone calls. In rare instances ex-clients have encountered major difficulties where they required assistance, the Coordinator made every effort to help personally or to obtain resources for the former client.

Peer Support   Another area discussed by the Coordinator was the Steering Committee's vision of having peer support available for clients. The Steering Committee believed this would be beneficial to orient clients to the building and activities available at the location and within the neighbourhood as well as providing senior representation on the Steering Committee. In Location #1, a person did volunteer to provide peer support however, in Location #2, peer support *"did not get off the ground".* In theory, the concept was excellent as it could offer clients yet one more resource, could create less dependence on the Coordinator, and could free the Coordinator to perform other tasks. In reality, the

Coordinator reported a variety of problems between the peer support person and the clients. The majority of problems stemmed from the informal/undefined nature of the peer support role at the time and the lack of training of the volunteer. The Coordinator also expressed her belief that the peer support tenant should not be a Steering Committee member and this was primarily due to issues of confidentiality.

Through experience during the pilot phase and later, the Coordinator found that peer support works best if volunteers have some formal training and are subject to a degree of supervision. It is also important that volunteers have instruction in issues of confidentiality, along with prescribed procedures and established guidelines to follow. One solution proposed to provide informal peer support was to adapt the model so that all the safe housing suites would be on one floor in the same location. The Coordinator gathered input from clients, most of whom thought this was a good solution. This option would allow for formal peer support in the form of trained volunteers coming in to visit as well as informal peer support in the form of clients befriending each other.

Some clients have told the Coordinator that they "feel different" from other residents because the clients know they are in the safe housing setting while others are not. Some explain the temporary nature of the accommodation leads to reluctance to forge new friendships since clients know they will be moving. In other cases clients bring problematic situations to the Coordinator, which indicate clients need to work on establishing boundaries for themselves in their new situation to avert feelings of discomfort when dealing with their interactions with other tenants.

In reviewing the experiences of clients the Coordinator realized that the physical space and size of different residences was also a determinant in the formation of new friendships. In the smaller building the gathering area is smaller and more conducive to interaction. In the larger building, fewer friendships develop because there is less interaction in larger spaces and with more people living in the building on any given day there are different people frequenting the gathering area.

A major area of work for the Coordinator when she was hired was to search out housing options for clients. In fact, the Coordinator reported that the search for housing begins as soon as clients enter the safe housing suite. Members of the Steering Committee provided information in the form of both a renters guide and a support person who was aware of the housing options in Edmonton. The Coordinator's role was to forge relationships with managers of apartment complexes throughout

the City to build a network of resources to meet the needs of a wide variety of clients.

Coordinator Role with Steering Committee

Prior to the hiring of a Coordinator the Steering Committee had taken 'hands-on' responsibility for the support and day-to-day operation of the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing service. It took time and negotiation to determine the role of each. At first the Steering Committee was involved in both policy and procedural issues and they were accustomed to a decision-making role with respect to clients. At meetings, it was agreed that the Steering Committee would be responsible for policy issues and the Coordinator would handle procedural issues. This however, was a gradual evolution, which required change on the part of the Steering Committee. This observation was confirmed in an interview with a Steering Committee member who described the reluctance she experienced in stepping out of the direct service aspect of the program. The Project Coordinator realized that ultimately the Steering Committee wanted to be informed to ensure that client needs were being met. Eventually a balance was achieved between providing information and respecting the need for client confidentiality. In addition, there was the learning that some Steering Committee members required different information about clients than others. For example, Meals on Wheels would need to know the client's name while other agencies would not.

One of the ways the Coordinator facilitated the evolution from 'hands-on' decision making to policy/service provision was to meet individually with Steering Committee members. This allowed the Coordinator to learn the role of the member on the Steering Committee and to become familiar with the unique contribution of each. This also provided an opportunity for the members to get to know the Coordinator. *"Because I had developed a relationship with each of the committee members, if an issue came up I could phone and talk it through."*

Because some members of the Steering Committee were not experts in the area of elder abuse, one of the roles of the Project Coordinator was to educate members about abuse. The Coordinator was able to clear up myths and help members understand the many challenges faced by an abused person. One example cited was the need to weigh safety issues with isolation issues. For safety reasons, the policy of the Steering Committee was that clients in safe housing were not allowed to have visitors. The Coordinator discussed the need to respect the client's knowledge of when and with whom they are most safe. If the goal was to have clients feel at ease, then in some circumstances further isolating the client by disallowing visitors

was considered to be counterproductive. In cases deemed safe by the Coordinator and the client, visitors are now permitted. The result was a policy change in this area.

The Coordinator reported an excellent working relationship between committee members and between members and the Coordinator.

> "We are so fortunate that the people on the Steering Committee had so much dedication and commitment because many of these agencies are not involved in the field of social work. They worked hard together and were supportive of each other. Each one had something really important to offer the program and that's what makes this service so unique, each brought expertise from their own area."

Client Experiences

Method
Exploratory, in-depth, open-ended interviews were conducted with the first 12 clients to determine potential patterns for formalizing tools and to learn what makes short-term accommodation relevant and appropriate. Information related to how clients accessed safe housing, support experienced, satisfaction with service delivery process and accommodation, feelings of safety during their stay and coping skills following utilization of the safe housing suite was obtained through face-to-face interviews with clients following their stay. The average length of interview was 45 minutes. The same person conducted all interviews and took detailed notes of client responses to questions, which were later used for analysis. These interviews were scheduled after the clients had reentered the community and were no longer receiving services directly connected to the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing. The length of time between leaving safe housing and the interview was a decision made by the Coordinator and the client based on the client's readiness to participate. Clients that were asked followed through on their initial decision to participate.

A written consent to be interviewed was piloted as one of the forms at the outset. On the advice of the Coordinator (based on the experience of the client), it was agreed that verbal permission would be sought at two different times rather than written consent. Just prior to the end of their safe housing stay, the Coordinator sought consent for an interview. If the client agreed, the evaluator called to arrange an appointment at which time she again confirmed the client's willingness to participate. On average, interviews were conducted 1-2 months following the client's departure from Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing.

Due to the action-orientation of the evaluation component of the program, new tools/questions were developed to assess project outcomes based on learnings from both review of existing literature and client interviews. An area of particular note was the recognition that when asking clients about feelings of safety, in order to clarify responses the interviewer needed to differentiate between safety in the suite, in the building and in the community. Currently, learnings about the interview guide and analysis of the findings are under review. The results of the review will be used to develop a formal exit interview tool that will best meet the evaluation needs of the Coordinator. The following represents the analysis of all the client interviews to-date.

Accessing Safe Housing
Clients hear about Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing service from a variety of sources including brochures, social services and friends. Some clients report that if they had known about the safe housing service they would have left their abusive living situation much sooner.

> *"I heard about the safe house at my church, they had brochures. I thought I might not be old enough but one day, I phoned (the Coordinator) who took me to (location #1) the next day."*

> *"I heard about safe house from L. at Catholic Social Services (Elder Abuse Intervention Team)."*

> *"I found out about the safe house through my cousin. I was living with my son. My cousin was afraid of my son."*

> *"I was on the street with nowhere to go so I went to WEAC. The worker told me they were full and that it would not be an ideal environment for me. She connected me with the safe house Coordinator and the Coordinator got me into the safe housing location immediately."*

Still others have learned about the service after accessing women's shelters or other services for abused women. These women generally report very positive experiences in the shelters including finding the counseling and social workers very friendly and supportive. One client did note that she felt out of place in the shelter and was frightened by the other women, the noise and activity.

> *"My friend called a social worker because she was worried about me. The social worker suggested I go to shelter in Sherwood Park. Originally I did not want to go because I didn't drink and I was not a*

battered woman and did not want to be a burden.
Then I agreed to go and they got me in here."

Many clients are desperate at the time of leaving their homes and will take any option available, *"I got scared and I went to my room until the next day. I phoned the woman in St. Albert and I said, "you've got to get me out of here right now!"* and another women, *"They asked if me if I would go to a woman's shelter and I said, anywhere, I don't care where."* The level of vulnerability of clients entering safe housing cannot be overstated. Some clients are at a point where they place themselves at the mercy of their rescuers, they accept help without asking questions and with no idea where they are going.

"They asked if me if I would go to a woman's shelter and I said, anywhere, I don't care where."

"The SW said they might move me from the shelter and I didn't know why. They told me I might find it nicer (the safe house). When the Elder Abuse Intervention Team came, I could not figure out the connection but when I arrived at safe house, I couldn't believe it was furnished and there were things in the fridge."

"I was in the shelter and (the Coordinator) got me into safe housing (location #1). At the time, I didn't know where I was going. I was not afraid because of my strong spirituality, but I wondered if others might be afraid and what they would do. I didn't ask questions because I am shy. I need to learn to ask questions."

Others report leaving their abusive relationship taking only the clothes they were wearing and having no idea where they would go.

"I was living with my common law partner and his daughter. He was abusive and "kicked me out". I left with one overnight bag not knowing what I would do or where I would stay. I had no idea who to call. I had thought to take lots of dimes and quarters so I went to the nearest mall and phoned everywhere in the phone book. I can't remember who I called that gave me the safe house number."

"I looked at classifieds, in phone book, I tried Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired, I couldn't find the number. Then I saw the senior's health line ad – I phoned. I was petrified."

Regardless of how abused seniors come to learn about the safe housing service, all have expressed gratitude for the service as evidenced by this quotation, *"It was the best day of my life when*

I found the safe house." Knowing that some seniors are trapped in abusive situations because they are unaware that help is available is troublesome. The lack of public knowledge of the existence of the safe housing program was a problem the Steering Committee recognized at the outset of the program. The need for public education was addressed in Part 3, "Community Awareness/Public Education", of this report.

Safety
It is interesting to note that when clients discuss their feelings of safety, they make clear distinctions between their feelings of safety while in the suites, safety in the buildings and safety in the communities. There are clear distinctions also between safe suite Location #1 and Location #2 in the latter two areas.

Within the Suites, #1 and #2
Clients reported feeling quite safe while inside the suites. The physical factors that contributed to the sense of security included the locks on the door, connection to a telephone response service, and the private number on the phone line. Clients particularly enjoyed the quiet of the suites, which was a relief from emotional and verbal abuse many had suffered. For some the relief was immediate and for others it took several days to realize they were secure within the suite.

"After a couple of days I felt relief in my bones I didn't have to shrink away".

"I knew there was complete safety."

"I felt safe, safe from harassment, safe from verbal abuse."

"It was great. The door lock outside, the padlock inside, I knew no one could attack me."

"I knew that no one was to have the phone number – not even family members. The rules were hard because they had to safeguard me."

"In the suite nobody was there to be mad, nobody was yelling –it was such a contrast to be no longer in his control."

"There was always someone calling or coming by. The connection to Telecare made me feel safe."

Within the Buildings
Within the building where the safe housing suite #1 is located, feelings of safety were more mixed. Many clients enjoyed the freedom of movement through the building and the company of others in the common area. They noted that they felt secure within the building because they knew the location was secret. Others found the presence of security guard comforting and

reported going down to visit with the security guards in the night when they felt anxious. Most clients developed a comfort level in the building over time and many were reluctant to leave when the time came to move on.

> "It was the ideal spot because it was kept such a secret."

> "I liked having the security guard in the building – you knew he was there all night and you could just get him."

> "It was helpful to have the security guard there at night and on the weekends."

As would be expected, some clients enter the safe suite #1 in an emotionally traumatized state. They are fearful in their new environment and not assertive in social settings. These clients initially express fear of some of the other residents and spent more time in their rooms than other clients.

> "I had a problem with one person in building-he was kind of scary. He was a pest and I wasn't strong enough to tell him to leave me alone, finally I ended up ignoring him and he quit."

> "One man in the building scared me so I didn't like going to the lounge. I liked getting a coffee but I was really afraid of small men with canes."

> "I continued to get braver and would start to go downstairs for a few minutes at a time. I gained some comfort when I realized that no one knew why I was there."

Those clients who were located in safe suite #2 did not report any problems or sense of fearfulness within the building. Some clients found the common areas were large and not as inviting as a smaller space but no one expressed concern for their well-being within the building.

In the Neighbourhood/Community

The area where safe housing suite #1 was located proved to be a concern for some clients. The neighbourhood has been described by clients as "scary" and frightening for people who may not be "street smart." Clients mentioned three types of unsettling occurrences: vehicle vandalism, being approached by intoxicated persons, and sightings of prostitutes and drug users in the area. No physical harm has come to any client as a result of living in the area and clients report that as they gain experience living in the area, they realize that those around them are not dangerous. One client suggested that it would be helpful

if new clients were oriented to the neighbourhood and told that "people may look scary but they are not harmful, and on payday at the end of the month you may encounter people that are drunk". Other tenants in the building have been encouraging clients to go outside and carry on with their business without fear and this has also been cited as beneficial.

"I was not really frightened in the suite, but it was scary to go out at night and come home because of the district. My nerves were shot, and the safe house community was scary."

"I was told by (the Coordinator) about the neighbourhood. I do not go out at night but I feel very safe in the building."

When clients are very distressed and fearful, attempts are made to move them to another location. Location #2 was a larger apartment building in a different area of the city. The neighbourhood of Location #2 has been described by clients as completely safe and comfortable. Clients in this safe housing suite may feel at times that they do not *"fit in"* as well with the other tenants in the building but all who have lived in the area report no fear when going outside and they felt able to go outside *"all the time."*

"I phoned (the Coordinator) crying and told her I felt I didn't belong here and I wanted to move somewhere else. (The Coordinator) was able to move me to safe housing location #2, which ended up being a big mistake. Suite #2 was a whole different ball game- I didn't fit in at all. It was a fancy high-rise. The people were kind but it just wasn't a good surrounding for me. I ended up going back to spend time with a client at Location #1."

Two important learnings emerge from these discussions with clients, first that clients differentiate between feelings of safety within the suite, within the building, and within the neighbourhood. Secondly, as anticipated by the Steering Committee, it is important to match clients with the most appropriate location given individual circumstances.

Changes in the Lives of Clients

Reduced Isolation   Most of those clients interviewed reported a reduced sense of isolation after living in the safe housing suite. They expressed a willingness to participate in every day activities that they may not formerly have done such as going out with others to meetings, appointments, or to get groceries. In addition, many clients

participated in group activities provided in the buildings where they resided.

> "I know a few people in my building and I've gone with them a few times on the bus to get groceries."

> "Since I've moved out of the safe house, there are activities to do in my building that I like to take part in."

Independence   For some clients the move to the safe housing suite may be the first time in a very long time that they have lived independently. Many have lived in controlling relationships where decisions were made for them and where they were told what to do and when to do it. Some have spent a lifetime living to please others with little time to consider their own needs or desires. The time and counseling available from the safe housing program encourage clients to assess themselves and to learn or relearn skills necessary to move out on their own.

> "It was strange to suddenly be by myself, it took a couple of weeks to get use to the idea of being by myself."

> "Now I live on my own. I take one day at a time. I've made new friends and I spend a lot of my time volunteering."

> "My son now realizes I am able to do things on my own."

> "I was able to relax, I got back to being myself, enjoying my space –I got to know myself again and what I want."

Another client reported, *"Now I know I can make decisions for myself."*

One of the lessons learned by clients in the safe housing program, was the ability to use DATS and the public transportation system. This ability allows clients to travel when and where they please thus increasing the sense of independence and self-sufficiency. One client expressed her newfound freedom this way, *"Now I call DATS and I can go out when I want. It is really good, because now I have choices, I can do what I want to do."*

For clients who decide to return to their former relationships, the counseling to raise self-esteem, to recognize abuse and to perhaps prepare for a subsequent move, can be helpful. *"I don't take as much from him as before, after my stay at the safe house. The counseling I got at the safe house made me see I didn't have to live the way I had been living. I am entitled to better treatment."*

Financial Help For some clients the services provided by the safe housing program allow the client to achieve a level of financial independence would have been next to impossible without the program.

> *"I couldn't have done it without the safe house, the support to move and the staples with which they provided me. I could not have afforded a hotel, movers etc. [her income is approximately $500/month with over half of that going to rent]. Now, I am ecstatically happy. I do not want to go back to my previous living situation." [in spite of being on good terms with her ex-partner and him asking her to]*

There is particular difficulty for those aged 55-65 to access subsidized services. There is particular difficulty for those aged 55-65 to access subsidized services but stays in safe housing may open doors to housing in special cases. In these cases, the provision of furniture and other household items is a tremendous help. The use of volunteers for moving has also been mentioned as a financial help since most clients do not have the resources to pay for this service.

> *"I can never thank them enough, I want to bless all, I really appreciate it."*

Client Praise for the Program

Praise for the program and praise for the Project Coordinator on behalf of the clients was overwhelming. There were literally pages of positive comments, which have been condensed to give a sense of the worth of the role of the Coordinator, the safe housing suites and the time and effort spent in arranging the fan-out and arrayed services to provide for the needs of clients.

The Coordinator > *"I could not have handled it without (the Coordinator) she was so kind, helpful, thoughtful, loving and understanding."*

> *"I just loved (the Coordinator), she's such a natural person. She'd have coffee with you and give you lots of support."*

"I don't know what I would have done without (the Coordinator), she was my rock of Gibraltar, she was always there for me, she is so special."

These quotations reflect the sentiments of the vast majority of those interviewed. Not only did clients admire the Coordinator, they were clear about exactly what was helpful. Clients report that the Coordinator would phone every morning. This was considered important because through this contact, the Coordinator knew each individual's situation. She was able to build a rapport quickly with clients by chatting in a happy, approachable way. Clients noted they felt comfortable and could tell her anything. As the relationship progressed the Coordinator was able to counsel clients and to be helpful in a very respectful way. In addition to phone contact, the Coordinator would visit frequently.

The Coordinator provides very practical assistance by taking clients shopping, providing rides to appointments, teaching bus routes, bringing needed items to the apartment, taking clients to the food bank, arranging for police assistance to return home for belongings, and assisting in finding and moving to a new location. The Coordinator also connects clients with many other resource people throughout the community to help clients access services and obtain required assistance.

"[The Coordinator] helped me in every way she could."

"It was the little things made a big difference."

Connection to Community Resources

Connecting clients to community resources is an essential aspect of the service.

This connecting with community resources is an essential aspect of the service envisioned by the Steering Committee early in the project. As previously explained, the committee spent considerable time anticipating the needs of potential clients, contacting agencies and services possibly required and obtaining a commitment to support the safe housing. This resulted in clients gaining immediate access to the services they need.

Clients cite the following as important aids in clients' movements towards independence. One-to-one counseling and the opportunity to join support groups for abused women were very helpful to those clients who were working through the issues of surviving abuse. The Senior's Health Line was also cited by one client for its counseling, *"it was fabulous and they also provided legal advice".* The Meals on Wheels service was considered wonderful for some clients who enjoyed not having the responsibility for making meals. Those who wanted to cook for themselves were provided with hampers from the Food Bank.

Nursing services provided by Victorian Order of Nurses and Boyle McCauley Health Centre. Not only did clients appreciate having their medical needs attended to, they also appreciated the company of the nurses and their willingness to help with making other medical appointments. Several clients reported that Good Samaritan Telecare called on weekends adding to their sense of care and security.

In addition, City of Edmonton Community Services Community Service Workers provided many clients with information on senior's residences, helped clients search out options, attended apartment inspections when needed and called clients with words of encouragement and support. Volunteers aided clients from out of the area in learning bus routes and accessing DATS.

Some clients also expressed gratitude for the Edmonton John Howard Family Violence Prevention Program assistance and for the provision of household furnishings since these clients did not have the financial means to buy these things for themselves. One client cited the tremendous support provided by translator services. This was a very high needs client who needed a variety of services and did not speak English. The work between the Coordinator and the translator made significant strides in helping this woman to live independently.

> "It was marvelous the way it was arranged, they met me at doors and helped me carry my stuff up. There were ladies there to welcome me but they didn't stay long which was good as I wanted a good cry and didn't want to embarrass them."

> "While staying at the safe house, I was provided with one-to-one counseling. I found that to be very important and helpful because I was so down, angry and depressed when I left [the abusive situation]."

> "They were all so kind, I had not experienced that for a long time."

> "I knew all the service providers involved were doing everything possible to help me."

The Suites Several clients commented on the atmosphere within the suites. They reported that the suites were good, cozy, warm, and the people had bright voices. A few clients expressed appreciation at not having to go out to a laundromat because the laundry facilities were within the apartment. Many clients told the interviewer that within reason, anything they wanted or needed was there or was brought to them within a short time. One client

said it was quite a change to be catered to after so many years of catering to others. Most clients expressed gratitude for all that was provided or done for them.

> *"When you've got nothing-food, a good bed, and the chance to sleep as long as you want – is all that's important."*

The Tenants and Building Manager Location #1

Several clients mentioned the importance of maintaining their privacy within the building. It was important to them that others in the building did not know why they were there or what floor they were on. Many also appreciated that there were *"nice"* people in the building. They enjoyed being able to go down for coffee, having a change of scenery and not have to stay in the room all the time. Some clients made friends within the building and have maintained these friendships since they have moved out.

> *"The tenants were wonderful and friendly. They knew I was in poor health and they all rallied around. They always wanted me to stay longer and visit downstairs 'til the cookies and coffee were gone."*

Several clients expressed appreciation for the building manager. They noted that the manager was friendly and helpful. She offered a listening ear, moral and practical support especially at times when the Project Coordinator was unavailable.

> *" I got to know the building manager and she was very encouraging."*

> *"The building manager was a dream. It was very comforting to have her there. She had compassion, she really knows how to deal with people."*

> *"The building manager introduced me to people. She is nice and very good to me. Since I don't have a phone she makes calls for me and comes to give me messages."*

One client did not have a positive experience with other residents in the safe housing building. She expressed mistrust of other tenants and ongoing fear of living in the community.

> *"It was not a pleasant place to stay. Other than going some place in particular, I stayed in my suite. You have to be very careful who you pick as friends, I don't need people starting rumors about me."*

One client commented on the helpfulness of the police after two constables accompanied her to her former residence to retrieve her belongings. Her son-in-law had threatened her and she was very worried about what might happen. She called the police detective associated with the Elder Abuse Intervention Team and found him to be *"very validating, very reassuring."*

Improvements When asked what could be improved in the safe housing program, clients strongly emphasized that the program should be kept as is. The adjustments suggested, with one exception, related to minor changes to household items i.e. the quality of bedding, the provision of frozen meals. The concern in the one exception was a desire of one client to have had more individual time with the Coordinator. Again, the problem of considerable concern is the lack of any services in the community available to persons in the 55-65 age group.

One of the clients interviewed suggested that it would have been better if the tenant association support person were a woman, considering the issue of abuse and the level of comfort of the new female client. She also suggested that the tenant have some experience in the area of abuse. Others who expressed relief that those in the building did not know their circumstances countered this suggestion. The notion of gender matching for client support appears to be valid.

See Appendix XIII for a Case Study of the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing service model in action.

Building Manager Location #1 Experiences

The building manager in Location #1 was contacted and asked to participate in a telephone interview. The decision was made to include input from this building manager because she had had contact with the Steering Committee during the pilot, she was instrumental in providing the first Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing suites and clients expressed the belief that she provided a service to them. The manager at location #2 came to the project at a later date and did not have the same type of involvement with the Steering Committee or with clients. The location #1 building manager was interested in participating but preferred to respond to the questions in writing. The following reflects the views of the manager as submitted.

The building manager reported becoming aware of senior's abuse issues at a workshop in the Fall of 1998. The workshop was facilitated by the City of Edmonton social worker who later became the Chair of the Steering Committee. *"I was very moved by the presentation and was astounded by the facts and figures*

"I felt compelled to do whatever I could to assist." (Building Manager)

she was reporting. I felt compelled to do whatever I could to assist." The building manager believed she was in a very good position to present a proposal to the Board of the building suggesting the Board approved involvement in assisting seniors in need of safe housing. This proposal was accepted by the Board and 2 suites were designated for 'emergency housing' for abused seniors.

While the building manager was invited to the meetings of the Steering Committee, her attendance was irregular due to other commitments. She noted that when she did attend the Steering Committee meetings she was *"always impressed with the dedication of all the professional people involved. The success of the Safe Housing pilot is a direct result of their vision and commitment."*

In terms of the implementation, the building manager explained that the services provided to the clients of the safe housing suite worked well with few exceptions. As could be expected, some clients required more services and more support than others. Many times the building manager was called upon to *"supply an ear and empathy to the senior"* when the Project Coordinator was not available. After the pilot phase, the Steering Committee moved to situate a number of safe housing suites on the same floor in a different building and to have a Coordinator on site. The building manager believed this adaptation would best serve the needs of the client, especially as they related to counseling and support.

The Steering Committee and the Project Coordinator both readily accepted feedback from the building manager as issues arose and as the service developed. Changes were made as required and generally the manager expressed the observation that the Project Coordinator made necessary adaptations to best meet the needs of the client.

When asked about the most important aspects of the pilot, the building manager reflected on the need to educate the community on issues of elder abuse, the need to raise awareness of the existence of the safe housing service and of the role the service plays in insuring seniors are safe in our community.

> *"My involvement with the safe housing pilot project has been a very positive experience. It has been a learning curve in my career as a manager. I have become more aware of the abuse seniors suffer. I have had the pleasure of meeting some very wonderful seniors and being a positive influence in their lives."*

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APPENDICES

Appendix I

Definition of Elder Abuse - *Elder abuse is any action or inaction by self or others that jeopardizes the health or well being of an older adult.*

CATEGORIES OF ELDER ABUSE

Physical Abuse

Any act of violence or a non-accidental, willful infliction of physical pain or injury that results in bodily harm or mental distress.

Neglect

Passive Neglect - an unconscious or unintentional refusal or failure to fulfill a caretaking obligation. This may also include self-neglect.

Active Neglect - a conscious or intentional refusal or failure to fulfill a caretaking obligation. This may also include self-neglect.

Emotional/Psychosocial Abuse

Instilling the fear of denial of care and/or abandonment, or of violence. It can be a spontaneous or systemic effort to dehumanize or intimidate. It often diminishes the older adult's sense of dignity and self worth.

Financial Abuse

Any situation involving the dishonest use of an older adult's money or property or the failure to use an older adult's assets for that person's welfare.

Sexual Abuse

Any sexual behavior directed towards an older adult without that person's full knowledge and consent.

Medication Abuse

Misuse of an older adult's medications and prescriptions by self or others including withholding medicating and overmedicating.

EDMONTON SENIORS' SAFE HOUSING PILOT PROJECT

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

APRIL 9, 2001

Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing Evaluation Framework
Revised as a Result of Planning Day April 9, 2001

Elder abuse is a rapidly growing issue that requires community involvement along with appropriate professional action. It is a complex problem that involves health care, social, law enforcement, legal and housing issues. We are continually learning about what is involved in elder abuse as well as obtaining more up to date information on the prevalence and dynamics of elder abuse. While there have been a number of committees and discussions about elder abuse in Edmonton since 1988, there have been few initiatives that provide actual resources to address it. One recent initiative in Edmonton, the Elder Abuse Intervention Team (EAIT), was established for this purpose. Through the work of the EAIT, the Edmonton Seniors' Safe House Pilot Project initiative was created.

The initial goals of the pilot project are threefold. First, to accommodate the needs of older adults who are addressing abusive situations through providing them with a safe place to stay as well as addressing their social, emotional, health and wellness needs. Second, to develop and promote awareness of elder abuse through the creation of written materials in several languages as well as public education through in-person presentations. Third, to develop a framework and model suitable to Edmonton which will sustain the Safe House service on a long term basis past the pilot project phase.

In order to learn about what difference this initiative makes in the lives of the clients it is intended to serve, the Steering Committee recognized the importance of incorporating an evaluation component early on in the project. To that end, an evaluation subcommittee met to develop an evaluation framework.

The evaluation framework includes collecting information in seven main areas. A chart outlining the framework appears below. The evaluation areas have purposefully been separated according to client focus or system focus. Due to the pioneering nature of this project, learnings in both areas are important for future development and improvement of service.

Exploratory in-depth, open-ended interviews will be conducted with three to six clients to determine potential patterns for formalizing tools and to learn what makes short term accommodation relevant and appropriate. New tools/questions may be developed to assess project outcomes based on learnings from both review of existing literature and client interviews. The evaluation consists of a multi-method design to incorporate both the quantitative and qualitative dimensions.

Particularly because the service provision in this project is innovative, the evaluation will be both learning and action-oriented. Utilization of much of the information gained is for the purpose of ongoing adjustment and improvement and will be incorporated as required. Evaluation reports will be provided in accordance with the funding agreement.

Definition of Terms:

Client	refers to person occupying safe house suite
Residents	refers to tenants of the building where the safe house suite is located
Formal Support	refers to support provided by helping professionals
Informal Support	refers to support provided by family, friends, peers, residents

	Evaluation Areas:	EXPECTED OUTPUTS	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	METHOD/TOOL
	CLIENT-oriented			
A.	*Appropriateness of match between safe house client and safe house setting*	Number of hours of coordinator's time	Safe house clients experience increased support in addressing abusive situations as a result of utilizing a safe house suite	Time reporting of coordinator
		Amount and type of support safe house clients receive from involved agencies (e.g. number of times Good Samaritan Telecare is made use of/employed, number of meals provided by Meals on Wheels etc.)		Care plan (See Appendix I)
	• Safe house client's experience of service		Satisfaction with service delivery process and accommodation, including admission, assessment, discharge and care plan development	Client interviews
	• Safe house client's experience of support (both formal and informal)			Informal feedback from residents; residential peer support
	• Impact on safe house residents	Number of additional community agencies involved	Safe house clients achieve individual goals established in the care plan	
			Clients are safe from abuse during their stay	Feedback from Building Manager
				Feedback from family members as appropriate
				Information from participating organizations.
B.	*Safe house client's experience of reentering the community*	Information for longer term planning of this service (e.g. is the service helpful, does it set up false hope, reality of post safe house stay, are supports out there or what needs to happen afterwards)	Safe house clients reenter the community with: increased awareness of elder abuse increased knowledge of resources in the community increased coping skills following utilization of the safe house suite	Care plan including progress and follow-up notes
				Follow-up interview with clients
	SYSTEM-oriented			
C.	*Demand/Need for Service*	Demographic information about demand/need and service users (i.e. safe house client demographic profiles, length of stay, as well as those who were turned away including major reasons)	Older adults in abusive situations access appropriate necessary, short term, refuge as a result of establishment of safe house suites	Inquiry calls record
	• Profile of who is using the Service			Risk assessment form (See Appendix I)
	• Who gets turned away and why			

Evaluation Areas:	EXPECTED OUTPUTS	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	METHOD/TOOL
	Information on referral sources and after hours accommodation utilization.		Human Resources and Employment utilization statistics on after hours potential clients.
D. *Service delivery capacity* • Suitability of model to Edmonton, to this culturally diverse population • Ability to adapt/be flexible to system needs	Functional – time spent on a variety of activities outlined in job description (to determine amount of staff resources needed) Structural – ability to obtain and/or provide suites or services as required given the available resources, support needed from partnerships, perceived efficacy of current service and client need		Progress notes Development of forms to track coordinator's activities Demographic information Wait list
E. *Participating agencies*	Description of process for establishing membership and roles, i.e. how this "organic model" came to be – key strengths and weaknesses Creation of a legal relationship Ongoing functioning	A unique collaborative approach to delivery of a service is experienced as positive by involved organizations.	Reflective or historical review Legal document Group interview
F. *Data collection mechanisms*	Systematic review of whether tools in place are resulting in needed information and/or what else needs to be collected	Existing tools are refined on an ongoing basis	Interview with coordinator Periodic tool review

G.	Production and distribution of written materials/public education	
	Number of presentations made	
	Brochures are developed	
	Number of brochures printed and distributed; locations of distribution	
	Number of brochures developed in different languages	

*****Changes to Evaluation Framework

Appendix III

SOCIETY FOR THE RETIRED AND SEMI-RETIRED

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position: **Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing Coordinator**

Reports to: **Executive Director**

Accountable to: **Seniors' Safe Housing Steering Committee**

Date Approved: **October 13, 2000**

OVERVIEW OF THE POSITION:

PART- TIME

This position is responsible for coordinating accommodation in Seniors' Safe Housing, coordinating the services required by program clients, arranging timely discharge from the program and periodic follow-up of discharged clients. In addition, this position is responsible for informing potential referral sources about the service, coordinating the services provided by the participating agencies, obtaining additional sites and services as required (and approved by the Steering Committee), developing and implementing policies and procedures for the operation of the program, providing data required for the formal evaluation of the program, preparing periodic written progress reports as required by the Steering Committee and the funder(s), and working with the Steering Committee to ensure the continued viability of the program.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Area of Responsibility	Tasks
Planning and Program Development	• Promote the service to potential referral sources • Refine the Intake process • Refine the Assessment and Risk Tools and develop a Discharge planning tool • Develop and document policies and procedures for on-going Case Management and discharge • Collect data as required for program evaluation • Advise the Steering Committee of the need for additional spaces • Arrange with seniors' housing provider(s) to make a sites(s) available to the project when/if additional sites are approved by the Steering Committee • Arrange with participating agencies to provide services to any additional sites • Arrange for furniture, etc to be provided for any additional sites
Case Coordination	• Assess the needs of individuals who are referred

	to Safe Housing for service
Case Coordination (continued)	• Assess the risk of violence to the client and other residents • Make the final decision about whether an individual is appropriate for service in Seniors Safe Housing • Arrange for transportation to Safe Housing, as required • Arrange for Interpreter Services, as required • Coordinate services provided by participating agencies • Arrange for other services, as required • Work with client and her/his family, as required, to address issues of abuse and/or neglect • Plan for the safe discharge of the client within 60 days • Provide periodic follow-up of discharged clients
Reporting and Community Awareness	• Prepare written reports as requested by the Steering Committee and as required by the Funder(s), including the articulation of the framework and model developed • Prepare written materials that will develop community awareness about Seniors Safe Housing • Arrange to have written materials translated into other languages • Respond to media enquiries • Make presentations about Senior Safe Housing to agencies, workshops, conferences and other interested parties
Other Duties	• As required and/or assigned

QUALIFICATIONS

- Human services degree. Preference will be given to candidates with a Masters degree. Equivalencies will be considered.
- Be able to provide a Criminal Record Check that is free of criminal convictions.
- Have (and be prepared to use) a vehicle and possess a valid Class 5 driver's license.
- Be able to obtain $1 million auto liability insurance with a rider that permits transportation of clients.

SKILLS and EXPERIENCE

- Experience working with older people in a community setting;
- Familiarity with social/psychological issues related to elder abuse and neglect;
- Experience working with victims of abuse, preferably older persons;
- Experience assessing client needs and related risks;

- Experience as a Case Coordinator;
- Experience as a project manager;
- Knowledge of community resources and services;
- Excellent negotiating skills;
- Excellent interviewing and communication skills;
- Excellent report writing and presentation skills;
- Computer literacy, especially Word for Windows, Access and Excel;
- Self-motivated and able to work both independently and as part of a team;
- Excellent time management skills.

TERM

This is a temporary position. The position will be for up to twenty-one months.

HOURS OF WORK

This is a part-time position, 4 days per week (26 hours). Specific work hours will vary due to client/project demands. Must be available between 9:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday when not working and there is a vacancy at one of the sites.

STARTING SALARY LEVEL

$22,000 per annum plus benefits after a three-month probationary period.

CLOSING DATE

October 13, 2000

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Appendix IV

Original Participating Agencies/Project Affiliates

Organization
Good Samaritan Telecare
Edmonton Gleaners Association
Edmonton Meals on Wheels
Safe Housing Location #1
Boyle-McCauley Health Centre
City of Edmonton Community Services Elder Abuse Intervention Team
Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired
Edmonton John Howard Society Family Violence Prevention Program
City of Edmonton Community Services Innovative Services Section
Seniors Healthline/ Lamplighter Program
Human Resources and Employment

PROJECT AFFILIATE MEMBERS

Community Services Advisory Board
Edmonton Police Services
Lurana Shelter

Note: As the service has evolved, additional agencies participate as needed.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE EDMONTON SENIORS' SAFE HOUSING SERVICE, PLEASE CONTACT:

Bernice Sewell, Project Coordinator
Edmonton, Alberta

780-423-5510 Ext. #334

Guiding Principles for Working With Seniors who are Being Abused

Elder Abuse is described as any action or inaction by self or others that jeopardizes the health or well-being of an older adult. This includes physical, emotional, psychological, financial and sexual abuse, passive or active neglect or misuse of medication. The following are the values and beliefs guiding work with seniors' who are abused:

1. Abuse is about power and control issues and can happen to anyone.
2. It is never the abused seniors fault.
3. Abuse to seniors' can be perpetrated by anyone including a spouse, adult children, daughter or son-in-law, grandchildren, extended family member, friend/ roommate, or unrelated caregiver.
4. All abused seniors must be treated in a respectful, supportive and objective manner. Every complaint is believed to be legitimate.
5. Assistance will be provided regardless of gender, race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, ability, socioeconomic status, or decision to report to police.
6. No action will be taken or care plan initiated without the consent and understanding of the abused senior. The abused senior has the right to refuse services offered.
7. If an abused senior decides to return to the abusive situation, information about the issue of abuse, choices, and resource information will be made available. A safety plan will be developed with the individual and they will be encouraged to keep in contact with an applicable resource.
8. Though issues of abuse are similar, each case is unique and will be treated as such.
9. All seniors have the right to be safe. This being so, seniors experiencing abuse shall have the opportunity to have access to temporary, free, safe living accommodations while they are making decisions about their future.
10. Individuals working with seniors experiencing abuse must recognize the complexities and barriers involved.
11. It is important to understand the myths around aging that perpetuate abuse and not act in an ageist manner.
12. Persons in the position of management or governance will act as advocates on issues pertaining to abuse to seniors.
13. All information pertaining to the abused senior will be held in confidence unless it is deemed that by keeping this information confidential the senior's life will be at risk or that the law is being broken. In all other circumstances, if information is being shared, it will be done in such a way that the abused senior's identity is not revealed or the abused senior has signed a release of information form allowing release of information to the individual named on the form.

Vision and Philosophy of Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing (E.S.S.H.)

VISION: **ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF OLDER ADULTS BY ELIMINATING ELDER ABUSE.**

The Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing Project is an important initiative that serves to provide safe, free and temporary accommodation for seniors who are experiencing or escaping abuse, neglect or exploitation. This program capitalizes on the strengths of Edmonton to collaborate and utilize existing facilities in the community.

Client Focused:

Safe housing services are available to both men and women. The maximum length of stay (60 days) is set out to provide sufficient time to support and address the many issues that face the senior and maximize their safety. E.S.S.H. recognizes that older adults struggle with different issues than younger adults, including dealing with adult children, lengthier relationships, and issues of competence-incompetence. Thus, our service delivery model is to be client responsive, meaning that we work to address individual needs as they occur, and the resources provided will be specific to elder abuse. Once the senior has moved on from the safe house, follow-up services may be provided to assist with the transition back into the community.

Client Responsive Locations:

The vision is to have available an array of sites and services to meet risks and needs. There will be deliberate effort to ensure that units are available in a variety of locations while recognizing that some may be contained in the same facility. The intention is to capitalize on the strengths of Edmonton to accommodate a variety of needs through a variety of resources and not limiting the program to one facility or organization. As well, by providing accommodation in existing seniors accommodations, the embarrassment and shame that older adults have voiced in accessing safe accommodations when leaving an abusive situation are minimized.

Multi-Agency Service Delivery:

Organizations have worked together to meet the needs of abused seniors. Multi Agency service provision with a common purpose has been an identified strength of this program. The agencies that have been supporting and guiding this project include: Alberta Human Resources and Employment, Boyle McCauley Health Centre, City of Edmonton Community Services Department, Edmonton Meals on Wheels, Edmonton Gleaners Association, Edmonton Police Service, Edmonton John Howard Society, Good Samaritan TeleCare, Lurana Shelter and Society for the Retired & Semi-Retired.

Program Operation:

We have developed and strive to maintain a client focused in-take process that gives consideration to ensuring the safety needs of both the client and the community. A thorough screening process, which entails the usage of a professional screening and assessment tool, determines entry into the safe house. The risk assessment will determine the degree of physical risk for both the older adult(s) being accommodated as well as the other tenants of the senior's facility. If it is determined that housing an older adult in the safe house will endanger the physical safety of others, they will be referred to an alternative resource.

Given that the safe house sites are in community settings, maximizing safety and anonymity of clients is a key focus area. Thus, the location of the safe house, or any other identifiable factors, is not disclosed to the public.

Public Education and Awareness:

In addition to providing services related to safe housing, there is a commitment to promote and create awareness of elder abuse. This could be through such actions as the creation of written materials in several languages or in-person presentations.

EDMONTON SENIORS' SAFE HOUSING
ADVISORY COMMITTEE – TERMS OF REFERENCE

PURPOSE
The Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing Advisory Committee ensures the vision of the program is maintained as outlined in the vision statement. It works in an advisory capacity to the Board of the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired and makes recommendations as appropriate.

THE SOCIETY'S RESPONSIBILITIES
Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing is a program of the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired and as such, the day-to-day operation of Safe Housing is the responsibility of the Society and is subject to the policies and procedures of the Society. The Society is responsible for hiring and supervising staff, providing office space, financial monitoring, and logistical support and is to procure funding for the program, including submitting applications for grants. The Society is also responsible for minute taking and distribution of such.

MEMBERSHIP
Membership consists of one member from each agency that provides service to the program: Meals on Wheels, Boyle McCauley Health Centre, Good Samaritan Society (Telecare), John Howard Society (Family Violence Prevention Centre), Edmonton Gleaners Association, Edmonton Police Service (EAIT), City of Edmonton Community Services (EAIT), Alberta Human Resources and Employment, the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired, Lurana Shelter, 2 community members (appointed by the Society), Executive Director of the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired (ExOfficio), Program Director of Seniors' Safe Housing (ExOfficio)

*Representatives may change if there is a change in agencies delivering a particular service.

CHAIR
The Chair is to be appointed annually by the Advisory Committee Members.

SUB-COMMITTEES
The Advisory Committee has the right to appoint such sub-committees, as it deems appropriate, and shall discharge the committees when their tasks are completed. Sub-committees will have representatives from the Advisory Committee, but some members may be members of the community or professional representatives with expertise that is helpful in carrying out the work of the sub-committee.

MEETINGS
The Advisory Committee meets a minimum of four times a year, at the call of the Chair. A meeting may also be called at the request of two or more members of the Advisory Committee, or at the request of the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired.

FUNDRAISING
The Society is responsible for obtaining sufficient funds to operate the program.
Members of the Advisory Committee may make appropriate contacts with individuals, organizations, foundations or government departments to facilitate the securing of grants for the program but it is the responsibility of the Society to submit applications for such funding, keep appropriate records, and submit reports as required by the funders.

APPENDIX VII

SENIORS' SAFE HOUSING – PROMOTION PLAN

1. Become involved with various committees city wide which deal with senior's and/or abuse issues:
    a. Write to chair of Interagency on Spousal Abuse of Women to request membership. (Done)
    b. Contact individuals to find out when committees, regarding seniors, meet in various areas of Edmonton. (In progress)

2. Provide information to agencies who work with individuals experiencing abuse:
    a. Arrange a time to present information on the Safe Housing project to the staff at the 3 Edmonton shelters. (In progress)
    b. Meet with the staff of Safe Society in St. Albert to provide information on the Safe Housing project, abuse to seniors and brochures.
    c. Meet with staff of the Millwood's Welcome Centre for Newcomers to provide information on the Safe Housing project, abuse to seniors and brochures.

3. Do presentations to large groups pertaining to Seniors' Safe Housing:
    a. Make contact with and schedule presentations to groups who work with seniors such as Home Care.
    b. Contact social Work departments of hospitals, make them aware of E.S.S.H.

4. Make contact with media to set up interviews to discuss Seniors' Safe Housing.

5. Distribute brochure on a broad scale to agencies in Edmonton:
    a. Talk to Wayne Hill from the Office for the Prevention of Family Violence regarding a mail out and whether they would include our brochure if they were doing one.
    b. Get the information into Dr.'s offices.

PARTICIPATING AGENCIES:

Good Samaritan TeleCare

Edmonton Meals on Wheels

Edmonton Gleaners Association

Boyle-McCauley Health Centre

Elder Abuse Intervention Team

Society for the Retired & Semi-Retired

Edmonton John Howard Family
Violence Prevention Program

City of Edmonton Community Services

Edmonton Police Service

Alberta Human Resources and
Employment

(Victorian Order of Nurses now also
provides services)

Project funding provided by:
The Muttart Foundation

Other funding:
Edmonton Community Foundation
Clifford E. Lee Foundation
Other community donors

If you are...
or   If you know....

An older adult who is experiencing
abuse and who is:

- 60 years or older

- Mentally and Physically able
  to live on his or her own

- Making the decision to leave
  an abusive situation, and

- In need of safe accommodation

Call:

Edmonton
Seniors' Safe Housing

To access safe housing, call:

Edmonton
Seniors'
Safe Housing

Safe housing for men and
women,
60 years or older,
who are making the decision
to leave an abusive situation

WHAT IS ELDER ABUSE?

Any action or lack of action that is harmful to the health or well being of an older adult.

This can include:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional/Psychological Abuse
- Financial Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Medication Abuse
- Neglect

POTENTIAL ABUSERS MAY INCLUDE:

- A Spouse
- Common-law partner
- Daughter
- Son
- Daughter-in-law
- Son-in-law
- Grandchildren
- Extended family member
- Friend or Roommate

SAFE HOUSING SERVICES:

Based on an assessment of your situation, we can provide:

- Temporary housing in a safe and furnished suite
- Meals and snack items
- Peer support
- Professional assistance including support, information, outreach and follow-up
- Connections to community resources
- Practical assistance (For example: help with arranging finances, housing and legal services)

THINGS TO REMEMBER:

- If you are being abused, you do not need to feel ashamed. **IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT.**
- Abuse can happen to anyone. **YOU ARE NOT ALONE.**
- If you are being abused, talk to someone you trust. Keep talking until someone listens.
- If you are being emotionally abused, don't accept it. Outside wounds can heal, inside wounds can fester.

"I felt safe there and that was very important to me"

"Everyday was a healing day"

"I could sleep and didn't have to worry."

... A former safe house residents.

Appendix IX
Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing (ESSH) Pilot Project
DRAFT Risk Assessment Form

Move in date: _____

Move out date: _____

Date of Call:_____

Referral came to coordinator from: ☐ *Person in Need (PIN)* ☐ *PIN's Relative*
☐ *Edmonton Police Service* ☐ *Catholic Social Services*
☐ Edmonton Community Services ☐ E.A.I.T. (Elder Abuse Intervention Team)

☐ C.H.A. (Capital Health Authority) ☐ Good SamaritanTelecare

☐ Other _____

Type of Abuse Reported by PIN:

☐ Financial ☐ Physical ☐ Sexual ☐ Emotional

☐ Active Neglect ☐ Passive Neglect ☐ Self ☐ Medication

Accommodation Required:

☐ Immediately ☐ Within 2 days ☐ Within a week

☐ Weekend Referral ☐ After Hours

Person in Need (PIN)

Name: _____

D.O.B. _____**Age:** _____

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Marital Status:

☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Single ☐ Widowed

☐ Separated ☐ Common Law

Employment Status:

☐ Employed ☐ Retired ☐ Other _____

Ethnic Origin (optional): _____

Preferred Language of Service: _____

Permanent Address:_____

City_____

Mailing Address (if different from above):_____

City_____

Phone:_____

Current Accommodation:

    ❑ Apartment   ❑House own/rent   ❑ Seniors residence   ❑ Lodge

    ❑ Nursing Home   ❑ Medical Facility   ❑ N.F.A. (No fixed address)

    ❑ Shelter   ❑ Other (e.g. hotel) specify_____

Living Situation:

    ❑ Alone   ❑ W/spouse   ❑ W/child   ❑ W/relative

    ❑ W/others   ❑ Other _____

Cohabiting with Alleged Abuser:

    ❑ Yes   ❑ Yes, up until interim safe place   ❑ No

Relationship to Alleged Abuser(s):

    ❑ Spouse   ❑ Mother   ❑ Father   ❑ Grandmother

    ❑ Grandfather   ❑ Aunt   ❑ Uncle   ❑ Brother

    ❑ Sister   ❑ Brother-in-Law   ❑ Sister-in-Law   ❑ Friend

    ❑ Neighbour   ❑ Mother-in-Law   ❑ Father-in-Law   ❑ Other_____

Name and phone number of emergency contact:_____

_____

Name and phone number of family physician: _____

_____

Is PIN currently taking any medication?

☐ No ☐ Yes (*if yes, please list*)

Name of Drug	Dosage	Amount per Day	Reason	·(Rx) Prescription	(OTC) Over the Counter
				Please check one	

Which of the following EQUIPMENT is required by PIN? (H=has , N=needs)

H N

☐ ☐ Cane

☐ ☐ Hearing aid

☐ ☐ Incontinence aids

☐ ☐ Glasses

☐ ☐ Bathaids

☐ ☐ Eating aids

☐ ☐ Prosthetic appliance(specify_____)

☐ ☐ Other(specify_____)

H N

☐ ☐ walker

☐ ☐ wheelchair

☐ ☐ O$_2$/Resps

☐ ☐ Toileting aids

☐ ☐ Dressing aids

For which of the following ACTIVITIES does PIN require assistance?

☐ using the phone ☐ shopping ☐ meal preparation ☐ dressing/undressing ☐ bathing

☐ eating ☐ walking ☐ security of personal property ☐ medication

☐ household management ☐ financial management ☐ personal grooming

☐ Language interpreter ☐ other (*please specify*_____)

Is there anyone who can assist PIN while residing in safe house?

_____

(specify relationship and provide phone number if different than emergency contact)

PIN's transportation requirements
☐ Public transportation ☐ Special needs taxi/DATS

☐ Owns Car ☐ Other (specify_____)

PIN's dependency on Alleged Abuser for each of the following:
(Circle 1= very dependent, 2= somewhat dependent , 3= not at all dependent, 4= unknown. *Please circle a number for each*)

Companionship	1	2	3	4
Property Maintenance	1	2	3	4
Daily needs	1	2	3	4
Transportation	1	2	3	4
Financial management	1	2	3	4
Financial resources	1	2	3	4

Description of Alleged Abuser's History of Abuse/Violence:

Does alleged abuser have access to weapons? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, specify: _____

On a scale of 1 – 5, how likely is it that the Alleged Abuser will continue to persue the PIN once in Safe House?

1 (very likely)   2 (likely)   3 (not sure)   4 (unlikely)   5 (very unlikely)

INTERVIEWER'S OBSERVATIONS:

1. Does the PIN have any outward signs of abuse? Specify.

2. Describe the PIN's mental/emotional state.

3. Based on interviewer's observations and the information gathered, PIN's suitability for the safe house is considered to be (*Please circle a number*):

1 (unsuitable)   2 (somewhat suitable)   3 (suitable)   4 (very suitable)

Reasons why this suite is unsuitable (and/or other comments):

Risk Assessment Completed By: _____

ESSH Project - Draft Care Plan

Issue	Need			How it will be Accomplished (What, who & expected time frame)	Progress Notes (Including date & followup goal/activity)	Date Accomplished	Critical to Discharge	
	Date	Current Situation	Goal/Objective				Yes	No
A. Health I. Physical								
II. Mental								

Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing Pilot Project

Issue	Need			How it will be Accomplished (What, who & expected time frame)	Progress Notes (Including date & followup goal/activity)	Date Accomplished	Critical to Discharge	
	Date	Current Situation	Goal/Objective				Yes	No
B. Finances								
C. Housing								

Issue	Need			How it will be Accomplished (What, who & expected time frame)	Progress Notes (Including date & followup goal/activity)	Date Accomplished	Critical to Discharge	
	Date	Current Situation	Goal/Objective				Yes	No
D. Legal								
E. Police/Victim Services								

Issue	Need			How it will be Accomplished (What, who & expected time frame)	Progress Notes (Including date & followup goal/activity)	Date Accomplished	Critical to Discharge	
	Date	Current Situation	Goal/Objective				Yes	No
F. Safety Plan								
I. Employment & Volunteer Work								

Issue	Need			How it will be Accomplished (What, who & expected time frame)	Progress Notes (Including date & followup goal/activity)	Date Accomplished	Critical to Discharge	
	Date	Current Situation	Goal/Objective				Yes	No
G. Social & Emotional Supports								
H. Personal Relationships								

Issue	Need			How it will be Accomplished (What, who & expected time frame)	Progress Notes (Including date & followup goal/activity)	Date Accomplished	Critical to Discharge	
	Date	Current Situation	Goal/Objective				Yes	No
K. Knowledge Of Abuse								
J. Independence: I. Life Skills								
II. Other								

Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing Pilot Project

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Appendix XI

Consent for Release of Information

I, _____ give permission to the Seniors Safe Housing Coordinator to release information to the individuals and/or agencies listed below on my behalf during the time of my stay at the Seniors Safe House. This permission will be withdrawn upon my discharge from the safe house.

Information will not be released to any individuals and/or agencies unless I have signed beside the name listed below. I also understand that information will be shared on a need to know basis only and that sharing of this information will be done in my best interest.

Admission Date: _____

Signed: _____

Witnessed: _____

Date: _____

DATE	AGENCY AND CONTACT PERSON	PH NO.	PURPOSE OF CONTACT	SIGNATURE

Departure Summary

NAME: _____   **ADMISSION DATE:**
_____

ADDRESS TO: _____ **DEPARTURE DATE:** _____
PHONE NUMBER: _____

SUMMARY OF STAY AND DISCHARGE PLANS:

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Staff Signature: _____   **Date:**
_____

Appendix XII

PLACES TO CONTACT WITH CHANGE OF ADDRESS INFORMATION

Phone Hook Up – Telus – 310 – 2255

Revenue Canada – 495 – 5400

Canada Pension Plan & Old Age Security Toll Free   1 – 800 – 277 – 9914

Albert's Widow Pension - 422 – 4080

Alberta Health Care - 427 – 1432

Your Own Personal Bank –

Your Own Personal Dr. (Dr's) –

Income Tax Toll Free   1 – 800 – 959 – 8281

AISH - 415 – 6300

All Credit Cards Toll Free No. On Statement

Appendix XIII

EDMONTON SENIORS' SAFE HOUSING PILOT PROJECT- Case Study

The following story of the experience of one Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing client illustrates the effectiveness of the unique Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing model developed by the Steering Committee.

Accessing Safe Housing
A woman was referred to Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing by the Elder Abuse Intervention Team. The woman had arrived in Canada one year prior, sponsored by daughter and son-in-law. The daughter and son-in-law had been providing the woman with room and board in return for babysitting services while both parents worked full time. This arrangement was useful to the young couple as they did not have to pay cash for childcare.

Intake and Risk Assessment
When the Project Coordinator met the woman, the woman's daughter had lost her job. The son-in-law had become verbally and emotionally abusive to his mother-in-law and forced her out of the family home with no resources and nowhere to go. She was in need of new glasses and had recently been diagnosed with diabetes and high blood pressure. The woman was on medication for high blood pressure but had not received care for her diabetes. Her chest was very congested and she was coughing. As could be expected, the woman was very tearful and frightened not knowing what might happen to her alone in a new city with very limited personal resources and limited command of the English language. During intake and risk assessment, the Coordinator identified verbal and emotional abuse as well as neglect. She determined the women clearly met the criteria for entry into the Safe Housing Service.

Safe Housing/Fan Out
When the decision was made to accept the woman into the program, all services connected to the safe housing suite were notified using the fan out procedure. The suite was made ready for the new client and the Coordinator helped her settle in to the comfort and safety of the service.

Accessing Arrayed Services
After the client was safely established in the suite, the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing Coordinator made contact with Catholic Social Services (CCS) who had been originally involved in the referral. CCS had a social worker who spoke the woman's language and offered serve as her interpreter. The Coordinator assisted the interpreter in identifying what needed to happen so the client could permanently leave the abusive situation and live independently.

Once a means of communication was established, the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing Coordinator contacted a variety of Steering Committee service providers to meet the extensive needs of this client. Alberta Human Resources and Employment (AHRE) was contacted as immediate assistance was required to meet the woman's need for medical coverage. Later during her stay, AHRE was approached to obtain a living allowance for the client. Boyle McCauley Health Centre provided a nurse to educate and attend to the client's numerous health issues. The Family Violence Prevention Centre helped the client gain to access furniture for her new apartment. The City of Edmonton Community Services Department provided a Family Support Worker to help the client access her clothing needs as well as deciding on necessary, small household items required for her new home.

Intensive Case Management

Throughout the woman's stay at the Safe Housing, the Coordinator worked to insure the following needs of the client were attended to; health, finances, banking, nutrition, access to shopping, transportation, recreation, English as a Second Language classes, as well as organizing the help from the services already mentioned. The following is one example how the service operates to meet the individual client's needs. The coordinator and the interpreter took the client to the grocery store. They went up and down all the isles in the grocery store identifying items that the woman was familiar with but did not recognize because of the differences in packaging and the language. This type of activity was very important in helping the client remain independent.

A case conference was held prior to the client's departure to live self-reliantly in a community setting. The interpreter/settlement counselor, nurse, and Coordinator were all involved in a discussion of the area of responsibility of each and the follow-up service that would be provided to the client upon leaving the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing.

Effectiveness of the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing Service

At the time of discharge, the client had new glasses. She was on medication for diabetes and was booked into Diabetic Clinic, which she would be attending with the aid of an interpreter. The client was receiving Social Assistance and had learned to fill out her client response card. The client had a bank account and she had learned how to access money from account. The client had also learned the bus routes that would take her for groceries, to her medical appointments, and to ESL classes. The woman had her own apartment complete with furniture and other necessary items. The client had joined "Changing Together", a Centre for Immigrant Women, where she could go to meet her social/recreational needs.

Currently, the client continues to live self-reliantly in the community. She has chosen not to see her family though she does attend the same church and sees her granddaughter there. The women continues to drop in, on occasion, to see the Coordinator and sends her cards at Xmas and Easter.