

**EDMONTON SENIORS' SAFE HOUSING
FOLLOW-UP REPORT**

2003

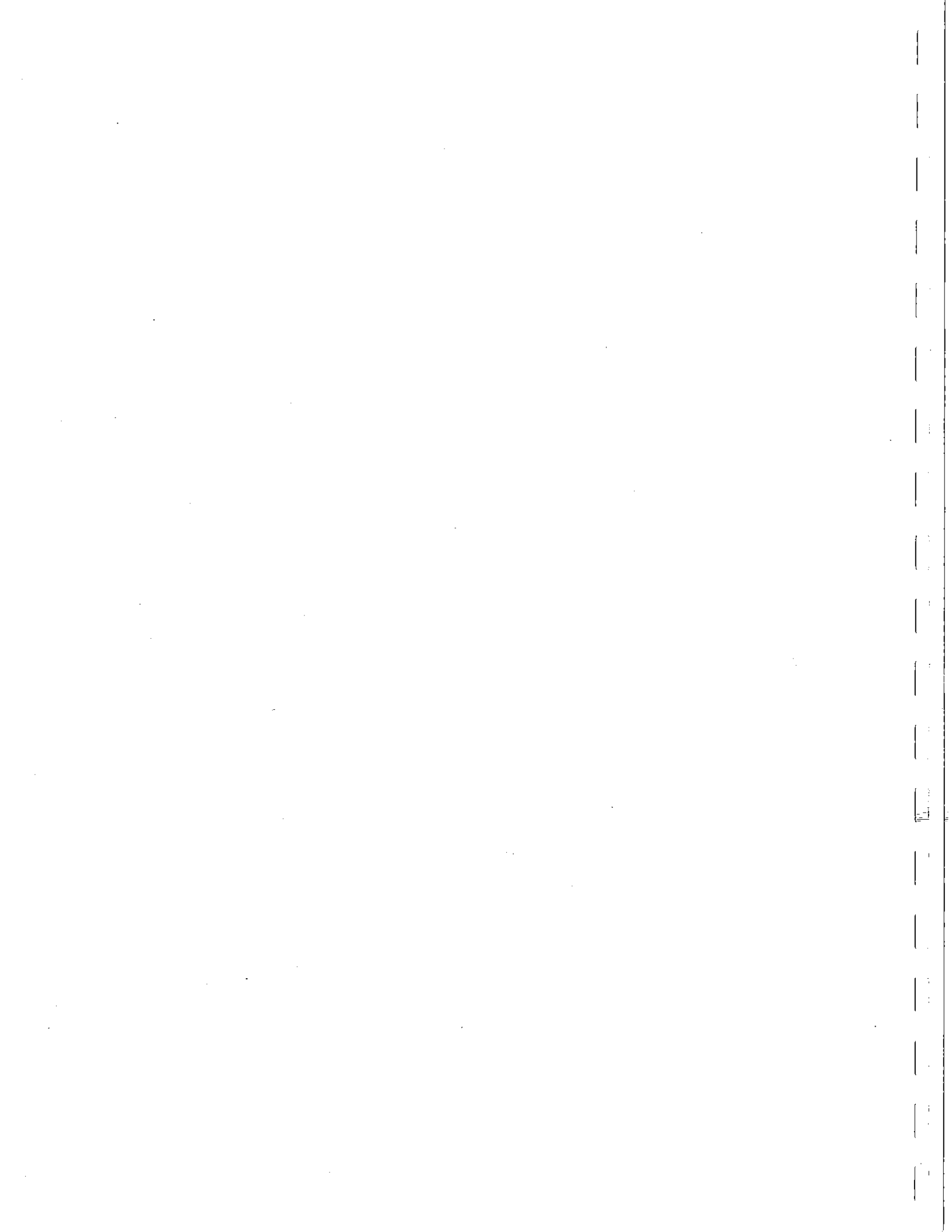
Prepared for: City of Edmonton, Community Services Department
the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired

Prepared by: Katherine Kilgour, M.Sc.
Consultant

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Executive Summary

The Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing service provides accommodation and support for a period of up to 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."

Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing Project Follow-up Report

The Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing (ESSH) service provides accommodation and support for a period of up to 60 days to Edmonton Seniors: men and women, 60 years of age and older, who are leaving an abusive situation. The service is unique in that it utilizes an intense case management model and connects clients with an array of existing community support services. A copy of the executive summary of the Creating Safe Housing for Abused Seniors: The Edmonton Model has been included for a brief overview of the service.

Part A Purpose, Method & Demographics

Purpose

Safe Housing for Abused Seniors: The Edmonton Model was written after the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing service ended a two year pilot phase in October 2002. It provides a comprehensive articulation of the history and context, conceptualization of the pilot, implementation of the service and the experiences of those involved. Since the end of the pilot there has been a significant change to the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing service which has had implications for staff, clients as well as the service delivery agencies involved. The purpose of this report is:

- to provide updated demographics
- to document the changes to the service from the end of the pilot phase to December 2003.
- to review funding
- to provide information that may assist in replication of this type of service in other communities

Method

Two in-person tape recorded interviews were conducted with the Executive Director of the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired which is now responsible for the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing service and the Director of the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing Service. Both people have been deeply involved with the Safe Housing service. The Executive Director of the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired was an original member of the steering committee and has been part of the service since its inception. The Director of Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing served as the Coordinator of Safe Housing through the pilot phase and has been with Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing since that time. Interviews were conducted and analyzed by the same researcher and were approximately 1 ½ hour in length. Information collected in these interviews forms the basis of this report. The report is written in a generalized format combining the responses of the two participants except where one or the other is specifically identified. Participation was entirely voluntary. Both people had opportunity to read and check for accuracy of the final draft report.

It must be noted that both the perspectives of the organizations providing services to Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing and the clients currently receiving service is beyond the scope of this report. An 'exit survey' is being developed to collect further information regarding clients' experience of the Safe Housing program. It is intended that those results will be compiled by staff at Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing program on an on-going basis for the purposes of service improvement.

Demographics November 2002-Oct 31, 2003

- **36 seniors served**
 - 10 males served (28%)
 - 26 females served (72%)
 - average age of clients is 65 years
 - average length of stay is 58.5 days

- **types of abuse experienced** (some individuals experience more than 1 type of abuse)
 - emotional 29
 - physical 15
 - financial 14
 - neglect 6
 - threats of physical harm 5
 - sexual 1

- **Departure Status**
 - 29 individuals are currently in new accommodation or have made situational changes promoting safety (80.5%).
 - One individual went into hospital
 - two individuals were asked to leave the service (see Policy section of this report)
 - 4 individuals returned home to their partners. Of those who chose to return home, two have since left the situation and are living on their own. Follow-up with these two individuals continues.

- **referral sources**
 - Elder Abuse Intervention Team 11
 - Family members or self 11
 - Community Agencies including hospitals 14

Part B Structural Change & Experience of this Change

Factors Leading to Change

Two main factors have been reported as significant influences to a major structural change in the Safe Housing service; the isolation experienced by some clients and the workload of the Coordinator. During the pilot phase, the project included two Safe Housing locations in different areas of the City of Edmonton. Once the service was in operation, a review of the service indicated that some clients experienced a sense of isolation in the Safe Housing locations where they resided. These clients reported feeling 'different' from other tenants. Some clients were reluctant to interact because they and others knew the client would be housed for a short term. Others indicated they felt ashamed at having been subject to abuse and didn't want other tenants to know about them. Client isolation was compounded by the initial policy that, for their own safety, clients were not to have visitors in the Safe Housing suites. In addition, the peer support component of the program had not functioned as envisioned (peer support will be addressed later in this report). The sense of isolation led many clients to rely solely on the Coordinator for support.

The workload of the Coordinator was greater than anticipated. Having two Safe Housing units in different locations was very demanding of the Coordinator's time and energy. The intense case management model required significant amounts of the Coordinator's time. The logistics of driving between and providing for clients in two separate locations was stretching the Coordinator to the limit, *"the demands were so high as it was, other locations across the City would have been impossible."*

Structural Change

Funding for the pilot was coming to an end. Demand for the service was increasing. The workload of the Coordinator could not be expanded. There had been some discussion in the planning phase that service expansion could include Safe Housing locations through out the city. Operating the Safe Housing service for two years gave those involved opportunity to project the increased workload that multiple locations would mean. A decision was made to apply for funding which would provide for seven units on one floor of a building in the City of Edmonton.

Experiences of this New Structure

Both people interviewed believed the decision to have all of the Safe Housing located together, *"without doubt"*, created more effective service delivery. The implications of this decision are described in the following section of the report.

Reduced Isolation

The assumption that the move to seven Safe Housing units on one floor would decrease the sense of isolation and be less demanding of the staff's time is believed by staff to be accurate. Having all clients together in the same location allows for opportunities that would not be possible if clients were in different areas of the city. For example, once a week the staff invite clients and peer support persons to a coffee morning in the common area on the Safe Housing floor. This provides clients with an opportunity to have questions asked and answered to the benefit of all present. Clients are able to make contact and interact with each other. Clients have been socializing with each other and have been making use of a common area on the floor. One client recently rented a movie and *"knocked on doors inviting others to the common area to watch it together."* In addition, clients have not reported feeling out of place and have indicated to staff that most people they meet in the building are friendly. Clients are welcome to and do participate in public activities provided for the recreation of other tenants in the building.

Since the ESSH Director has an office located on the same floor as the Safe Housing units, there is opportunity for formal and informal accessibility. A weekly schedule is posted on the office door. Clients are able to access staff at times other than their scheduled meetings should the need arise.

Improved Safety

Providing housing where clients could be safe and free from abuse is a fundamental goal of the service. Interviews with clients in the pilot phase revealed that safety for clients included not only safety within the Safe Housing location but also safety with in the building and in the neighbourhood. Door locks, unlisted phone numbers, connection to a 24 hour telephone care line increased clients psychological sense of security. These aspects of safety continue and in the new location, even greater security measures are provided.

Now that the Safe Housing units are located on one secure floor, only those connected with the program, staff and clients have an elevator key to access the floor. The front door of the building is kept locked and access to the elevator is by a phone code to any given tenant's suite. This provides both safety and privacy to clients since only seniors who are accessing the service are housed on the floor.

The policy on guests/visitors has been altered to reflect the belief that the program should not further isolate seniors but assist them in the use of healthy community supports. To that end, clients may have guests excluding the person they have identified as their abuser. For their own safety, and the safety of other tenants, clients must agree not to provide the abuser with the phone number or location of the Safe Housing suites.

The building had been equipped with a video surveillance camera at the front door prior to accommodating the Safe Housing service. This camera has now been hooked up to the cable television so all tenants can see who is at the door before opening the door or going down to the lobby. Had the apartments been spread across seven different buildings in the City, cost and organization of this service would have been prohibitive.

Every effort continues to be made to protect the confidentiality of clients and to keep the location of the Safe Housing units from becoming public knowledge. For safety reasons, especially in the event of fire, the building manager must be notified whenever clients move in or out of the suites. Other than the building manager, only the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing service staff and the health nurses involved with the program are told the identity of the clients.

Supplies

When the program utilized two Safe Housing locations in different areas of the city, the supply room was the Coordinator's office or more often the back of her van! Renovations provided for a large storage room to accommodate supplies necessary to stock the suites including decorative items and aids to daily living. Now, donations and supplies are organized and accessible regardless of the staff on duty. The program continues to maintain a strong relationship with the local food bank. Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing staff are able to call for an appointment and to choose the necessary items for seniors in the program.

A laundry facility is located on the secure floor for use by all clients. Communal supplies are available. The provision of one central laundry for clients is more economical in terms of supplies, equipment, and staff time than seven separate laundry locations.

Meals

When the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired became the host organization for the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing service program, the decision was made to change to the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired cafeteria as the meal service provider. The perceived benefits to clients included the ability to use an 'in-house service' that could adapt to special diets on short notice and customize meals with minimal difficulty. Clients currently may receive three prepared meals a day and frozen meals on the weekends. As in the original model, all suites are equipped with a fully functioning kitchen and clients may make their own meals if they so choose. The local food bank continues to supply the kitchens with basic foodstuffs and snack foods.

Additional Benefits of Structural Change

In addition to the benefits outlined, having the Safe Housing units together has had the following advantages:

Support Group

The existence of a common secure area and the success of positive interaction between clients have led staff to plan for a psycho-educational support group for abused persons. The group would be open to current clients as well as those who have been through the safe house and are now independent in the community. *"It would have been much more difficult to try to bring everyone together if they were scattered across the City. It's much easier this way and people are more willing because they know each other"*. In keeping with the pattern of accessing local community resources, the group will be planned and led by local experts in the field of family violence prevention.

Foot Care

The agency providing nursing service to clients has been contracted for 7 hour per week, 1 hr per week per client. At times when clients do not require high nursing care, this level of service is not needed. Rather than the dollars being allocated to nursing care, the clients are provided with foot care. Travel time for nurses to clients is minimal since they are all in one place. If clients were not in one location, the cost of providing foot care would be prohibitive.

Follow-up

Of the 36 clients served in the time period covered by this report, 18 have requested follow-up. Follow-up continues in the same pattern as during the pilot phase; clients are visited within days of their move to new accommodation, time between visits lengthens as clients adjust to their new setting. Visits may continue for up to six months and afterwards assistance is provided on an 'as necessary' basis. Now that staff have office space on the Safe Housing floor, former clients have the option of coming in to visit at the office if they choose.

Part C Maintaining the Philosophical Ideology

In the planning phase, developing a model to best assist seniors who had suffered abuse, was a long and thoughtful process undertaken by a very diverse, committed group of people representing senior serving organizations and service providers. Certain principles of service delivery evolved that provided a strong philosophical basis for program practice. This group determined that the service delivery would be:

- Inclusive -the program would be as open and as responsive as possible to any Edmonton senior suffering from abuse and who met the eligibility criteria
- Client Centered –an individualized case plan that best suited the needs of each client would be developed with the client and appropriate service providers.
- Intense Case Management –clients participate in a needs assessment to develop a comprehensive case plan. The needs of each client would determine the amount and type of support based on a holistic approach. This may include but is not limited; to clients emotional needs, safety issues, legal issues, financial concerns and banking, housing, medical and pharmaceutical needs, aids to daily living, transportation, social connections, household furnishings, clothing, transition and follow-up services.
- Utilize Existing Resources -recognize a need and find the experts to provide the service to clients.

These basic principles continue to guide the work of the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing service staff and the daily decisions with respect to clients, policy and procedure. How these

principles have been translated into practice in the area of diverse populations of seniors, policy development, and use of arrayed services will now be outlined.

Diversity and One Location

As was previously mentioned, during the Safe Housing service planning phase there was a desire on the part of some Steering Committee members to establish Safe Housing in various areas of the City. It was believed that a variety of locations would best meet the needs of diverse clients. There has been a shift from thinking about the match between a client and an appropriate geographical setting, to an emphasis on a match between clients and the most appropriate services to meet their needs. As outlined, this change was based largely on the isolation experienced by some clients and the workload of the Coordinator. This shift has resulted in a constant quest for new connections to the program which will be discussed in the 'Arrayed Services' section of the report. At the end of the Safe Housing stay, clients may relocate to the area of the city that best meets their needs.

The goal of providing service to a wide range of seniors remains. Promoting the Safe Housing program in all communities through public presentations, in-service education is an essential part of the role of the Director of the Seniors' Safe Housing service. Three groups have been cited as examples of the programs response to the goal of serving diverse groups.

Service to Various Cultures

Clients from a variety of ethnic communities are regularly clients of the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing program. The use of interpretive services and finding and matching clients with safe and culturally appropriate community resources while they are accessing the Safe Housing program is part of case planning. In addition, those collecting supplies for the Safe Housing suites are becoming more sensitive to the needs of diverse communities and this is reflected in food available and decorating items available for Safe Housing suites.

Service to Persons With Disabilities

In order to further remain true to the principle of inclusion, renovations to the Safe Housing units in the building included creating a 'barrier free' suite. This made it possible to serve clients with limited mobility. Since that time, a hearing impaired client came into the program. The Director of Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing immediately began work to find resources that would best assist this client. She made contact with services whose mandate is to provide services to the deaf and hard of hearing. Agencies have assisted in arranging for the installation of a variety of devices (e.g. fire alarm/phone) which have made the suite 'user friendly' to those with sight and hearing impairment.

Service to Men

To date, 28% of clients accessing the Safe Housing service have been male. According to the Executive Director of the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired no other similar service he has been able to research on the internet has served men to this extent. *"We are doing something right for men, they feel comfortable and supported in this type of environment."* Future exit surveys with male clients may uncover some of the reasons for the program's success with male clients. Staff speculated that the provision of independent suites and the program's encouragement on self-reliance may be appealing to men and possibly the open, accepting and non-judgmental attitude of staff may be factors.

"When I see a need I look for a resource. There has got to be a way to make things better. I never think, 'there is no way to do this' that is just not in my repertoire."

One drawback identified by both people interviewed is the inability to provide service to clients in need of 24 hour care. In these cases Capital Health has assured staff that a secure bed for a person in need will be found. In the meantime, work is underway to find creative solutions, possibly a designated space in an extended care facility.

Policy

In keeping with the desire to provide a service that is inclusive, the Board of the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired has purposefully chosen to remain as flexible as possible in terms of policy recommendations. There have been four specific client situations that have presented policy challenges:

- persons needing 24 hour care
- clients with addictions
- clients reluctant to seek self-sufficiency
- clients who have invited their abuser to the Safe Housing suites

In each of these types of situations the question is raised, "How do you show respect for the individual and values of the service, yet achieve the intended outcomes of the program?" In the case of clients allowing the abuser into the suites, policy has been set. This behaviour clearly puts the client, all other tenants and staff at risk. These clients must leave the program. In the other cases there has been a conscious decision to keep the options for helping clients open. Rather than excluding certain groups of people, decisions regarding access to the program are based on the clients' ability to participate in their own case planning.

"If a person is frequently intoxicated when attempting to engage in case management decisions then they may be asked to leave. Just because it didn't work for that person doesn't mean it doesn't work for people who drink. We need to ask more questions and consider more options, not adopt a 'no alcohol' policy."

Arrayed Services

The service delivery model conceived and implemented in the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing is unique in that it utilizes existing community resources rather than duplicating existing services. Clients in the Safe Housing suites are connected with local agencies and service organizations who provide services based client need and agency expertise in a given area. Case plans are individually tailored to meet the needs of each client, therefore, the number of agencies is broad and varied. (Appendix A). Maintaining this model of service delivery is central to the functioning of the program. Those agencies that provide direct service to Safe Housing clients are invited to become part of the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing Advisory Committee.

The agencies and service organizations that work with the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing have had a keen interest in and commitment to abused seniors. From the inception, a collaborative effort has been evidenced in every aspect of the service. This approach continues to be fostered by the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing Director who was described as *"consultative, collaborative and respectful. People want to be a part of this work. There is a belief that we are all in it together, our client is their client too."* A reason suggested for the success of this unique approach is that each service has a clear and defined role. *"People know what their role is and they do their part without judgment from others. There is no stepping on someone else's toes".*

During the planning and the pilot phase, strong connections developed between the service providers in the City as they served as part of the Steering Committee. Some of changes to the program have resulted in changes to the involvement of some of the service providers. These changes have not been without consequence. While some may have left the service due to internal decisions which best met the needs of their own organization, others have been replaced by new partnerships. There is some evidence that all changes were not immediately embraced. After contributing considerable time and resources to the Safe Housing service through the development and pilot phases, it is understandable that termination of service delivery after the pilot phase might have been reluctantly accepted by some former members.

Some of the service providers continue to offer service but have chosen not to remain as members of the Advisory Committee. In these cases specific protocol for serving Safe Housing clients has been established between the Safe Housing service and the agency.

Part D Other Changes Staff, Peer Support, & Advisory Committee

Staffing

During the pilot phase the Coordinator was hired on a part-time basis. The position soon became full time and the Coordinator was responsible for all aspects of the program including public awareness, program development, grant applications, administration, as well as case management. Intense case management was and continues to be the first priority. With the increase in maximum capacity to seven clients it was apparent that another staff would be required to effectively manage the increased workload. Additional funding was acquired, the Coordinator has taken the position of Director and a new Coordinator has been hired. (Appendix B Position Description)

The working relationship is described as "flexible" as both staff are highly involved in meeting the needs of seven clients using an intensive case management model. The Coordinator is also responsible for case files, some presentations, "*finding out who needs what*", and advising the Directors on necessary changes. The Director of the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing Service remains responsible for such things as over all service development and maintaining relationships in the community with existing service providers, searching out new service providers, raising public awareness, and recruiting referral sources.

Peer Support Component

Evaluation during pilot phase of service delivery had indicated the peer support component would benefit from increased supervision and training. In order to meet this need the Director partnered with the Y.M.C.A. to access trained volunteers from their program. Currently there are two external peer support persons who work with Safe Housing clients on a regular basis. Peer support volunteers are matched to clients for friendship as well as to provide help in practical activities such as assisting in finding transportation to appointments, filling out forms, shopping, library trips, learning bus routes, etc. As mentioned, peer supporters attend the weekly coffee sessions with staff and clients. According to the Director, peer support has worked well for clients and has freed time for staff to attend to other matters. Funding for the YMCA volunteer training program was terminated in late 2003. In the immediate future, trained volunteers for peer support will then be recruited from the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired.

Advisory Committee

At the end of the pilot phase, the Steering Committee that had developed the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing service planned for transition from a governing body to an advisory role. At the time, the membership was virtually identical, those organizations providing services to clients had members on the Committee. One role of this newly formed Advisory Committee was to make Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing policy recommendations to the Board of the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired. The Advisory Committee was to serve as a "watch dog" to ensure the mandate and philosophy of the program would be maintained as it had been envisioned by the Steering Committee. It was not intended that the Advisory Committee would be a decision making body.

As mentioned, those senior serving organizations that provide direct services to Safe Housing clients are invited to send a representative to the Advisory Committee. The Executive Director of the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired has suggested the continued role of the Advisory Committee be explored in 2004 for several reasons:

- The Director of Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing service is in continual contact with all organizations for assistance, problem solving and revising as the need arises
- The Board of the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired has fully embraced the philosophy of the service as it was envisioned
- Staff now have a broader base of experience on which to base changes to the service
- There are more formally structured relationships between organizations and the Safe Housing service

These considerations will be presented and the future role of the Advisory Committee discussed. The group will continue to meet should the members so desire.

Part E Funding

The pilot phase of the program was funded primarily through a grant from the Muttart Foundation. As the end of this funding approached, members of the Steering Committee encountered considerable challenge in finding the appropriate government department to which successful application might be made.

Both bridge funding and "in-kind" support were received from the Seniors Ministry. Rent, utilities and janitorial services for seven suites in a government owned apartment building were waived. The group that operates the suites received capital from the Edmonton Housing and Trust Fund to renovate and furnish the suites, the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired received funds for staffing and to purchase the services required. Renovations to the suites began late in 2002. At the end of December 2002, 5 suites were in operation, the 6th at the end of January and the "barrier free" suite at the end of February 2003.

Funding by the Edmonton Housing and Trust Fund was due to terminate at the end of October 2003. In September staff learned that the funding application to Children's Services (the Ministry responsible for Family Violence) had been successful. Funding was secured to the end of the Government fiscal year with the likelihood of renewed funding in March of 2004.

"We haven't missed a day of funding but it has been nerve wracking at times. We have always believed in the program and that somehow we would get the money we needed to carry on."

A key aspect of gaining support for the service has been making personal contact with potential funders. Government officials and civil servants are invited to tour the site, the intense case management model and the service's connections to local community services are described. *"Once people see the site and have the opportunity to have their questions answered the interest in the program builds."*

Additional Community Sources of Funds

"I have been tremendously encouraged by the unsolicited community support. People have found us and have been donating." Several examples cited were: Over the past three years grants have been received from The Austin S. Nelson Foundation, staff in the Alberta Sustainable Resource Department have made yearly donations of gifts and products for seniors in the suites, Mayfield Rotary club financed the set-up of the surveillance cameras in the lobby of the apartment building, and Expert Parking have donated parking passes. Capital City Savings have provided funds to raise community awareness about elder abuse and to promote the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing service to potential referral sources. Currently posters, brochures and business cards advertising a help line for seniors have been developed and distributed. A display suitable for use at public events has also been funded.

With raised awareness those working with abused seniors recognize the real possibility of increased referrals and waiting lists for entry into the program. For the most part Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing has been operating at capacity since it was opened. Those who call when the safe suites are all occupied are offered assistance over the phone including a discussion of safety options until a suite becomes available. Information is collected and reviewed to determine the need for expanded services. Should the need arise, staff report being prepared to *"make the argument"* for expansion, maintaining the same model of service delivery and intense case management.

Part F Possibility of Replication in Other Communities

Those interviewed are understandably enthusiastic and proud of what has been achieved by all who worked to make the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing program a success. They believe there is potential for other communities to set up a Safe Housing service with arrayed services similar to the Edmonton model. Those interviewed stressed the importance of true collaboration which begins with the conversations that build relationships and the commitment to help abused seniors. The process by which the model was designed was considered key both in the pilot phase and to date. To that end it was suggested that other communities might wish to invite community agencies to come together to ask:

- ✓ What is the common goal?
- ✓ Who are the players?
- ✓ How do we work together now?
- ✓ What 'turf wars' need to be resolved?
- ✓ What services could be offered?
- ✓ Who would be responsible for what aspects?

As these questions are answered the group could move towards designing a unique service to suit their own community. Both people interviewed have offered to make themselves available to other communities, to answer questions, to guide the process, or to consult in any way that would be helpful.

Summary

"Despite the fact that we are dealing with such difficult emotional issues, the satisfactions are sufficient to strengthen us to be able to deal with issues and to support the clients appropriately....The rewards far outweigh the challenges. This has been one of the most satisfying programs I have ever been involved in."

As the quotation aptly shows, the enthusiasm for the Edmonton Seniors' Safe Housing service has not diminished. As reported, changes since the end of the pilot are believed to have enhanced service delivery. Those interviewed believe the intense work undertaken by the original Steering Committee laid a valuable framework for the Seniors' Safe Housing Service. There remains a commitment to the basic philosophy of the service, intense case management model and the use of existing community expertise in the "arrayed service" as cornerstones of this unique service.

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APPENDIX A

Resources and/or Coordination of Services:

VON Nursing and Foot Care Services
Diabetic Clinic

Community Geriatric Psychiatry, Alberta Hospital Edmonton
Mobile Mental Health Crisis Team and AHE Community Response
Northern Alberta Regional Geriatric Psychiatry, Glenrose Hospital Edmonton

Alberta Mental Health

- Group for Abused Women
- Relationships with your Adult Children support group

Canadian Mental Health

- Supported community housing
- Public information, assessment, referral and personal advocacy

Capital Health

- Aids to Daily Living
- Home Care

City of Edmonton Community Services

Neighborhood Social and Recreational Services

- Counseling
- City of Edmonton Resource Worker
- Support Group Counseling (Dealing with Adult Children)
- Disabled Adult Transit Service

YWCA

- Counseling Services
- Group Counseling Services
- Peer Support Volunteers

Catholic Social Services

- Family Services: Individual and Family Counseling

Sexual Assault Centre

- Group Counseling
- Diversity Project

Millwood's Centre for Immigrants

Mennonite Centre

SRSR

- Guardianship Program
- Housing Services
- Wellbeing Services

Good Samaritan Telecare Services

Family Violence Prevention Centre
-Furniture Request and Delivery

Alberta Human Resources and Employment

Edmonton Food Bank

Handicapped Housing Society of Alberta

Greater Edmonton Foundation

Bissell Centre
-Bissell Thrift Shop vouchers provided for clients

Legal Aid Services

Edmonton Police Service

Elder Abuse Intervention Team
- Composed of: Catholic Social Services, Edmonton Police Services, and City of Edmonton
Community Services

United Victims Assistance

CFRN Good Neighbor Fund

Lens Crafters: Gift-of- Sight Program

APPENDIX B

SOCIETY FOR THE RETIRED AND SEMI-RETIRED

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position: Safe Housing Coordinator - Temporary

Program: Seniors' Safe Housing

Reports to: Director, Seniors' Safe Housing

Date Approved: August 13, 2003

OVERVIEW OF THE POSITION:

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 to case management, this position will assist in informing potential referral sources about the service, coordinating the services provided by the participating agencies and working with the various agencies to ensure the needs of the clients are met. The coordinator will assist the Director with other related duties as required.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Area of Responsibility	Tasks
Planning and Program Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assist in maintaining program statistics;• Assist in the ongoing evaluation of the program;• Identify program improvement opportunities;• Assist in the development of program policies and procedures;• Implement policies, procedures and program development strategies;• Assist in the updating and maintenance of Welcome to Safe Housing brochure and client information binder;• Assist in keeping information and material for clients current;• Keep current with regards to community resources, provincial and federal grants and subsidies.

Case Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the needs of individuals who are referred to Safe Housing for service; • Assess the suitability of the client for the Safe Housing program; • Complete intakes of the clients coming into the program; • Develop case plans for clients admitted to the Seniors' Safe Housing program; • Provide case management to program clients as per the case plan; • Provide hands on assistance as well as coordinate other services for the client; • Assist in coordination of services to be provided by community agencies to Seniors' Safe Housing clients; • 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; • Assist the client in establishing a safety plan that would be effective during their stay and revise upon discharge; • Provide periodic follow-up of discharged clients. • Complete client file documentation as required.
Volunteer Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in the co-ordination and supervision of volunteers; • Provide on-going support and encouragement to volunteers working with the program.
Other Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make presentations about Senior Safe Housing to agencies, workshops, conferences and other interested parties as required by the Director; • Assist with on call as required; • As required and/or assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Registered Social Worker, College or University prepared.
- Hold a valid First aid certificate.
- 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 in case management;
- Knowledge of community resources and services;
- Computer literacy, especially Word for Windows;
- Self-motivated and able to work both independently and as part of a team;
- Excellent time management skills.

TERM

This is a temporary position until March 31, 2004 with the possibility of extension.

HOURS OF WORK

9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. with a 1 hour unpaid lunch break, unless otherwise advised or participating in the Compressed Work option. This position may be required to work outside these hours based on client/program demands.

SALARY LEVEL

\$25,000 - \$35,000 per annum plus benefits and pension contributions as defined by board policy.

SOCIETY FOR THE RETIRED AND SEMI-RETIRED

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position: Director

Program: Seniors' Safe Housing

Reports to: Executive Director

OVERVIEW OF THE POSITION:

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assess the needs of individuals who are referred to Safe Housing for service

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

SALARY RANGE

\$30,000.00 to \$ 45,000.00 per annum plus benefits and pension contributions as defined by board policy.

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