

# TORONTO SHELTER NETWORK



## PRESENTATION TO THE TORONTO HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS SERVICE SYSTEM PLANNING FORUM

SEPTEMBER 13, 2022

## THE SHELTER SYSTEM IS SEVERELY STRAINED

- Between June 2021 and June 2022, the shelter using population increased by 18% - from 8,072 to 9,752
  - The number of refugees increased by 150% from 998 to 2,499;
  - The number of family users increased by 40% from 1,276 to 2,218; and
  - Youth and Indigenous populations both increased by 19%.
- Since January 2022, 4,711 people entered the system while 3,848 left the system - 20% more people are entering the system than leaving it
- 100 people each day that are seeking shelter cannot access a bed

# OPPORTUNITIES – STALLED, LOST OR NOT WORKING

A few examples:

- COHB and rent supplements
- Advance planning for refugees
- Case management
- New shelter service model
- Housing Secretariat – set up but not resourced to fulfill its promise

# THE CURRENT SHELTER MODEL IS NOT SUSTAINABLE

During COVID:

- Shelter costs: up 17% - 40%
- Shelter funding (base) increase: 0% - 5%
- The amount that shelters are fundraising: millions of dollars each year to keep shelter doors open

**Action is needed if we we are to avoid the inevitable closure of shelters currently operating under unstainable conditions Inaction will only contribute to already untenable occupancy pressures**

## HOW DO WE RESPOND?

Build more and more emergency responses - emergency shelters, respites, 24-hour drop-ins, refugee hotels and with the pandemic, more hotel programs



**These responses do not reduce homelessness and are not effective strategies for ending a person's homelessness**

## HOW DO WE RESPOND

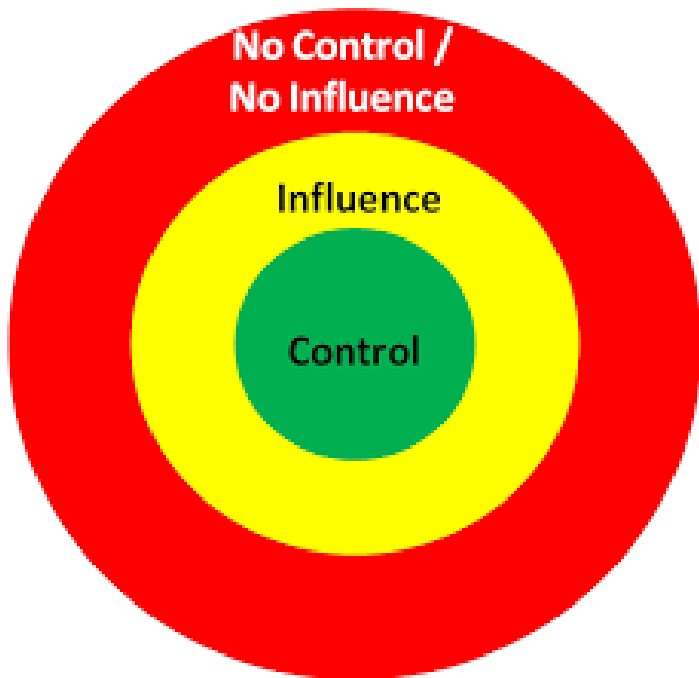


- Right size the shelter system
- Repurpose funds committed to more shelter beds into permanent housing options

## WHO SHOULD RESPOND?

- Toronto alone cannot fix this
- All orders of government must step up and do their part
- The province
  - Lack of investment in affordable housing and support services (i.e., funding only 100 COHBs per month in Toronto)
- The federal government
  - Lack of a proper refugee integration strategy
  - Not maximizing the impact of the new homes developed through the Rapid Housing Initiative

## WHERE SHOULD WE FOCUS?



- Prevention and diversion strategies
- New shelter service model and health services framework
- City funded income and rental supports
- Intense, client-focused Housing First outreach for people living outside
- Made-in-Toronto supportive housing service model
- Equitable funding allocations for shelters so that they can deliver client and housing focused services
- Rapid housing initiatives – fast tracked, evidence based, outside the box strategies
- Provincial and federal governments - to invest in supportive and affordable housing at the municipal level





THANK YOU

