**2023-24 Community Homelessness Report:  
Reflecting on the Changing Response to Homelessness Worksheet**

**What is this worksheet?**

In the Community Homelessness Report (CHR) 2023-24 reporting cycle, question 1.2 (which is mandatory) refers to a separate worksheet developed to help communities reflect on their changing approach to addressing homelessness. The worksheet is **optional** and included in **Annex A**.

Question 1.2 reads:

How has the community’s approach to addressing homelessness changed over the last few years?

Communities are strongly encouraged to use the “Reflecting on the Changing Response to Homelessness” worksheet to help them reflect on how the approach has changed and the impact of these changes at the local level.

**What is the purpose of this tool?**

The purpose of this tool is to support communities to reflect on changes taking place in their local approach to addressing homelessness. Recall that, through their CHR, communities self-assess their progress with Reaching Home implementation, which includes requirements related to:

* Integrated, community-level governance;
* Meaningful collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners;
* Encouraging broad participation and partnerships;
* Coordinating service delivery (Coordinated Access);
* Using a Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS); and,
* Maintaining quality, person-specific data on homelessness and working to meet reduction targets specific to core community-level outcomes (Outcomes-Based Approach).

Using the worksheet, communities can reflect on their efforts, as well as consider the overall impact and ways Reaching Home may have supported the changes that have taken place.

Note that this is an **optional** tool. The intent is to help communities with their reflection process, in order to answer question 1.2 in their CHR.

**Who can complete this tool?**

Any community can use this worksheet to help them reflect on the changes that are taking place in their local approach to addressing homelessness. That being said, the worksheet was developed specifically for communities funded under the Designated Communities stream and the territorial capitals funded under the Territorial Homelessness steam, to support them with completing their CHRs.

**Instructions for completing this worksheet**

See below for guidance on how to complete this worksheet. These are just suggestions – communities are encouraged to use the tool in the way that works best for them.

1. Download this document from the CHR Reporting Tools e-course on the [Homelessness Learning Hub](https://homelessnesslearninghub.ca/library/resources/reaching-home-community-homelessness-report-reporting-tools/).
2. The worksheet is organized by three broad themes:
   1. Governance and partnerships (page 4)
   2. HMIS and Outcomes-Based Approach (page 5)
   3. Coordinated Access (four sub-themes: access points to service [page 6], triage and assessment [page 7], Resource Inventory [page 8], vacancy matching and referral [page 9])
3. For each theme/sub-theme, consider how the local approach to addressing homelessness has changed over the last few years, and may continue to change going forward. Include changes in local data and information management as part of your reflections, such as the impact of having access to real-time, comprehensive information about people experiencing homelessness (i.e., a person-specific dataset).
4. Start by reflecting on the past. Consider the prompts. For example, for governance and partnerships, the first reflection reads, “What was the community’s approach to governance a few years ago? What needed to change and why?” Each page has questions to consider in your reflections. These questions may not all apply to your context and communities do not need to answer each one.
5. Next, reflect on how things are now, in the current state. Consider the questions. For example, for governance and partnerships, the second reflection reads, “What’s the current state? What changed? How?” Again, the questions are provided as prompts, and may not all apply to your current situation.
6. Continue with your reflections on the ideal future state. For example, for governance and partnerships, the third reflection reads, “What’s the ideal future state? What still needs to change? Why?”
7. Finally, in the last reflection, consider the impact of these changes on various groups in your community:
   1. People experiencing or at-risk of homelessness,
   2. Service providers and partners in the homeless-serving system;
   3. Service providers and partners in other service delivery systems,
   4. The broader public; and,
   5. Funders.

After the worksheet has been completed, communities can record their observations in their CHR specific to how the response has changed over the last few years (see question 1.2). The worksheet does not need to be returned with the CHR.

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| **Governance and Partnerships** | |
| **Reflection 1: What was the community’s approach to governance a few years ago? What needed to change and why?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| *Questions to consider in your reflections:*   * How did people communicate with each other about what’s happening in the homeless-serving system and broader community? * How could people participate in decision-making? * How were decisions made about service delivery for people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness? * How were changes in service delivery communicated to people impacted by them? | |
| **Reflection 2: What’s the current state? What changed? How?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| *Questions to consider in your reflections:*   * Is there a new or improved governance model in place? Are Indigenous partners included in the governance model? * Who makes decisions about Coordinated Access and HMIS? * Is it more clear how different governance groups fit together? Is information being shared more openly between groups? * Is the community working with new Indigenous partners on a more consistent, ongoing basis? Or working with existing partners in a new way? * Are decisions being informed by real-time, comprehensive data about people experiencing homelessness (i.e., a person-specific dataset)? | |
| **Reflection 3: What’s the ideal future state? What still needs to change? Why?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| *Questions to consider in your reflections:*   * What does an “integrated” or “inclusive” or “equitable” governance model look like for your community? * Has your community set reduction targets using accurate baselines generated from your person-specific data on homelessness? * Is your community using person-specific data to inform homelessness prevention and reduction strategies? * What would need to be true for your community to have effective governance in place? | |
| **Reflection 4: What’s the impact of the changes?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| *Questions to consider in your reflections:*   * Who has benefited most from the changes made to date? How? * Have there been any unintended consequences or successes that have resulted from the changes? | |

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| **Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) and Outcomes-Based Approach** | |
| **Reflection 1: What was the approach to data/ information management a few years ago? What needed to change and why?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| *Questions to consider in your reflections:*   * How many systems or tools were being used to collect data about homelessness? * How was information shared about people experiencing homelessness who needed help with their housing plans or shelter diversion plans? How were referrals made? * Were client consents and data sharing agreements in place? * Was data being protected from unauthorized access? | |
| **Reflection 2: What’s the current state? What changed? How?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| *Questions to consider in your reflections:*   * Do people have to repeat their stories or share the same information less often? * Have waiting lists for housing-related resources been consolidated, so that people don’t have to manage multiple processes to access what they need? * Has there been a reduction in administrative burden for service providers using the HMIS? * Is homelessness data less fragmented at the community level? * How are Indigenous partners being engaged about the HMIS? * Is your Unique Identifier List generated by your HMIS and is it being used to fill vacancies in the Coordinated Access system? | |
| **Reflection 3: What’s the ideal future state? What still needs to change? Why?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| *Questions to consider in your reflections:*   * What would need to be true for your community to have an effective HMIS in place? * Can your community use data from your HMIS to generate data for reporting requirements, including the core outcomes of Reaching Home? | |
| **Reflection 4: What’s the impact of the changes?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| *Questions to consider in your reflections:*   * Who has benefited most from the changes made to date? How? * Have there been any unintended consequences or successes that have resulted from the changes? | |

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| **Coordinated Access – Access Points to Service** | |
| **Reflection 1: How did people get connected to services a few years ago? What needed to change? Why?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| **Questions to consider in your reflections:**   * Where did people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness go for help with their housing challenges? How did people know about where to go for help? * How were referrals made when people first made contact with a worker in the homeless-serving system? Was there a process to keep track of these referrals? | |
| **Reflection 2: What’s the current state? What changed? How?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| **Questions to consider in your reflections:**   * Can your community more clearly explain where people can go for help with their housing challenges? * Is there a more coordinated approach in place for offering help at the first point of contact? * Can your community more clearly identify and describe the resources that are available to address homelessness and how to access them? * Is information about people experiencing homelessness in your HMIS being updated in real-time, so that the dataset includes everyone who has come into contact with the homeless-serving system? Are consents always included as part of this process? * Are Indigenous partners being engaged about access points in a meaningful way? | |
| **Reflection 3: What’s the ideal future state? What still needs to change? Why?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| **Questions to consider in your reflections:**   * What would need to be true for your community to have an effective triage and assessment process in place? * What does “easy access” mean for your community? How would your community know if people find your access points easy to use or navigate? * What does “equitable access” mean for your community? How would your community know if access points are equitable? | |
| **Reflection 4: What’s the impact of the changes?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| *Questions to consider in your reflections:*   * Who has benefited most from the changes made to date? How? * Have there been any unintended consequences or successes that have resulted from the changes? | |

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| **Coordinated Access – Triage and Assessment** | |
| **Reflection 1: How did workers gather information to inform service planning/referrals a few years ago?**  **What needed to change and why?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| *Questions to consider in your reflections:*   * How many intake forms were in place? Did the questions on the various forms align with each other? Did people have to complete the same or similar intake form more than once? * How many assessment tools were being used? Did people have to complete more than one tool? * How was information shared between workers who were helping the same person or family to find housing or connect with other services in the community? | |
| **Reflection 2: What’s the current state? What changed? How?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| *Questions to consider in your reflections:*   * Is there greater consistency in the information that is being gathered from people across the homeless-serving system, as appropriate? * Has there been an improvement in referrals in some way? * Is information about people experiencing homelessness in your HMIS being updated in real-time? Are housing plans being updated in real-time? * Are Indigenous partners being engaged about the triage and assessment process in a meaningful way? | |
| **Reflection 3: What’s the ideal future state? What still needs to change? Why?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| *Questions to consider in your reflections:*   * What would need to be true for your community to have an effective triage and assessment process in place? * Does the community have a process in place for evaluating the triage and assessment process? If so, what is the process for addressing issues that have been identified? * Is there a process in place for acknowledging when things are going well and celebrating successes? | |
| **Reflection 4: What’s the impact of the changes?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| *Questions to consider in your reflections:*   * Who has benefited most from the changes made to date? How? * Have there been any unintended consequences or successes that have resulted from the changes? | |

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| **Coordinated Access – Resource Inventory** | |
| **Reflection 1: How were housing resources documented a few years ago? What needed to change and why?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| *Questions to consider in your reflections:*   * Did the community have a document that identified and described the housing-related resources (e.g., units, subsidies and supports) that were available to people experiencing homelessness? * Did the community have a document that described the eligibility requirements for these housing-related resources? * Did the community have a documented process for filling vacancies in housing-related resources that are dedicated to people experiencing homelessness (units, subsidies, supports)? | |
| **Reflection 2: What’s the current state? What changed? How?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| *Questions to consider in your reflections:*   * Is the Resource Inventory current and complete? Is there a process in place to maintain it? * Are Indigenous-led housing providers included in the Resource Inventory? | |
| **Reflection 3: What’s the ideal future state? What still needs to change? Why?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| *Questions to consider in your reflections:*   * Are there housing-related resources missing from the Resource Inventory that your community would like to add, so that, when vacancies become available, they are filled using your Priority List (some of the time or all of the time)? * Is there a process in place to compare the housing-related resources that are available to people experiencing homelessness (the supply) against the unmet need in the community (the demand)? If so, what happens if there is a misalignment between supply and demand? How does this get addressed? | |
| **Reflection 4: What’s the impact of the changes?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| *Questions to consider in your reflections:*   * Who has benefited most from the changes made to date? How? * Have there been any unintended consequences or successes that have resulted from the changes? | |

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| **Coordinated Access – Vacancy Matching and Referral** | |
| **Reflection 1: What was the approach to filling vacancies a few years ago? What needed to change and why?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| *Questions to consider in your reflections:*   * In general, how did providers fill their vacancies, if they had housing-related resources dedicated to people experiencing homelessness (units, subsidies, supports)? * Did you community have a document that described how vacancies were filled in the housing-related resources that were available only for people experiencing homelessness? * In general, what happened when more than one person or family were eligible for the same unit, subsidy or caseworker? How was a decision made on who would get an offer? | |
| **Reflection 2: What’s the current state? What changed? How?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| *Questions to consider in your reflections:*   * Is information being shared more openly about vacancies and how they are filled? * Are more appropriate matches being made between people experiencing homelessness and the vacancies that become available for housing units, subsidies or supports? * Are there new case conferencing tables in place to help inform the vacancy matching and referral process and/or were existing tables strengthened? * Are Indigenous partners being engaged about the vacancy matching and referral process in a meaningful way? | |
| **Reflection 3: What’s the ideal future state? What still needs to change? Why?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| *Questions to consider in your reflections:*   * What would need to be true for your community to have an effective vacancy matching and referral process in place? * Does the community have a process in place for evaluating the vacancy matching and referral process? If so, what is the process for addressing issues that have been identified? * Is there a process in place for acknowledging when things are going well and celebrating successes? | |
| **Reflection 4: What’s the impact of the changes?** | **[Record your reflections here…]** |
| *Questions to consider in your reflections:*   * Who has benefited most from the changes made to date? How? * Have there been any unintended consequences or successes that have resulted from the changes? | |