

BACKGROUND

MHCC and CAEH: Building Housing First Capacity

The federal budget of March 2013 linked a five-year, \$600 M extension of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy to Housing First, specifically referencing the evidence generated by the At Home/Chez-Soi Research Demonstration Project—a significant research to policy impact.

This announcement, combined with existing receptivity to Housing First in Alberta, Ontario, and British Columbia, among other jurisdictions, ensured ongoing interest in Housing First as a viable response to people with mental illness who were experiencing homelessness.

The MHCC recognized the need to build Housing First capacity in communities. As a result, in 2014, the MHCC developed the [Housing First Training and Technical Assistance program](#) and the *Canadian Housing First Toolkit* to support communities to develop and implement Housing First. The CAEH assumed leadership of the Training and Technical Assistance program in April 2016 and under their expertise the program continues to offer hands-on training and ongoing support to Canadian communities.

The Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness was created to build a national movement to end homelessness in Canada. In July 2015, CAEH launched the [20,000 Homes Campaign](#), a national movement focused on ending chronic homelessness in 20 communities and housing 20,000 of Canada's most vulnerable homeless people by July 1, 2020. They are national leaders in this area and are well positioned to expand the reach of the toolkit.

Housing First offers an effective, evidence-based approach proven to improve the housing stability and quality of life for individuals who are chronically homeless and living with mental health issues. It is grounded in principles of choice and self-determination, individualized support services, no housing readiness requirements, harm reduction, and social and community integration.