



Housing Task Group Rent Supplement Position Paper

Over the course of the year 2107 the Niagara Poverty Reduction Network Housing Task Group explored the following questions:

- What does the rent supplement picture look like across the region?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of rent supplements in the current system?
- What potential is there to increase the impact of rent supplements?
- What best practices could inform rent supplement programs moving forward?
- What recommendations could be made regarding rent supplements in the region?

Position Statement

- **The Niagara Poverty Reduction Network sees Rent Supplement programs as a significant part of the region's continuum of housing and homelessness services. These programs offer individuals a stigma free, cost effective solution to the growing pressures for attaining quality affordable permanent housing.**
- **The Network strongly supports an examination and review of existing programs in comparison to best practices in order to identify opportunities to expand, strengthen, or realign local rent subsidies to maximize access and use by those who can benefit from them most.**

Recommendations

That a review of existing rent supplement and supported living programs administered by NRH and LHIN funded agencies to examine capacity and scope of the programs. The review should:

- Explore the development of protocols to offer rent supplements at the time when a client is ready to graduate out of an intensive program.
- Collate information about all rent supplement programs in the region with a goal of offering clear outlines of what they offer and how to access them. This should include a plan to offer ongoing updates on program changes to front line staff in community.
- Examine the collated information about existing program to form the basis for a needs study of this type of housing support for the entire Niagara Region.

Recommendations

- Explore best practices, innovations, and high impact rent subsidy programs from other jurisdictions to inform suggestions for local programs.
- Examine the current guidelines for local rent supplement, housing first and other housing programs to see if any of the practices or policies identified in the exploration or outlined in this report could be incorporated into existing programs.
- Explore options for the continued expansion of rent subsidies in Niagara

Endorsement of Statement



Next Steps

Who should we engage in community to share this position statement and recommendations?