

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1) Illustrate intersections between the housing, mental health and criminal justice systems in order to guide the development of "justice-informed" housing solutions for justice-involved people with mental health and addictions problems.
- 2) Articulate the **findings and priorities** identified by Col members and other attendees of a Think Tank Day.
- 3) Provide the Government of Ontario and decision-makers with **recommendations** on how to best meet the housing needs of justice-involved people with mental health and addictions problems.





A PREVIEW ON THE JOURNEY

Each person arrives in the CJS with their own unique set of life experiences.

- Victimization rates of homeless people with severe MI are between 74% and 87%
- Homeless less likely to call the police
- Cycle between homelessness & incarceration
- Justice-informed lens on MH & housing
 - Not always a linear journey

POLICE INTERACTION

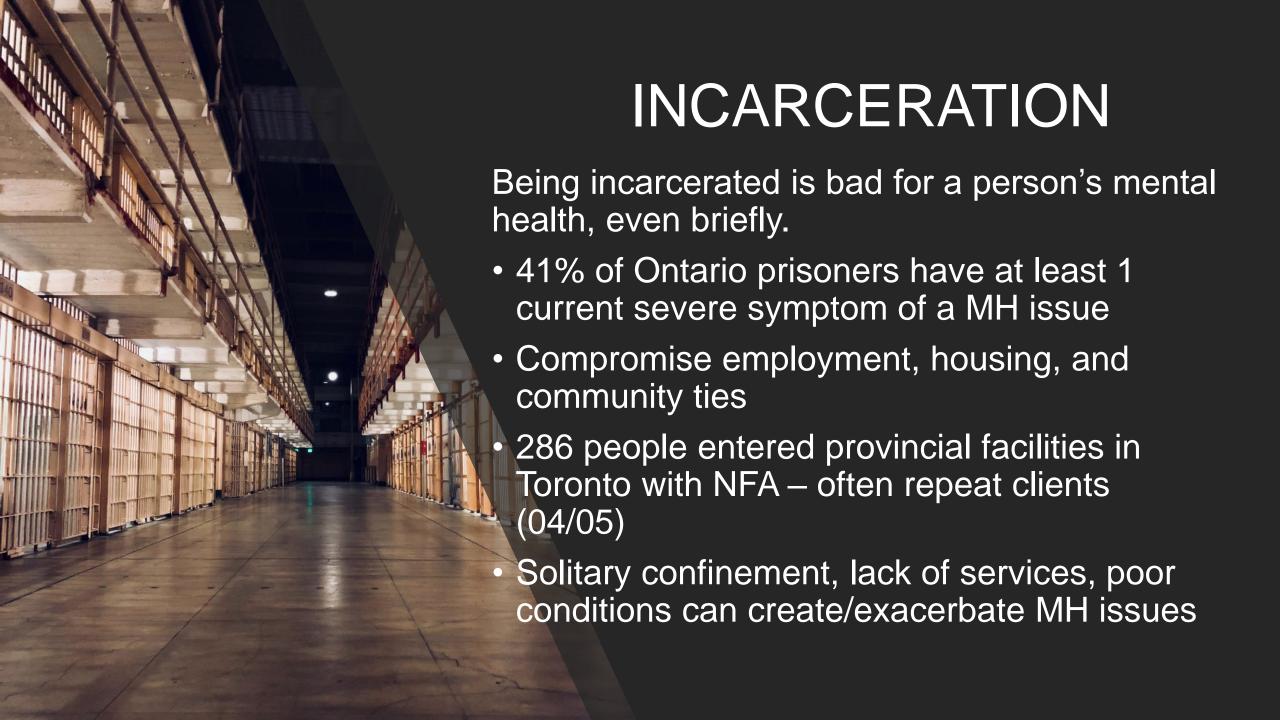
- Homelessness & mental illness are independently risk factors
- 2 to 2.5% of all police dispatches due to mental health crisis
- Homeless under greater surveillance
- Criminalization/penalization of homelessness (e.g., Safe Streets Act)
- Police as "forensic gatekeepers"
 - Formal vs. informal
 - MH system vs. CJS



BAIL

Being held in custody is stressful & traumatic, can produce or exacerbate mental health issues

- Held in custody > promise to appear
- Risk-aversive culture
 - People with NFA more likely to be denied bail
- Bail conditions set people up to fail
 - Strict residency conditions
 - Conditions unconnected to offence
 - Abstain from alcohol or illicit drugs





PHYSICAL HEALTH IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Physical health care issues can further compound mental health, housing & justice issues.

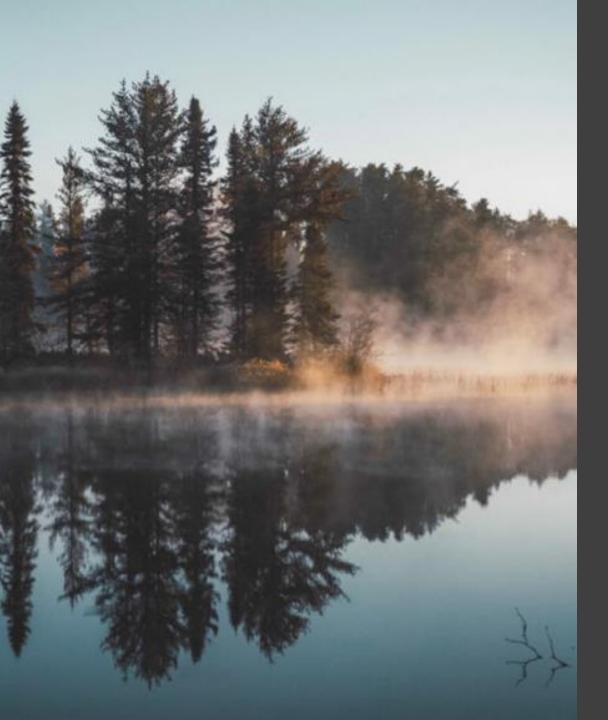
- Fractured nature of care
- Higher rates of Hep C and HIV in incarcerated populations
- Aging population & aging-related illness in federal institutions



DISCHARGE

Obtaining & maintaining secure housing is a challenge for anyone, but especially for those with MH concerns.

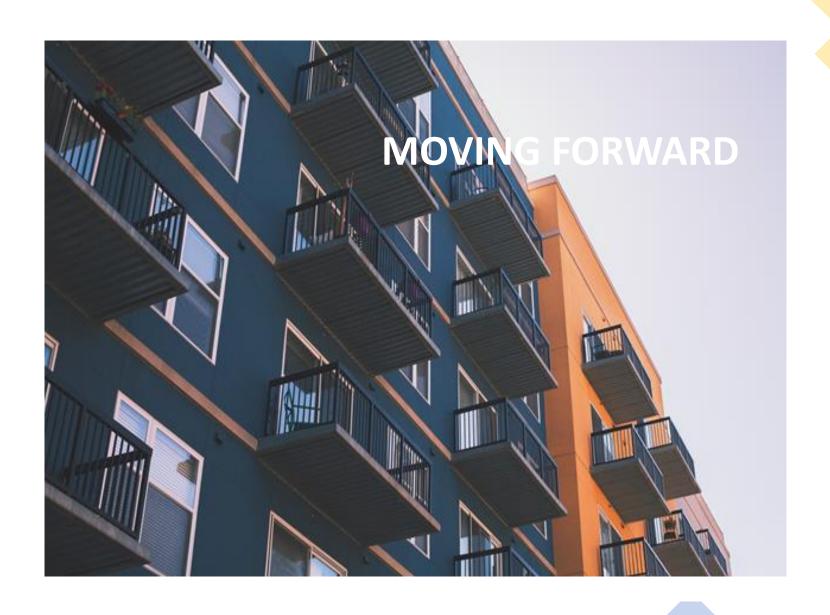
- Study showed 1/3 third of all incarcerated people in Canada would have no home upon their release
- Homeless before incarceration --> homeless upon discharge
- No access to quality discharge planning
 - Only 5 of 26 provincial jails have a staff member for discharge planning
 - Plan doesn't have to extend past incarceration
 - No planning for pre-trial population

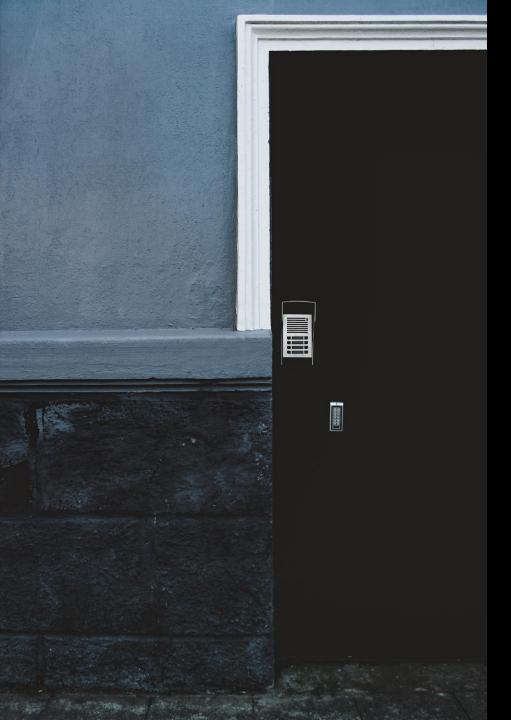


Northern Ontario & Indigenous Peoples' Housing Needs

- Indigenous over-represented in homeless & CJ population
- Limited resources & shortage of housing in Northern Ontario
 - Many forced to stay in Kenora, many in shelters
- Intergenerational trauma negatively impacts person's ability to secure housing







New Challenges

- Stable and secure housing that is responsive to the needs of people who are justice involved and/or have mental health and addictions issues
- Currently, rent geared to income housing is often the only affordable housing option
- Amendments to the Housing Services Act negatively affect people who find themselves at the intersections of the mental health and justice systems

• Effective September 23, 2019

RECENT AMENDMENTS TO THE HOUSING SERVICES ACT

- Applies to housing that is governed by the HSA (Public Housing, Co-Ops, etc)
- Refuse an offer housing if member of the household has previously been evicted from *HSA housing*

Specific criteria must be satisfied



CRITERIA FOR REFUSAL

- 1. Member of household was evicted pursuant to section 61 or 94.2 (illegal act or business) of the *Residential Tenancies Act*
- 2. Member of household was evicted from housing governed by HSA
- 3. Eviction under section(s) 61 or 94.2 was for one of six specific illegal acts/business
 - 4. Eviction occurred in previous five (5) years and was not overturned on appeal
 - 5. No reasonable grounds to believe that accommodating the household would pose a risk to the safety of one or more other persons at the housing project.



Implications for Re-entry & Community Safety

- Securing stable and supportive housing is essential for re-integration
- Public housing is often housing of last resort limit housing options
- Exclusion from public housing would negatively impact reintegration
- Fairness issue no requirement for conviction
- Other members of household may experience homelessness

CIVIL LEGAL NEEDS PROJECT



LEGAL EDUCATION



ACCESS TO LEGAL SERVICES



SYSTEMS NAVIGATION

