



Wellness Hub for Shelters: Tailored Version of the Program for the Shelter Setting

Partners:

- The Knowledge Translation Program at St. Michael's Hospital (i.e., the Wellness Hub coordinating centre): <https://knowledgetranslation.net/>
- Inner City Health Associations (ICHA): <http://www.icha-toronto.ca/>
- Healthcare Excellence Canada (HEC) Learning Together Program: <https://www.healthcareexcellence.ca/>

Wellness Hub Program Objectives in Shelters:

1. Tailor the Wellness Hub program, a wellness and infection prevention intervention for LTCHs, RHs, for the Shelter setting, and implement the program in this setting.
2. Understand what resources and supports are most useful to congregate settings both during and beyond the pandemic, and how these can be implemented effectively and sustainably to create safe communities (through a process and outcome evaluation of the Wellness Hub program).

Wellness Hub for Shelters Eligibility:

We are recruiting shelter sites through the following four shelter organizations within the Greater Toronto Area:

- Homes First
- Dixon Hall
- Fred Victor
- Salvation Army Toronto

Each organization has the opportunity to participate in the program. We would then request that each organization select specific sites that they would like to have enrol in the program and participate in the site-level Wellness Hub activities outlined in the Support and Learning sections below.

- Organizations that have not previously received HEC Learning Together Program seed funding (see below) will be able to enroll up to 4 sites in the Wellness Hub for Shelters program.
- Organizations that have previously received HEC Learning Together Program seed funding (see below) will be able to enroll up to 1-3 sites in the Wellness Hub for Shelters program.

We can work with you at the organization level to determine which sites may be most appropriate to support within your organization.

Eligibility criteria for shelter sites:

- Sites must be in the Greater Toronto Area
- Sites must be majority publically-funded (federal, provincial, municipal, in line with HEC funding criteria below)
- Sites must be either emergency shelters or temporary shelters in hotels that are funded until at least December 31, 2021 (in line with HEC funding criteria below)



Wellness Hub Supports Available for the Shelter Setting:

1. Access to **seed funding through HEC Learning Together Program**. Details and eligibility requirements are as follows:
 - Only emergency shelters are eligible to receive funding. Temporary shelters in hotels are eligible as long as they are funded until at least December 31, 2021.
 - Sites must be majority publically-funded (federal, provincial, municipal), and in the Greater Toronto Area.
 - Organizations that have not previously received HEC funding are eligible to fund 4 sites through the following funding structure:
 - i. 3 eligible sites can receive \$10,000
 - ii. 1 eligible site can receive \$3,333
2. Access to **capacity building resources and supports through partnership between the Wellness Hub and ICHA's Population Health Team**, including:
 - **Purpose:** The partnership between the Wellness Hub team and ICHA's Population Health Team will offer organizations supporting emergency shelters and the shelter sites themselves with a central, holistic, support hub to help guide their response to pandemic-related challenges. This partnership will consolidate ICHA's client-facing and Wellness Hub's staff-facing resource and support profiles and will act as a bridge between the shelter and the healthcare sectors.
 - Resources and supports will be continuously developed and updated based on the needs we are hearing from the shelter organizations and sites and the changing landscape of the pandemic.

A summary of the core resources that will be offered are as follows:

- **Online resource repositories and online or physical resource packages** with resources either developed by or compiled by the Wellness Hub and ICHA teams, in three core program domains:
 - i. **IPAC+** - Focus on creating healthy environments through infection prevention and control (IPAC)
 - ii. **CARE+** - Focus on promoting staff wellness
 - iii. **Vaccine+** - Focus on promoting vaccine confidence
- **Interactive supports and sessions** pertaining to key challenges that shelters have been experiencing throughout the pandemic relevant to the three core program domains (i.e., IPAC+, CARE+, Vaccine+), such as:
 - i. **IPAC training:** Through the Community Health Ambassador Program (CHAMP), ICHA is offering IPAC training and support to empower health ambassadors (including staff and those with lived experience) to promote IPAC best practices in their setting
 - ii. **IPAC and vaccine support:** ICHA nurses will be on-site to offer support with IPAC and to administer COVID-19 vaccines
 - iii. **Community Insight: Monthly Community of Practice:** Wellness Hub and ICHA will be leading a monthly meeting for shelters and drop-in sites with the ICHA health ambassadors and any other relevant shelter stakeholders. This will be an opportunity to connect, discuss key



- challenges, and receive resources and training on how to address these challenges.
- The discussion topics will be based on what the health ambassadors and other shelter stakeholders indicate are of interest and important and will be informed by site onboarding meetings (see below), ongoing discussions with ambassadors, and feedback forms.
 - Option for shelter organizations to engage in additional **coaching with a Wellness Hub for Shelters program facilitator**.
 - i. The facilitator can provide support with organization-specific needs around tailoring and implementing Wellness Hub for Shelters core resources and supports to their setting. For e.g., this facilitator could meet with all health ambassadors from one organization to provide support with implementation and tailoring.
 - ii. An ICHA health promotion facilitator will be able to be engaged for specific health promotion needs, including on a shelter site-specific level.
 - iii. These facilitators can support capacity building and act as the bridge between shelters and the healthcare sector and clients and staff.
3. Wellness Hub and ICHA are collaboratively offering access to novel and easy testing strategies:
- **PCR gargle saliva testing for COVID-19 diagnosis.**
 - i. This testing is immediately available through the Wellness Hub program.
 - ii. Available to shelter staff and their household members (e.g., partners, roommates, children, other family members) who are **symptomatic or have had a high-risk exposure**. This testing cannot be leveraged to cover routine testing (e.g., unvaccinated screening based on new vaccine guidance).
 - iii. Saliva test swish and gargle method is a non-invasive test, improving the COVID-19 test experience. For a demonstration of the test, please see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9xonNTtApY>
 - iv. Test kits can be courier directly to the personal homes of shelter staff and their household members to ensure appropriate isolation protocols can be followed.
 - v. Tests can be requested through a phone call to the Wellness Hub team, or through our online request form.
 - vi. Results will be available within 24-72 hours based on location and time of courier requests.
 - **Rapid dual influenza/COVID-19 antigen test.**
 - i. Available to new shelter admissions or newly symptomatic clients as well as shelter staff and their household members who are newly symptomatic.
 - ii. Uses a nasal swab (not nasopharyngeal) that will be completed by ICHA nurses on request from the shelter.
 - iii. Results available within 1-2 hours depending on the time taken to return to primary sites for processing.



- iv. Tests can be requested through a phone call to the ICHA testing team, or through an online request form.
 - v. **Please note:** Sites must enroll in a partner program evaluation project (currently under development) to receive access to the rapid dual influenza/COVID-19 antigen test. This program is being set up and therefore the antigen test will not be immediately available.
4. Access to **additional education supports through the HEC Learning Together Program**, including:
- A virtual learning series:
 - i. **Webinars** – A detailed presentation around a topic of interest followed by questions and answers from the audience.
 - ii. **Huddles** – A brief presentation with more time for discussion between participants and the presenter. Opportunity to make connections with others facing similar challenges in a supportive environment.
 - iii. **Workshops** – Opportunity for hands on experience with tools, templates, guidance, and techniques for supporting care.
 - iv. **Discussion forums** – Unstructured conversation led by people working in the area and subject matter experts.
 - 1:1 coaching

Wellness Hub Operates as a Learning Initiative:

We have embedded learning opportunities into this support program that will allow us to work with individuals in shelters and other congregate care settings to improve the quality of services and better understand how to effectively create healthy environments.

To contribute to these learning objectives, sites will be asked to participate in the following activities:

Enrollment Activities

- Have 1-2 individuals be a part of a 15-20 minute needs assessment interview to learn more about 1) the experiences of shelters throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and 2) the needs of the settings and how the Wellness Hub program can be tailored to meet these needs
- As a site, identify S.M.A.R.T. goals for what you would like to achieve through the Wellness Hub program within the three core program domains (i.e., IPAC+, CARE+, Vaccine+)
- Have 1 individual complete a 10-15 minute site-level questionnaire to help team learn more about factors associated with infection prevention and control in congregate settings
- Receive the Wellness Hub supports in your setting (including maintaining communication with the Wellness Hub team and the shelter organizations)

Mid-Line Activities

- Review progress to date on IPAC+, CARE+, and/or Vaccine+ S.M.A.R.T. goals

Exit Activities



- Have 1-2 individuals be a part of a 15-20 minute exit interview to learn more about the impact of the Wellness Hub program in their setting
- Review overall progress on IPAC+, CARE+, and/or Vaccine+ S.M.A.R.T. goals

How to Enroll:

Please confirm your interest in enrolling as an organization with the Wellness Hub team (in response to this email). We can then:

- **Step 1 – Organization-level:** Book a quick 30-minute call at the organization-level to review the Wellness Hub for Shelter program supports and how our team can best work with your organization, as well as to provide guidance on which emergency shelter sites within your organization would be the best fit for the Wellness Hub program, if needed.
- **Step 2 – Site-level:** Book 30-minute to 1-hour meetings with the shelter sites within your organization that are participating in the program to conduct the onboarding activities.