



news release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Government of Canada delivers support to help those who are homeless in Greater Simcoe County

BARRIE, ONTARIO, April 11, 2008—Families and individuals in Greater Simcoe County, working to break free from the cycles of homelessness and poverty and building a stronger future for themselves, are getting help from the Government of Canada.

Mr. Patrick Brown, Member of Parliament for Barrie, on behalf of the Honourable Monte Solberg, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, today announced \$274,892 in funding for United Way of Greater Simcoe County under the government's Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS).

"Our Government is delivering on its commitment to help those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless," said Mr. Brown. "We are proud to support community efforts that help find local solutions to local problems. Working together, we can help our most vulnerable citizens find a place to call home as well as find the supports they need to become more self-sufficient."

The announcement took place at the David Busby Street Centre, one of the many community organizations benefitting from this HPS funding. United Way for Greater Simcoe County provides this funding to local projects that reflect one of the four key priorities identified in the Community Plan: housing support services, transitional housing, youth services and community development. United Way of Greater Simcoe County is focused on having a positive impact in Simcoe County throughout their 49 year history.

"The strength of our partnership with business, community groups and government at all levels allows us to secure investment dollars," said Seija Suutari, United Way's Executive Director. "Clearly, housing is a necessity of life and access to affordable housing supports will have a domino effect on improving overall quality of life conditions for individuals and families. We are proud to be a partner in this essential project."

Funding will allow the David Busby Street Centre to hire a part-time housing worker, extend the Centre's hours and increase access to supports for individuals and families in need of permanent housing.

"Our mandate is to provide a warm safe environment for the marginalized population, those who are socially isolated, the homeless, low-income families, youth and seniors in the community," said Louise Stinson, Executive Director of the David Busby Street Centre. "We strive to advocate for and improve conditions for individuals and families within the County of Simcoe who are homeless or at risk of homelessness."

On February 22, 2008, Minister Solberg announced that 505 projects totalling almost \$150 million had been approved under the HPS to prevent and reduce homelessness in Canada. The announcement made today is part of this total funding.

The HPS is providing \$269.6 million over two years to help communities across Canada combat homelessness more effectively. The Strategy recognizes that housing stability is essential to self-sufficiency and full participation in Canadian society. It focuses on transitional and supportive housing as important measures to help people overcome homelessness. With its clear goals of improved partnerships, enhanced sustainability and tangible results, the Strategy will provide concrete, meaningful and lasting results for Canadians in need.

“Our government is investing more in affordable and supportive housing than any federal government in Canada’s history, and as a result we are helping tens of thousands of Canadians reach a better, more stable life,” said Mr. Brown.

The link between homelessness and mental illness is well-established. With Budget 2008, the Government is committed to developing solutions that will save lives by providing \$110 million to the Mental Health Commission of Canada to support innovative demonstration projects to develop best practices to help Canadians facing mental health and homelessness challenges.

- 30 -

This news release is available in alternative formats upon request.

For more information on the Homelessness Partnering Strategy, please visit www.homelessness.gc.ca.

For further information (media only):

Media Relations Office
Human Resources and Social Development Canada
819-994-5559

backgrounder

The **Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS)** began on April 1, 2007. The Strategy is providing \$269.6 million over two years to prevent and reduce homelessness in Canada. The HPS is a unique community-based program aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness in Canada by providing funding and direct support to more than 60 communities across Canada.

Under the HPS, the Government of Canada is offering to work in partnership with all provinces and territories. Once put in place, such partnerships would encourage better alignment of federal and provincial/territorial investments, and help to provide a seamless continuum of supports for homeless people.

The HPS has three main initiatives: the **Homelessness Partnership Initiative**, the **Homelessness Accountability Network** and the **Surplus Federal Real Property for Homelessness Initiative**.

The **Homelessness Partnership Initiative (HPI)** is the cornerstone of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy. Its housing-first approach recognizes that the first step is to provide individuals with transitional and supportive housing.

The HPI has four funding components:

- Designated Communities
- Outreach Communities
- Aboriginal Communities
- Federal Horizontal Pilot Projects

The **Homelessness Accountability Network** helps to strengthen program accountability. It also develops knowledge and encourages organizations to reinforce their networks and share best practices.

The **Surplus Federal Real Property for Homelessness Initiative** makes surplus federal property as well as land available to community organizations, the not-for-profit sector, and other levels of government, for projects to prevent and reduce homelessness.