



The Provincial Human Services and Justice Coordinating Committee urges all parties to have an action plan for housing in the 2014 election

www.hsjcc.on.ca

There are not enough safe, affordable and appropriate housing accommodations available for individuals who come into contact with the justice system, especially those who have mental health issues, developmental disabilities, acquired brain injuries, drug and alcohol addictions, and/or fetal alcohol spectrum disorders. Without affordable, supportive and/or supported housing, these individuals are at risk of reoffending and re-entering the mental health and justice systems.

ISSUE: There are not enough housing services available for clients with mental health, addictions and/or related issues who are being released from custody.

- ✓ **ACTION REQUIRED:** Investments to and implementation of Ontario's *Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy*, with a special focus on providing housing for individuals with mental health, addictions and/or related issues who have come into contact with the justice system.

ISSUE: 1,434 people in Ontario were waiting for service initiation to receive mental health supportive housing at the end of fiscal year 2012/13.

- ✓ **ACTION REQUIRED:** Allocate any existing and new investments in housing to a variety of housing options, including supportive housing, supported housing, and rent supplements for individuals with mental health, addictions and/or related issues who have come into contact with the justice system.

ISSUE: There is a lack of safe beds available to ensure that individuals with mental health, addictions and/or related issues are appropriately diverted away from the criminal justice system.

- ✓ **ACTION REQUIRED:** Invest in short stay crisis safe beds across Ontario in order to ensure individuals with mental health, addictions and/or related issues are kept out of the criminal justice and corrections systems.

ISSUE: 150,000 to 300,000 people across Canada are homeless, resulting in an annual cost of \$1.4 billion to the health, justice and social services systems.

- ✓ **ACTION REQUIRED:** Establish a Housing First model in the next phase of Ontario's *Mental Health and Addictions Strategy*, where housing is the first step to recovery, to support individuals with mental health, addictions and/or related issues who have come into contact with the justice system.

About the HSJCC

The HSJCC Network has over 1,500 members including health and social service organizations, community mental health and addictions organizations and partners from the justice sector including Crown Attorneys, judges, police services and correctional service providers. The Network consists of one Provincial, 14 Regional and 43 Local Committees. The Provincial HSJCC is mandated by the *Provincial Strategy to Coordinate Human Services and Criminal Justice Systems in Ontario (1997)* and established to coordinate resources and services, and plan more effectively for people who are in conflict with the law.