



July Newsletter

We hope you all stayed safe and (somewhat) cool during the heat wave, and enjoyed some summer time. While we all know winter cold is deadly, the health risks for people without homes or with homes without cooling systems, especially isolated people, are very real. Our friends at the BCNPHA with their partners at BC Housing have developed resources for dealing with extreme heat, including a checklist and decision tree that you can check out [here](#). Health Canada also has a toolkit on communicating health risks of extreme heat events, which includes fact sheets, [here](#).

MNPCHA NEWS

Vote Housing Campaign

MNPCHA has endorsed a national campaign created in partnership with the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association, the Co-Operative Housing Federation of Canada, the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness and the Canadian Lived Experience Leadership Network. The campaign will shape what is expected to be the largest housing advocacy campaign in Canadian history.



Vote Housing is a **national non-partisan campaign designed to engage and mobilize Canadians to pledge to Vote Housing in the upcoming federal election**. We want to harness the power of Canadians across the country to ensure all political parties support making bold investments in affordable housing and ending homelessness.

The pandemic has exposed deep inequities in our country -- especially for those historically marginalized. What's more, we know homelessness and housing need in this country were created by public policy. Heading into an upcoming federal election, with the power of our voice, our time, and our vote, we will change those policies. We've invested in safe, affordable housing in the past – we can do it again.

We encourage MNPCHA members to endorse the campaign as well, and we will have updates and information on how to participate in the months ahead.

Watch the campaign video [here](#), and learn more about how to get involved [here](#).



Rent Relief Fund Update

Launched on May 31, the Manitoba Rent Relief Fund has received hundreds of applications for rent arrears, utility arrears, first month's rent, and damage deposits. Demand is high and continues growing daily. COVID-19 has had a deep impact on Manitoba tenants and many applicants have faced job loss or underemployment, a health crisis, or are waiting to receive benefits.

The stories we hear are varied and highlight the need to provide supports to tenants to help stabilize their housing. We are fortunate to have partners who are both referring people to the fund and accepting referrals from us. We have provided information on available financial supports through the Community Financial Help Line, tenant rights through referrals to the Tenant Landlord Cooperation and Residential Tenancies Branch, grants available for utility arrears through Neighbours Helping Neighbours, and guidance in applying for Rent Assist. During intake conversation with clients, we work to understand their broader circumstances in order to provide resources beyond short term loans.

Although the Rent Relief Fund is a brand new initiative, we are already seeing success. One of the families we were able to help this month includes a couple with a newborn baby who were being evicted from their housing. Their loan, funded in just three days time, allowed them to secure a new apartment.

We welcome you to check out our website for more information. If you would like additional information including promotional material for your organization please contact Kendall at supports@mnpha.com.

BOARD PROFILE

A new feature in our monthly newsletter, the Board Profile shares what MNPFA members' Boards of Directors are up to, and their perspective on current events within the sector. This month we spoke with Mary Agnes Welch, Chair of the Westminster Housing Society (WHS) Board.



WHS is a registered charity with a mission to provide good quality, affordable housing to lower income tenants. To achieve this, the WHS rehabilitates and constructs housing stock in Winnipeg's West Broadway area and surrounding neighbourhoods. Run entirely by volunteers, WHS relies on having a robust working board.

According to Mary Agnes, one of the biggest challenges faced by the WHS board is finding diverse members. The solution? "You just ask people!" she says. Having a range of skills, age groups, and life experience on a board will inevitably make it stronger.

Alongside working on developing new housing stock, WHS has been improving services and supports for tenants. "We are really lucky because we have strong tenant relations due to a sub committee run by Mike Maunder. The sub committee has been around forever, and Mike balances board and tenant responsibilities carefully". According to Mary Agnes, having tenants on the board has helped shape organizational priorities and outcomes.

As a working board, the WHS group faces the challenge of finding a work/volunteer/life balance. "On housing boards there is so much, so many things you wish you could do, and it is a matter of time and skills and capacity... Work/board/life balance can be a challenge because

things [board issues] happen during business hours".

Mary Agnes suggests that advocacy within the sector for more funding and government support is the best way to remedy the persistent issue of burnout, faced by many volunteers and workers in the charitable/non-profit sector.

HOUSING NEWS AND UPDATES

Province Providing \$355,000 to Canadian Mental Health Association to Provide Emergency Shelter in The Pas

The Manitoba government will provide an annual grant of \$355,000 to the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) to operate 26 overnight beds at the Oscar's Place shelter to support continued protection of vulnerable populations in The Pas and surrounding areas, Families Minister Rochelle Squires announced last week.

"Oscar's Place operates at full or close-to-full capacity every night and is an important resource that many vulnerable people in The Pas rely on," said Squires. "Our government will continue to work with local stakeholders to develop a long-term sustainable approach to keeping the facility open for the protection of vulnerable individuals in and around that community."

The Minister noted the funding will enable the facility to operate for 14 hours overnight, an increase from the current 12-hour operation, and will support the delivery of programming through applications to Reaching Home, Canada's Homelessness Strategy.

To read the full press release [click here](#).

National Housing Strategy Triennial Report



This report outlines the steps being taken to provide adequate, safe and affordable housing across the country. It describes the work being done to design and launch a complementary toolkit of housing initiatives that address needs across the housing continuum. To read the full report [click here](#)

Manitoba Housing 3-Year Action Plan: Feedback Opportunity

Manitoba Housing is creating a renewed 3-Year Action Plan, as required under the agreement of the National Housing Strategy.

A public survey is currently open, requesting feedback on:

- Housing priorities
- Populations in greatest need
- Housing options that are missing in your community
- Ideas, suggestions or solutions to address housing issues in your community

If you are looking for data and research on housing need in your community (including rental market needs and populations in housing need), you can reference the [Canadian Rental Housing Index](#) or the [Manitoba Collaborative Data Portal](#)

These show that across Manitoba:

- Indigenous households and recent newcomers to Canada (10 years or less) are slightly more likely to be living in unaffordable housing, and much more likely to be living in overcrowded conditions
- Seniors are much more likely to be spending more than 30% of their income on rent and utilities, but less likely be spending 50% or more, showing that their affordability challenges exist but are less severe as those of youth, aged 15-29 (of whom 22% are spending more than 50% of their incomes)
- Northern Manitoba has the highest rates of core housing need in the province, and much

of the Interlake region has higher than average rates of housing need

Additional [research](#) by CMHC has demonstrated that one-bedroom rental housing is least affordable to low income people in Winnipeg.

MNPHA's suggestions for addressing housing issues in Manitoba have included:

- **Increasing the supply of deeply affordable housing** through stackable grants, financing, and tax rebates to non-profit housing development
- Work collaboratively with the non-profit housing sector to **maintain affordability (that is, RGI housing) post-operating agreement**. This will require capital repair and renewal funding, and rent subsidies to keep the units affordable to low income tenants
- Provide **consistent and stable funding for supports within housing**. The two-year funding to MNPHA is an opportunity to demonstrate the impact of these supports on housing stability for those exiting or at-risk of homelessness, and continuing this funding will be critical for long-term outcomes
- Community delivery of social housing: MNPHA has developed a three-pronged strategy for the transformation of social housing: **transferring Manitoba Housing Assets into regional Community Housing Corporations**; **professionalizing the community housing sector** through a transformation team so community housing operators can manage day-to-day operations; and **developing sector-wide services** to take advantage of economies of scale across the province

The current Manitoba Housing Action Plan is available [here](#). The survey is open now until July 28.

Fill in the Survey and Learn More

EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

MOODLE LEARNING: JUNE 28 - JULY 28, 2021

Accessible Customer Service Standard Course

This is a self-directed, member-only online course.

COST: \$6 (CERTIFICATE ISSUED BY MANITOBA POSSIBLE)



Registration closes July 25, 2021

Register for the Course

MNPHA is offering the Accessible Customer Service Standard Course for our members, as a self-directed course.

This course covers foundational knowledge for all staff and volunteers of the housing sector to understand the Customer Service Standard under the Accessibility for Manitobans Act.

This course should take 45 to 90 minutes to complete. When it is completed, you will receive a participation certificate from Manitoba Possible.

It is open to MNPHA members only, and costs \$6.

Rapid Housing Initiative



The Government of Canada, through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), first launched the [Rapid Housing Initiative \(RHI\)](#) in October 2020. The initial funding for this initiative was \$1 billion to help address urgent housing needs of vulnerable Canadians through the rapid construction of affordable housing.

With this funding, RHI exceeded its initial target of creating up to 3,000 new affordable units. It will ultimately support the construction of more than 4,700 units across Canada. As announced on [April 26th 2021](#), the 2021 Budget provides increased funding for the RHI to address the urgent housing needs of our most vulnerable populations. CMHC will deliver the additional funding under two separate funding streams.

1. Under the Cities Stream, CMHC has notified [30 pre-identified municipalities](#) of their allocations. The only city in Manitoba receiving this will be Winnipeg, we will share updates on how this will be delivered as soon as we know.

2. [Under the Projects Stream](#), RHI will **only consider the applicants who submitted applications during the first round of RHI** and whose applications remain eligible for funding.

For more information and to apply click [here](#).

Picture of the Month

No idea is too big or too small for picture of the month! You can submit them by e-mail to membership@mnpha.com to be included in August's newsletter

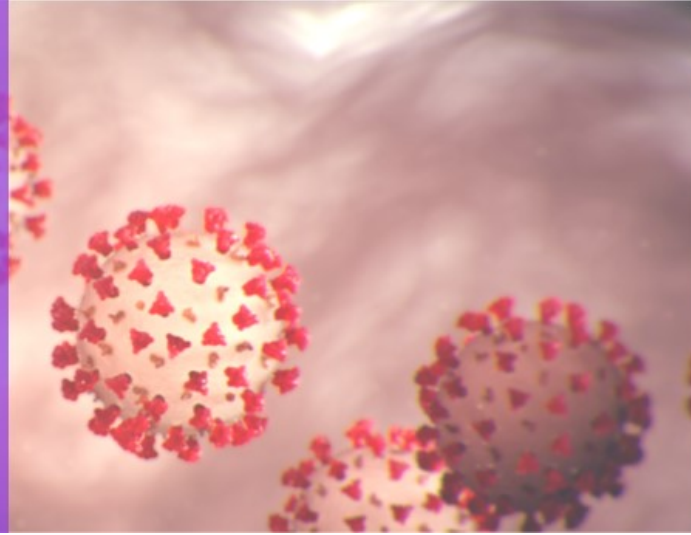


June's Picture of the Month: Mural by Dee Barsy

Muse Flats, UWCRC 2.0's newest development, has a beautiful mural. The painting features Dee's iconic blue background, bright colours, and abstract lines. Colony Creek, the waterways the used to run through the city, is represented in this composition with: a continuous (and nearly consistently black-coloured) line beginning from the left side of the image and then mirrored and flipped vertically with a continuous (and nearly consistently red-coloured) line beginning from the right side of the image. The flowing lines of this composition suggest: lines of movement and spaces of rest; pathways and waterways.

COVID-19 Resources for Non-Profit Housing Providers in Manitoba

[https://mnpha.com/
covid-19/](https://mnpha.com/covid-19/)



Other recent COVID-19 Resources and Updates:

- Guides, videos, and fact sheets on vaccination
- Public health orders as of June 26 require that: No more than 5 people may assemble in the common area of a multi-unit residence. You can [read the public health orders here](#). A number of members have told us they are keeping common rooms closed as they don't have monitoring capacity on site. We have also been asked about how organizations might be applying vaccination requirements and proof as things open up - we will monitor information on this and share it with members as soon as it is available.
- Healthy Hire Manitoba Program will provide a wage subsidy up to \$5000 per employee (and up to \$50,000 per employer) to hire/rehire a vaccinated employee. Program details [will be available here](#)

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