



Housing First Fidelity: Peer Exchange Approach

Ontario Housing First Forum: Linking Research with Practice

March 8, 2019, CAMH, Toronto

Geoffrey Nelson (Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo)

Tim Aubry (University of Ottawa)

Kathryn Gibb, Amy Osika, Dani Mills (Home for Good, Peel)



Overview of the Presentation

- **Introductions – All**
- **Rationale and Domains of HF Fidelity – Tim**
- **Methods of Fidelity Assessment – Geoff**
- **Fidelity Exchange – Kathryn, Amy, and Dani**
- **Completion of Fidelity Scale – All**
- **Discussion of Exercise – All**
- **Interest in Participating in a Fidelity Exchange – All**



Fidelity

- **Fidelity may be defined as the extent to which delivery of an intervention adheres to the protocol or program model originally developed. Fidelity measurement has increasing significance for evaluation, treatment effectiveness research, and service administration.**



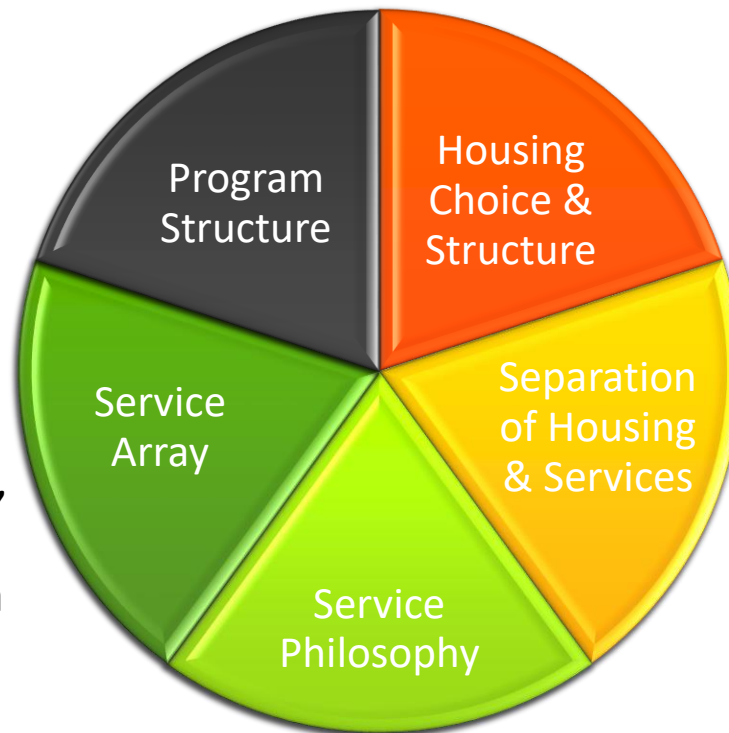
Housing First Fidelity Domains

5. Program

Structure: team structure, staff communication & organization, contact with participants

4. Service Array:

psychiatric, nursing, substance use, employment/education, social integration, etc.



3. Service Philosophy:

choice, harm reduction, self-determination, recovery

1. Housing: choice, integrated, affordable, permanent

2. Separation of Housing & Services:

no housing readiness, standard rights & rules of tenancy

Fidelity and Outcomes

Higher fidelity:

- **Higher community functioning, increased quality of life, and more time stably housed (Goering et al., 2016)**
- **More time stably housed (Gilmer et al., 2014)**
- **Greater housing retention and decreased drug use (less likely to report using stimulants, opiates at 1-yr follow-up) (Davidson et al., 2014)**

Fidelity and Adaptation

- **Housing First can be adapted for different populations:**
 - **Indigenous people**
 - **Ethnoracial groups**
 - **Youth**
 - **Women**

- **But there should still be adherence to the core principles and domains**

Maintaining a Balance Between Fidelity and Adaptation

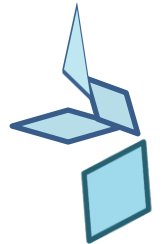
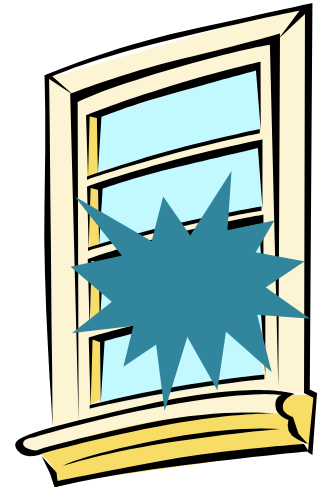
fidelity **adaptation**



When Fidelity Goes Out the Window

fidelity

adaptation



Why Fidelity?

- **Understand current practice and make improvements**
 - **How are services being delivered?**
 - **How are staff roles understood and enacted?**
- **Maximize outcomes**
- **Learn about effective ways to apply principles**

Methods of Housing First Fidelity Assessment

- **Self-assessment**
- **External assessment**
- **Fidelity exchange**



Self-assessment

- **Developed and validated for a study in California (Gilmer et al., 2013, 2014; Stefancic et al., 2013)**
- **36-item measure that taps the five domains**
- **Scores for each item converted to a 1-4 scale (low to high fidelity)**
- **Staff complete measure**
- **Group conciliation process to come to consensus ratings**



Program Sustainability Outcomes – Self-reported Fidelity at 4+ Years Post At Home / Chez Soi (Nelson et al., 2017)

Dimension	Vancouver ACT	Winnipeg ACT	Winnipeg ICM – Wi Chi Win	Winnipeg ICM – Ni Apin	Toronto ACT	Toronto ICM	Toronto ICM Ethnoracial	Montreal ICM	Moncton FACT
Housing Process and Structure	3.3	3.0	2.9	3.3	3.5	3.6	3.8	4.0	2.1
Separation of Housing and Services	4.0	4.0	3.7	4.0	3.7	4.0	3.7	4.0	3.7
Service Philosophy	3.0	4.0	3.8	3.8	3.8	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.8
Service Array	3.9	3.6	2.7	3.3	3.6	3.4	3.6	3.5	3.4
Team Structure	3.4	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.7	3.2	3.0	4.0	2.8
Average Across Dimensions	3.5	3.7	3.3	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.9	3.2
	Benchmark for high fidelity is 3.5								

Cross-national Study

Table 1: Fidelity Assessment Item Scores each Domains of Included Programs

PROGRAM NAME LOCATION	HOUSING PROCESS & STRUCTURE	SEPARATION OF HOUSING & SERVICES	SERVICE PHILOSOPHY	SERVICE ARRAY	PROGRAM STRUCTURE	TOTAL
PATHWAYS TO HOUSING DC <i>WASHINGTON DC, U.S.</i>	4	4	3.5	3.9	3.4	3.8
ARRELS FOUNDATION <i>BARCELONA, SPAIN</i>	3	3.9	3.2	2.4	2.8	3
UN CHEZ-SOI D'ABORD¹ <i>FRANCE</i>	3.7	3.9	3.8	3.1	3.2	3.6
HOUSING FIRST ITALIA² <i>ITALY</i>	2.9	3.3	3.3	2.8	3	3
HÁBITAT PROGRAM³ <i>MADRID, SPAIN</i>	3.2	3.5	4	3.3	3.2	3.4
PATHWAYS TO HOMES DUBLIN <i>DUBLIN, IRELAND</i>	3	4	3.6	3.5	3	3.4
THE SANDY HILL COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE <i>OTTAWA, CANADA</i>	3.7	4	3.8	3	3	3.5
CASAS PRIMEIRO <i>LISBON, PORTUGAL</i>	4	4	4	3.5	3.4	3.8
HOUSING FIRST BELGIUM⁴ <i>BELGIUM</i>	3.2	3.9	3.8	3.4	3	3.4
BERGEN HOUSING PROGRAM <i>NORWAY</i>	3.8	4.0	3.9	3.2	3.7	3.7
TOTAL	3.5	3.9	3.7	3.2	3.2	3.5

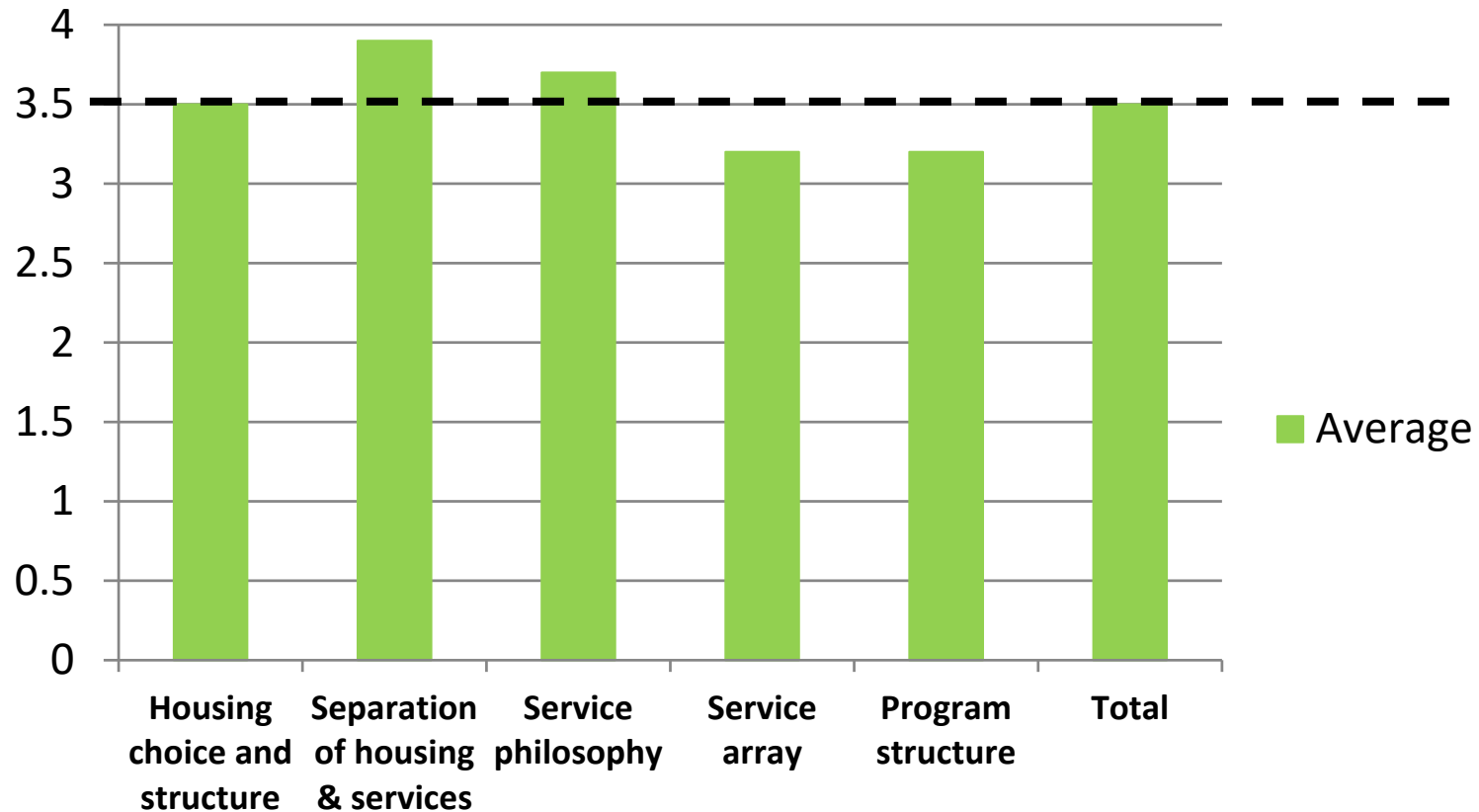
¹ Un Chez-soi d'abord consisted of 4 individual program sites, mean provided for across the sites

² Housing First Italia consisted of 4 individual program sites, mean provided for across the sites.

³ Hábitat Spain consisted of 3 individual program sites, mean provided across the sites.

⁴ Housing First Belgium consisted of 8 individual program sites, mean provided for across the sites.

Average Domain and Total Fidelity Scores Across International Study Programs



Benchmark for high fidelity is 3.5

External Assessment

- **Developed and validated by Stefancic et al. (2013)**
- **36-items cover the five domains**
- **Completed by an external team**



External Assessment



Fidelity Total Scores (0-4) for Scaling Up Project

Vancouver ACT 1	Vancouver ACT 2	Vancouver ACT 3	Vancouver ACT 4	Saskatoon ICM	Winnipeg ACT	Winnipeg ICM	Waterloo ICM	York ICM	Halifax ICM
3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.5

Scores of 3.5 or higher indicate high levels of fidelity.

Digging Deeper – Average Fidelity Scores (0-4) by Domain

Project	Housing Process and Structure	Separation of Housing and Services	Service Philosophy	Service Array	Team Structure / Human Resources	Average
Current study (10 programs)	3.4	3.8	3.3	2.8	3.4	3.3
At Home (10 programs early)	3.6	3.9	3.6	2.9	3.5	3.5
At Home (10 programs later)	3.6	3.9	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.6

Fidelity Exchange

- **An external assessment**
- **But conducted by two Housing First programs with one another**
- **Advantages of peer learning, getting to visit another Housing First program, low cost**
- **Does require some commitment though**

Fidelity Exchange

Evidence Exchange Network (EENet)

Ontario Housing First Regional Network Community of Interest
(OHFRN-Col)

Manual for Pilot of Collaborative Fidelity Assessment of Housing First Programs

December 20, 2018



Tim Aubry, Ph.D.,
Co-chair, EENet Ontario Housing First Regional
Network Community of Interest
Professor, School of Psychology
University of Ottawa
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5
Email: taubry@uottawa.ca

Geoffrey Nelson, Ph.D.
Co-chair, EENet Ontario Housing First Regional
Network Community of Interest
Emeritus Professor of Psychology
Department of Psychology
Wilfrid Laurier University
Waterloo, ON N2L 3C5
Email: gnelson@wlu.ca

Steps

- **1-2 orientation/training meetings by experienced fidelity assessors**
- **Organize date, schedule for visits**
- **Fidelity teams of 4-6 individuals**
- **Consensus ratings**
- **Initial program feedback**
- **Fidelity report**

Kathryn, Amy, and Dani

- **Why did you decide a fidelity assessment was important for your program?**
- **How do you envision the day of the assessment for your program?**
- **How will you prepare for the day?**
- **What do you hope to learn by visiting the Waterloo program?**
- **How will you prepare for your visit to Waterloo?**
- **What do you hope to gain from the fidelity exchange?**

Questions, Comments?



Exercise

- **Complete the external fidelity assessment items for your Housing First program**

Questions for the Audience

- **What factors have contributed to your high fidelity scores?**
- **What factors have played a role in your lower fidelity scores?**
- **What strategies do you have for improving your fidelity scores?**



Fidelity Exchange

➔ **Who is interested in participating in a fidelity exchange?**



Contact Information

- Geoff Nelson, gnelson@wlu.ca
- Tim Aubry, taubry@uottawa.ca
- Kathryn Gibb, kathryn.gibb@shipshey.ca
- Fidelity self-assessment and fidelity exchange manual are available at <http://eenet.ca/initiative/housing-first-community-interest#about>