

BUILDING KNOWLEDGE



Scattered-Site Supportive Housing SROI Series: Lookout Housing and Health Society, Surrey

This series explores the Social Return on Investment (SROI) of operating scattered-site supportive housing in B.C. It features five case studies of scattered-site supportive housing programs located in communities across the province. An SROI ratio compares the total investment to the financial value of the social and economic outcomes achieved, highlighting the value created by investing in these programs.

Full report

The Social and Economic Value of Scattered-Site Supportive Housing in B.C.

Other case studies

CMHA Mid-island, Nanaimo

CMHA Kelowna, Kelowna

MPA Society, Vancouver

Pacifica Housing, Victoria

For every dollar invested in scattered-site supportive housing through Lookout, approximately four and a half dollars in social and economic value is created.

Scattered-site supportive housing programs assist individuals experiencing – or at risk of experiencing - homelessness in transitioning from the streets, shelters or inadequate housing to long-term housing stability in the community. BC Housing supports this type of housing by investing in community-based non-profit agencies that provide programming and rent supplements for market housing. These programs are funded through the Homeless Outreach and Homeless Prevention Programs (HOP and HPP).

Lookout Housing and Health Society (“Lookout”) is a charitable organization that provides housing and support services to adults with low or no income who have few, if any, housing or support options. Lookout’s Homeless Prevention Program provides scattered-site supportive housing outreach to individuals and families in the Surrey area and helps them with obtaining and maintaining housing in the community. These outreach clients are at high risk of homelessness, and may be leaving institutions, have lost their jobs or housing, be aging out of care, or living in unsafe accommodations.

Through the program, staff support individuals and families in searching for safe, affordable housing in the community as well as making connections to community services. They can also provide rent supplements to support housing stability. Approximately 75 individuals receive supportive housing through this component of Lookout’s outreach programming. The average length of stay in scattered-site supportive housing through the program is seven months, after which residents may move on to other independent housing in the community without supports. Program statistics are not available on resident housing status post-program.





This study examines:

- › The social and economic value created by investing in the operation of scattered-site supportive housing
- › The breakdown by stakeholder group of social and economic value that is created
- › Implications for future investment

The Social Return on Investment (SROI) Methodology

The SROI methodology articulates the financial value of outcomes created through a social investment (such as investment in supportive housing), to reveal how much value is created for every dollar invested. An SROI analysis combines quantitative, qualitative, and participatory research techniques to show the value of outcomes from different stakeholder perspectives. The result is an SROI ratio that compares the total investment to the financial value of the social and economic outcomes that are achieved, showing – in monetary terms – the financial benefit of social investments.

The current research follows the internationally standardized SROI methodology and uses information from existing academic research and grey literature (including other SROI studies and economic analyses), and data gathered from residents, partners, and supportive housing providers.

KEY ELEMENTS IN THE LOOKOUT SROI MODEL

Inputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Investment by BC Housing (through HPP) as the sole investor in the total program costs, including staffing, programming, repairs, and rent supplements › Rents paid by residents
Timeframe for Investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 2016-2017 operating year
Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Residents (single men & women adults, couples without children and families with children) (primary stakeholders) › Landlords › Local communities › Government systems (various levels) › Investor (BC Housing)
Duration of Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Average length of stay in Lookout’s scattered-site supportive housing is approximately seven months, so outcomes were estimated to last a maximum of seven months. We have not speculated about future value because information is not available on resident housing status after the program and without further investment, residents may not continue to experience program-related outcomes. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that some residents move on to other independent housing in the community after receiving HPP outreach support, so the duration of outcomes included in the SROI model are a conservative estimate of the program’s impact.
Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › The SROI analysis of Lookout’s scattered-site supportive housing employs a primarily evaluative approach with some forecasting based on primary and rigorous secondary research.



Outcomes Included in the SROI Analysis

Outcomes included and valued in the SROI analysis were identified based on existing research, information from Lookout staff and resident interviews. Each outcome was assigned a financial value in the calculation of the SROI ratio. Outcomes include:

Stakeholder	Key Outcomes Included in the SROI
Residents (single male & female adults, couples, families)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Increased access to high quality housing and decreased experiences of homelessness › Increased overall wellbeing including positive changes in physical and mental health › Increased safety and decreased experiences of violence › Decreased harm from risk involved with street-based sex work › Decreased harm from substance use and increased ability to move towards reducing use › Increased personal disposable income › Increased ability to stay together as a family › Increased ability to engage in employment › Increased ability to be involved in community (such as volunteering)
Landlords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Decreased time and resources managing tenancies (such as evictions, repairs, and resident relations)
Local community/ neighbourhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Improved local neighbourhood and community quality › Increased local economic activity due to resident spending
Government (all levels)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Decreased use of emergency services by residents/families such as ambulances and emergency rooms › Decreased use of homeless shelters by residents › Decreased resident involvement in the justice system › Decreased hospital use by residents and families › Decreased service use related to resident substance use › Decreased child welfare involvement experienced by families › Decreased risk of sexual exploitation related to homelessness among residents (and associated decreased government service use)



“My life has changed for the better. I want to give back, and move into a career in mental health and addictions.”

– Lookout Resident



Lookout SROI Results

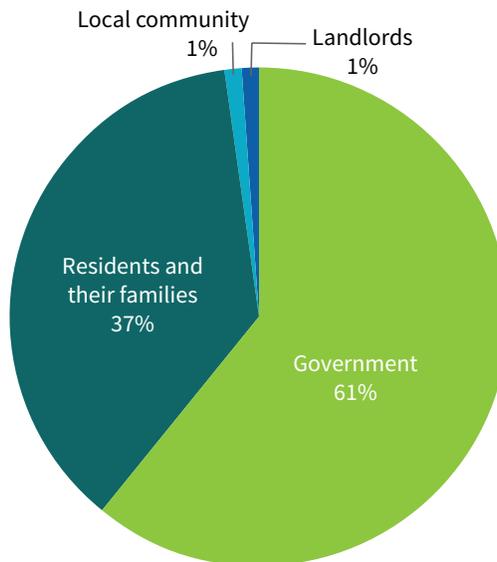
SROI analysis of investment in Lookout’s scattered-site supportive housing revealed:



For every dollar invested in Lookout’s scattered-site supportive housing, approximately four and a half dollars in social and economic value is created.

“When I got out of recovery, I left an abusive relationship... This program helped me to change my life.”

– Lookout Resident



Value Breakdown by Stakeholder Group

All stakeholders included in the SROI analysis experience value from outcomes, including:

Government: Approximately 61% of the social and economic value goes back to the government in cost reallocations related to decreased service use by residents. For every dollar invested, nearly three dollars is generated for government in cost reallocations due to decreased service use.

Local Community: While the community as a whole benefits from decreased service use that increases efficiency and reduces costs to taxpayers over time, an additional 1% of the value goes back to the local community. This value is generated through improved community quality and local spending by residents. The value is experienced by community members who encounter less homelessness in their community and businesses that benefit from local spending. While some value to the local community was captured through SROI analysis, this value is likely understated because benefits from resident community engagement and volunteering and benefits for businesses (beyond local spending) were not fully captured in the SROI model.

Landlords: Approximately 1% of the value is returned to landlords who support program success. Landlords experience value through positive and stable tenancies supported through the program and decreased loss of income and time spent due to rent arrears, repairs or evictions. While some value to landlords was captured through the SROI analysis, this value is likely understated because some benefits, such as the value to landlords of knowing they are contributing to community wellbeing through their involvement with the program, were not fully captured in the model.

Residents and their families: Approximately 37% of the value goes back to residents and their families, through increased wellbeing, safety, disposable income, employment income, and reduced harm. This indicates that, while scattered-site supportive housing creates important value for the government, it is also generating significant value for people living in supportive housing.



Discussion

With over four dollars in social and economic value generated by Lookout's HPP scattered-site supportive housing for every dollar invested, it is clear that significant value is created through scattered-site supportive housing for adults and families who have experienced homelessness or difficulties maintaining housing. Lookout's HPP programming creates important added value through its support for families, who, without supportive housing, are at greater risk of experiencing violence, abuse, and long-term negative outcomes. The program generates further value by working with residents to engage with employment and volunteering opportunities once stably housed.

The SROI analysis of Lookout's scattered-site supportive housing program represents a conservative estimate of the total value created, since it was not possible to measure the financial value of all potential outcomes. Further, the SROI analysis only captures the value of outcomes for the seven months that residents are, on average, housed through the program, despite the possibility of longer term impacts generated through the life skills and experience of stability

gained through housing in community-based market rentals. The actual social and economic value created by Lookout's scattered site supportive housing program is likely much higher.

Lessons Learned

- › Investment in scattered-site supportive housing creates significant social and economic value, not only for the various levels of government that may experience decreased service use, but also for supportive housing residents, families, landlords and local communities. Further investment in scattered-site supportive housing is expected to generate value while addressing a social need.
- › Investment in increasing the supply of affordable housing can enhance the value of scattered-site supportive housing, which relies on the availability of affordable market rentals for vulnerable individuals.
- › Further research is needed to continue to understand and track the social and economic value created from scattered-site supportive housing.

Thank You

Our sincere thanks to all the residents who shared their perspectives and stories with us. Our sincere appreciation to Lookout Housing and Health Services staff for sharing their valuable insights and for supporting this study.

More Information:

Visit BC Housing's Research Centre at www.bchousing.org to find the latest workshops, research and publications on building and operating affordable, sustainable housing.

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