

August 2021

Orca Place Modular Supportive Housing Resident Outcomes



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The Research Centre identifies and bridges research gaps to address homelessness, housing affordability, social housing challenges and the needs of distinct populations. Mobilizing knowledge and research expertise helps improve the quality of housing and leads to innovation and adoption of new construction techniques, Building Code changes, and enhanced education and training programs.

Learn more about the Research Centre at www.bchousing.org. Sign up to receive the latest news and updates at www.bchousing.org/subscribe.

Acknowledgements

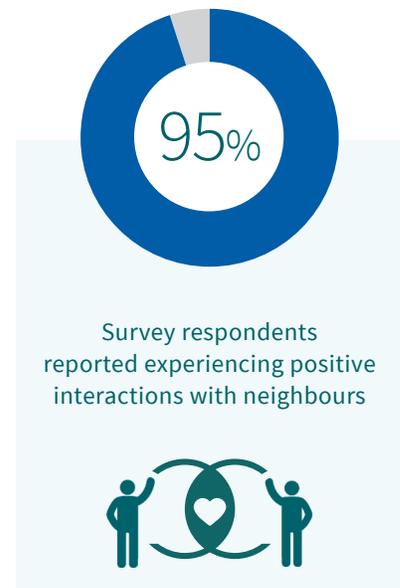
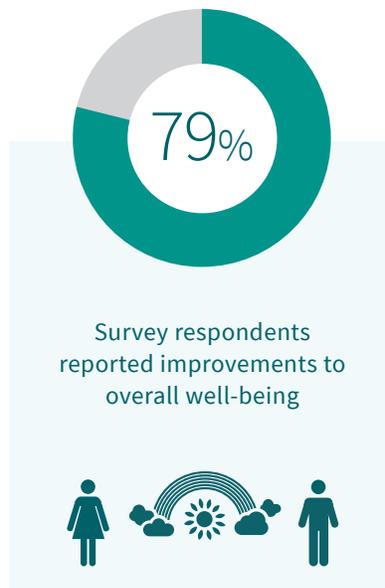
BC Housing gratefully acknowledges Island Crisis Care Society for sharing their insights on Orca Place, a modular housing development in Parksville, and for supporting this study. We would like to sincerely thank all the residents who shared their perspectives through the resident survey as part of this study.





This snapshot shows outcomes for residents of Orca Place, a modular supportive housing development in Parkville, B.C., twelve months after the building opened.

Please refer to page 15, Research Methodology for information about data sources.



ORCA PLACE



Housing provider, Island Crisis Care Society operates Orca Place, providing on-site support coverage twenty-four hours every day of the week and helping residents to:

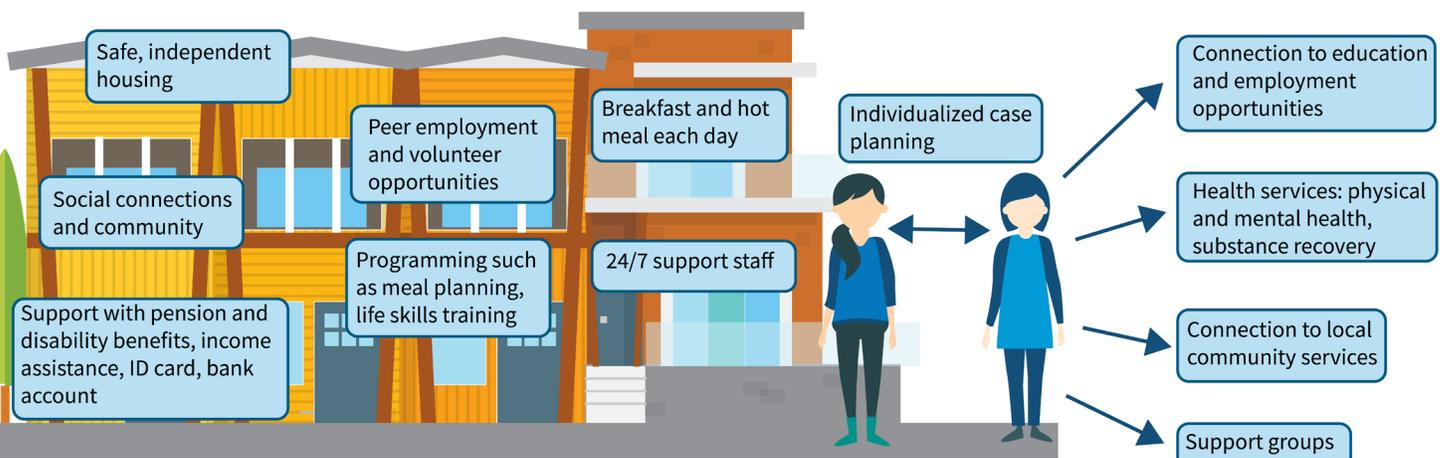
- › Maintain their homes
- › Enhance their life skills, including learning to cook
- › Connect with education, employment, health, and independent housing
- › Access community information, social and recreational programs
- › Participate in case planning and needs assessments
- › Access income assistance, pension benefits, disability benefits
- › Apply for BC Identification
- › Open a bank account
- › Access food

Modular units funded under Rapid Response to Homelessness program deliver results

Orca Place opened in August 2019 and is funded under the Rapid Response to Homelessness program. The building provides 52 units of housing for individuals experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness in Parksville, B.C.

The Government of British Columbia announced the Rapid Response to Homelessness program in 2017 as an immediate response to homelessness across the province. The B.C. Government committed \$291 million over two years to build 2,000 modular supportive housing units for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. In addition, \$170 million was committed over three years to provide staffing and support services for residents.

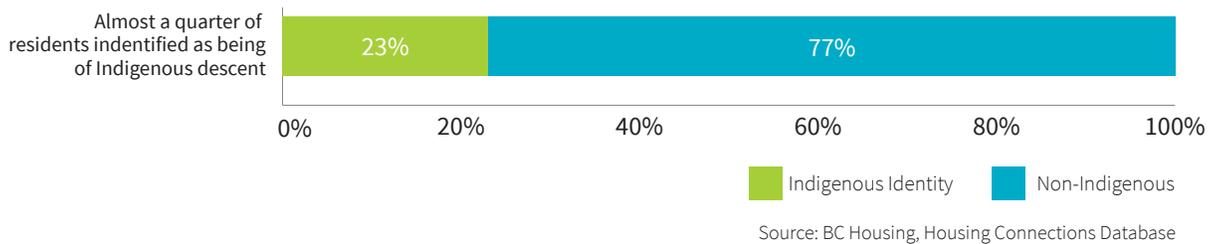
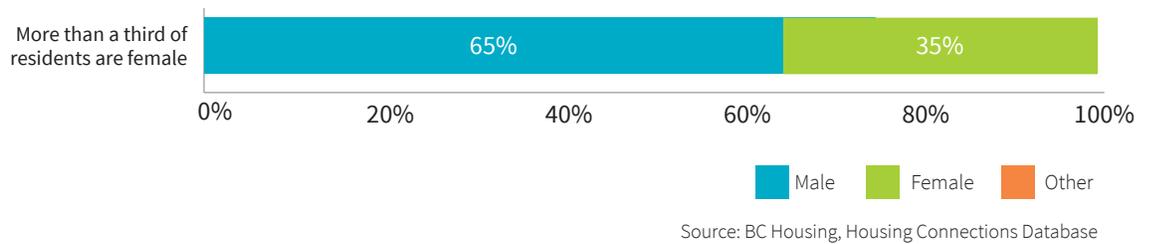
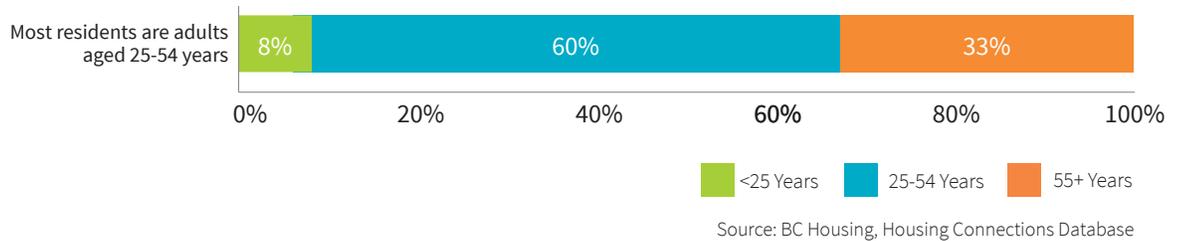
Each self-contained studio apartment is 320 square feet and includes a 3-piece bathroom, 2-burner stovetop and a full-height fridge. Each building includes 2,000 square feet of amenity space with an oven for social gatherings and meals. Six units on the first floor of the building are wheelchair accessible.



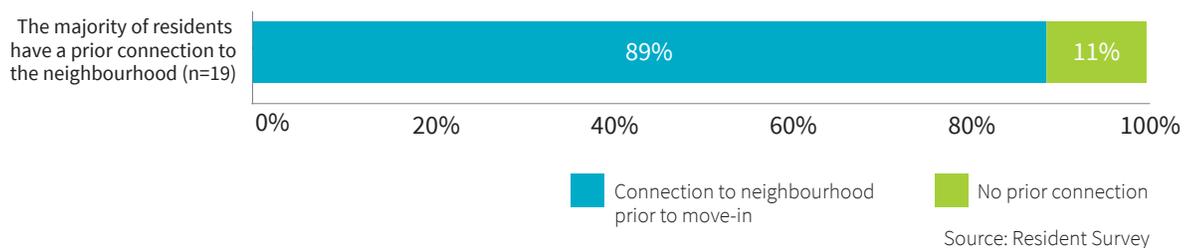


Resident Profile

Orca Place provides housing for a mixed community of residents. This includes people with different genders, ethnicities, and ages. Residents also have a mix of vulnerabilities and support needs. While the majority of residents are adults aged 25-54 years, a high proportion of individuals in the building are over the age of 55.



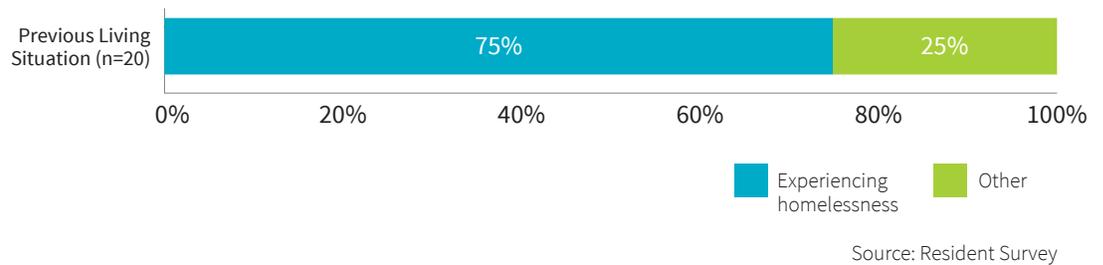
Eighty-nine per cent of survey respondents indicated that they had a prior connection to the neighbourhood. These connections include living in the neighbourhood either immediately prior to moving to Orca Place or in the past, having friends or relatives in the neighbourhood, and using services located in the neighbourhood.



Experience of Homelessness

OUTCOME: **DECREASED**

The majority of residents who responded to the survey were experiencing homelessness immediately prior to moving into Orca Place. Staff reported that residents who had not been experiencing homelessness had been precariously housed or living in unsuitable accommodations such as dilapidated housing.



Housing Stability

OUTCOME: **INCREASED**

Seventy-three per cent of the first residents at Orca Place remained housed there six months after moving into their homes. Staff reported that several residents were asked to leave the program at Orca Place for a variety of reasons including violence and interpersonal conflict. In addition, one resident left to a facility with more medical services and one transferred into social housing.



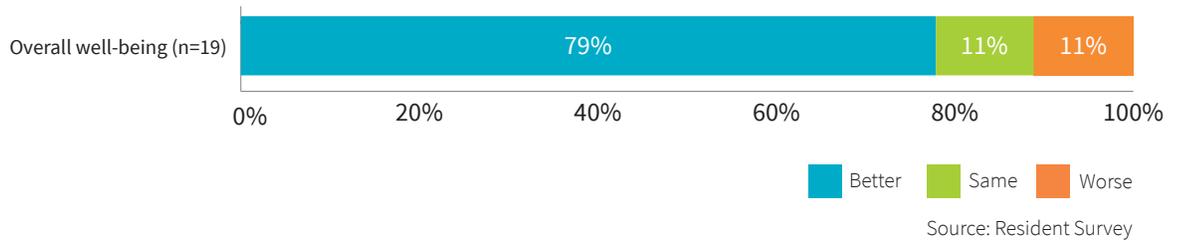


Quality of Life for Residents

OUTCOME: IMPROVED

Overall Well-being

Seventy-nine per cent of survey respondents reported improvements in their overall well-being, while 11 per cent of survey respondents reported that their well-being remained the same.

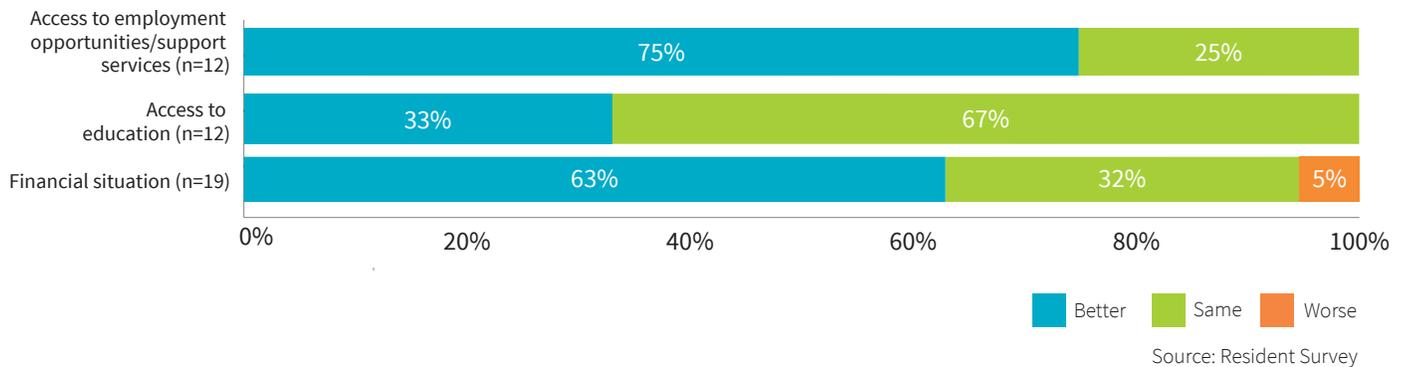


Employment, Income and Education

Seventy-five per cent of survey respondents reported better access to employment opportunities since their move, while 33 per cent reported better access to education.

Sixty-three per cent of survey respondents reported that their financial situation had improved.

Staff reported that a few residents have connected with employment opportunities, and several others have started the process of continuing their education. They noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has made accessing these opportunities more difficult.

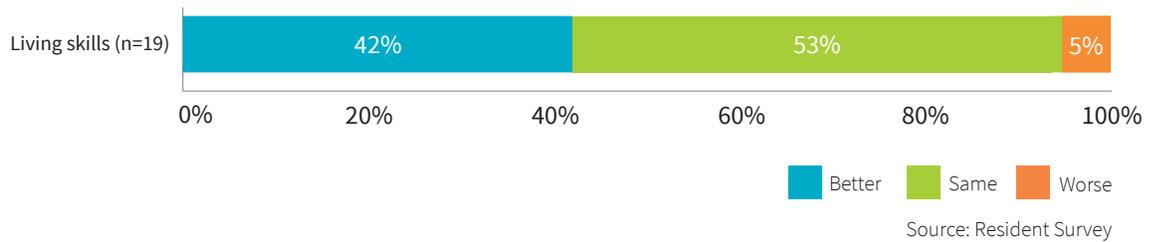




Living Skills

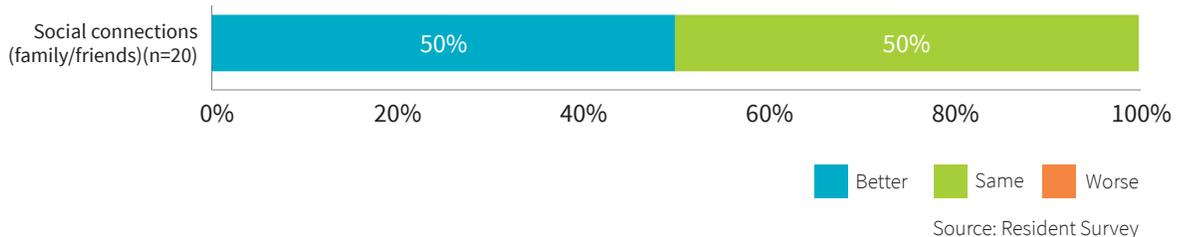
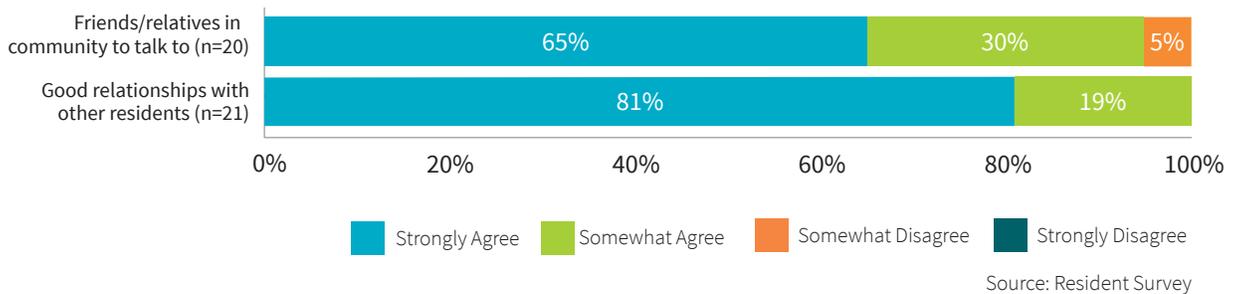
Forty-two per cent of survey respondents reported that their living skills had improved, while living skills remained the same for 53 per cent of residents. Staff reported that residents are having success with managing their rooms and improving their tidiness over time. Staff noted that on-site supports are available to help residents improve their cooking and cleaning skills.

“People are taking pride in having their own space.”
 – Orca Place staff member



Social Connections

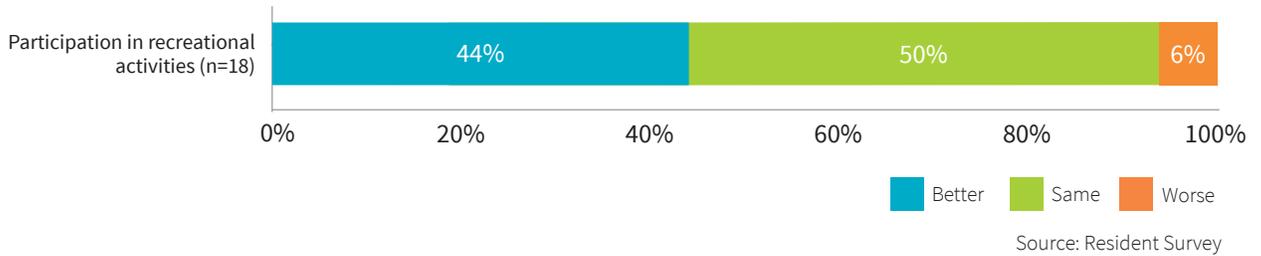
Orca Place residents reported improved social connections. Ninety-five per cent of survey respondents somewhat or strongly agreed that they have friends or relatives in the community to talk to, while all respondents reported good relationships with other residents. Fifty per cent of survey respondents reported improvements in their social connections, while 50 per cent indicated that their social connections remained the same. Staff reported that many residents have made very good social connections within the building.





Recreation

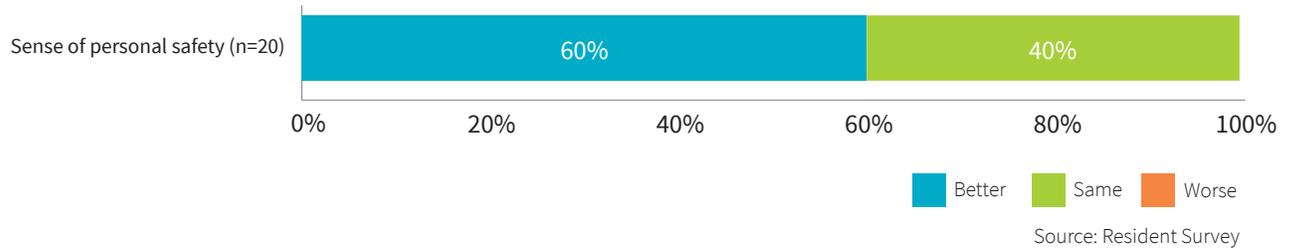
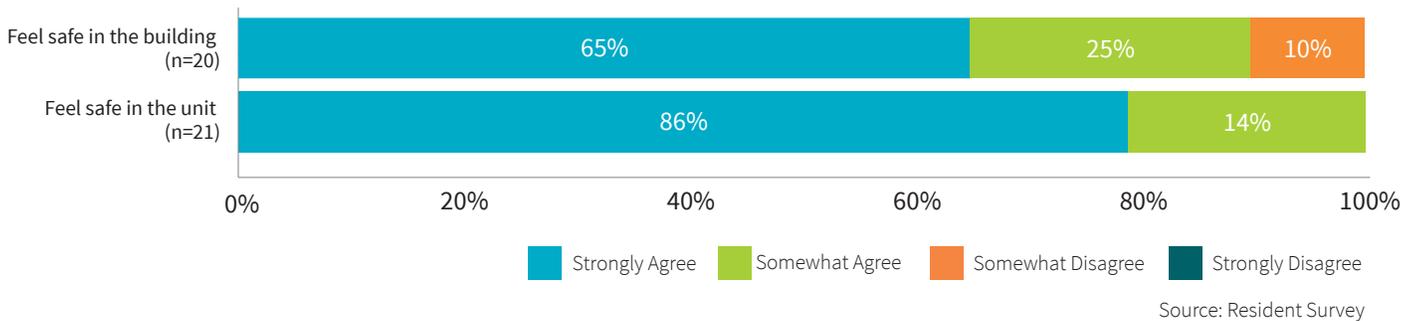
Forty-four per cent of survey respondents reported improved participation in recreational activities, while participation remained the same for 50 per cent of respondents. Staff reported that the COVID-19 pandemic has made access to recreational activities difficult due to social distancing requirements.



Safety

The majority of survey respondents (90 per cent) somewhat or strongly agreed that they felt safe in the building, while all agreed that they felt safe in their home.

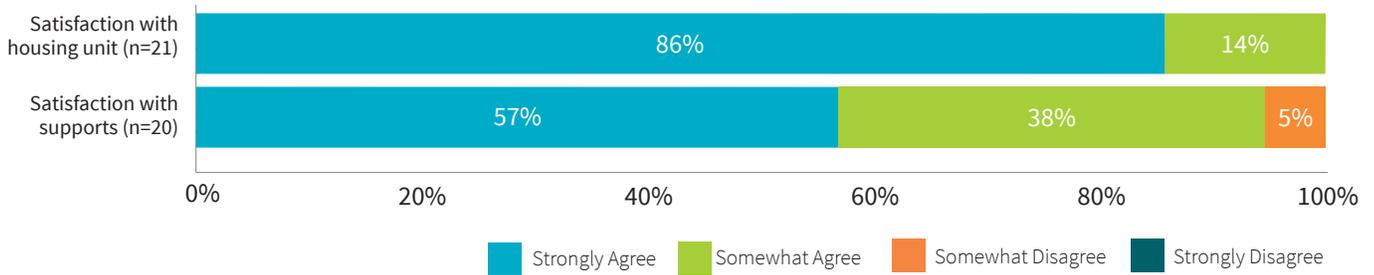
Most survey respondents (60 per cent) reported an improvement in their sense of personal safety.





Satisfaction with Housing and Supports

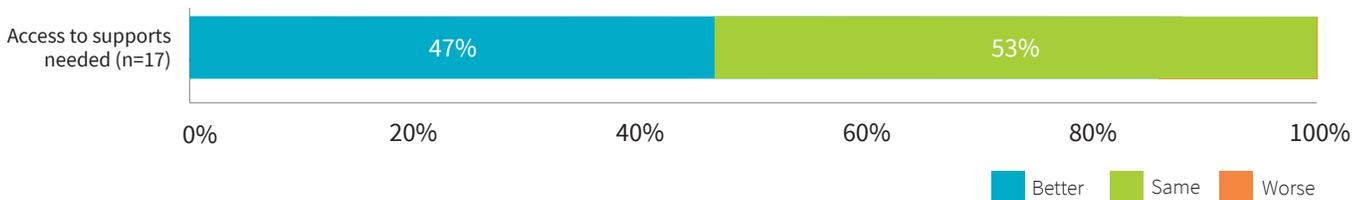
The resident survey supports staff perceptions that residents are satisfied with their housing and supports. All survey respondents somewhat or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their housing unit, while the majority of survey respondents (95 per cent) somewhat or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the level of supports they receive at Orca Place.



Source: Resident Survey

Forty-seven per cent of survey respondents reported that access to the supports they need has improved, while 53 per cent reported that access has stayed the same. Staff reported that residents are accessing a range of supports offered at the building and that it was wonderful to have a common room, as many of the supports could be offered on-site.

“We notice a lot of people are more motivated to access supports.”
 – Orca Place staff member



Source: Resident Survey

Challenges

Some of Orca Place residents have experienced challenges since moving to their new home. Staff reported that there have been some interpersonal challenges between residents in the building. Some residents have also experienced difficulties managing their rooms, especially if they are not willing to work with staff. In addition, it is difficult for some residents to manage their recovery from substance use when other residents are still using substances in the building.

Orca Place staff also identified challenges related to the modular building design and location, including:

- The units are prone to overheating in the summer.
- The location of the bike storage at the back of the building. They noted that it would be preferable if it was closer to the front door.



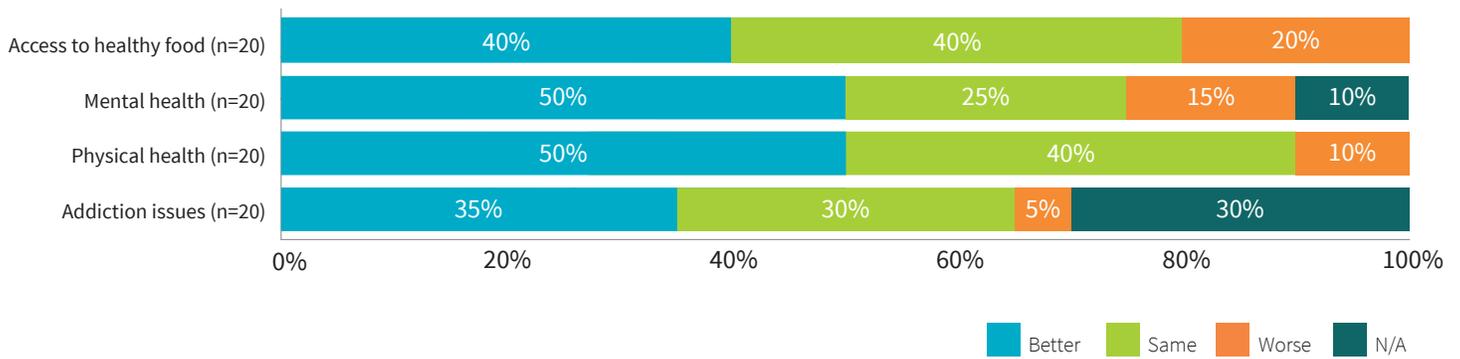
Residents' Health

OUTCOME: IMPROVED

Forty per cent of survey respondents indicated that they have better access to healthy food since their move to Orca Place.

Fifty per cent of survey respondents reported improvements to their mental health since moving into their home, while 10 per cent indicated this question did not apply to them. Fifty per cent of survey respondents indicated an improvement in their physical health.

Thirty-five cent of survey respondents reported improvements in addiction issues, while 30 per cent reported that this question did not apply to them.



Source: Resident Survey





Health Care System Usage

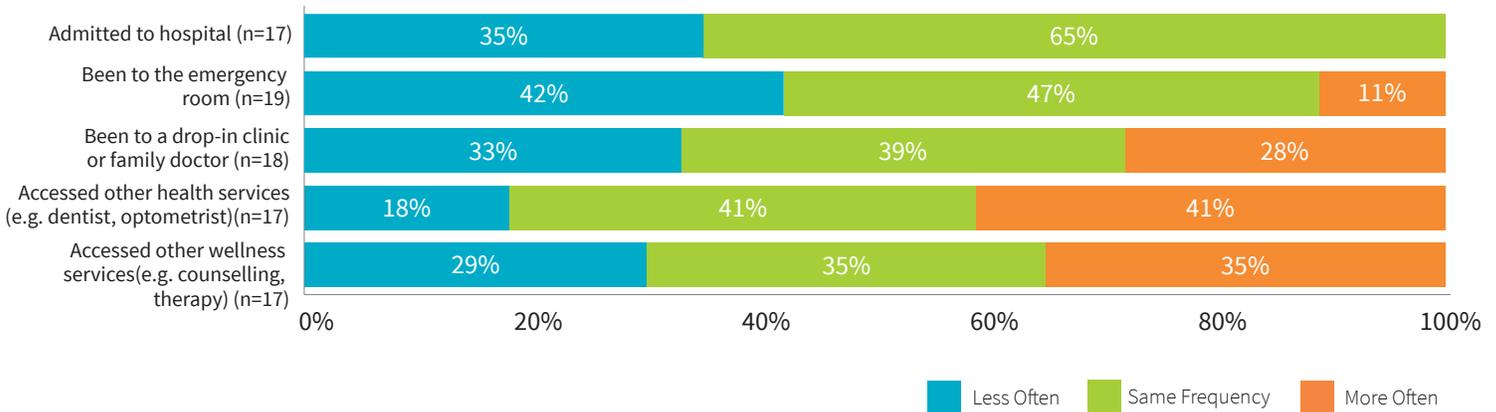
OUTCOME: REDUCED USE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

Thirty-five per cent of survey respondents indicated that they have been admitted to hospital less often since moving to Orca Place, while 65 per cent reported they had been admitted to hospital with the same frequency.

A similar percentage of residents reduced their trips to the emergency room, with forty-two per cent of survey respondents reporting they had been to the emergency room less often. Forty-seven per cent of survey respondents indicated that they had been to the emergency room with the same frequency.

Twenty-eight per cent of survey respondents reported that they had been to a drop-in clinic or family doctor more frequently since moving into Orca Place.

Forty-one per cent of survey respondents reported accessing other health services (such as dentist or optometrist) more frequently. Thirty-five per cent of survey respondents indicated accessing other wellness services (such as counselling and therapy) more frequently since moving into Orca Place.



Source: Resident Survey





Community Relations

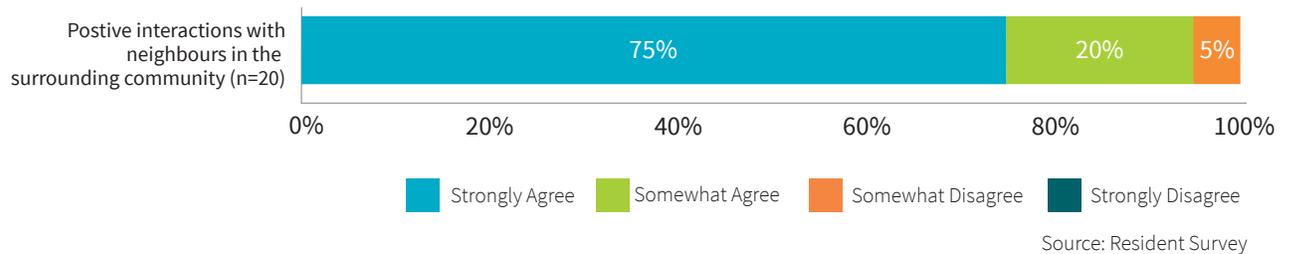
OUTCOME: POSITIVE

Orca Place staff indicated that the relationship with the wider community is fairly positive. Staff reported that some neighbours initially had negative expectations about what would happen when Orca Place opened and have been pleasantly surprised. Staff reported that building staff are very conscientious about ensuring that the area surrounding the building is clean and they conduct perimeter checks for safety.

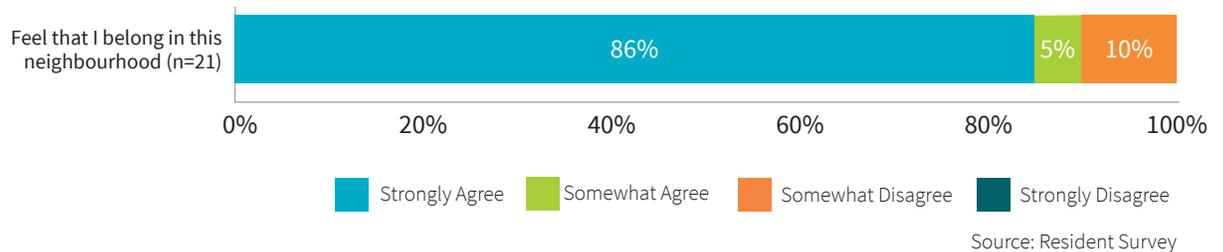
“The community sees that we are diligent and vigilant. They see the Clean Team out there.”

– Orca Place staff member

The majority of survey respondents strongly or somewhat agreed that they have experienced positive interactions with the surrounding community (95 per cent).



Ninety-one per cent of survey respondents feel that they belong in the neighbourhood.

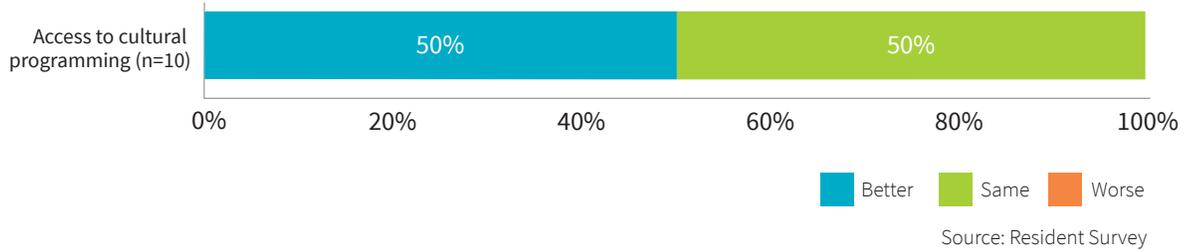
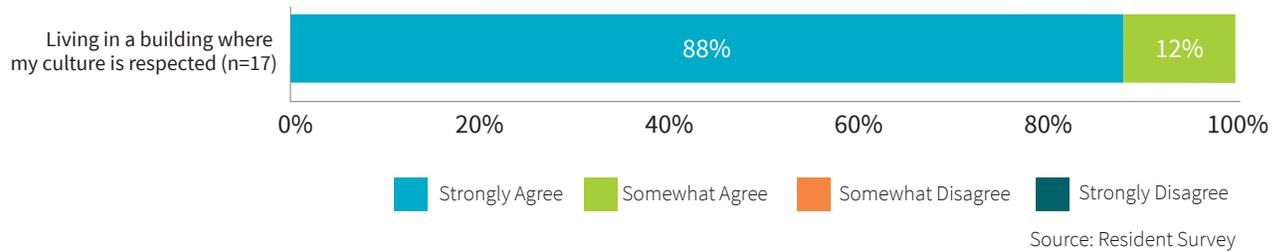




Access to Cultural Programming

OUTCOME: POSITIVE

Orca Place houses individuals from a range of cultural backgrounds. All survey respondents reported that they feel their culture is respected at Orca Place. Fifty per cent of survey respondents felt that their access to cultural programming had improved, while 50 per cent of survey respondents felt that their access had remained the same.





Data provided in this report was collected twelve months after Orca Place opened. Data from the Housing Connections database is from six months after the first residents moved into the building to be comparable across reports. While all evaluations were originally planned for six months after the building opened, some of the later surveys and interviews were delayed. Outcomes may change over time as the resident mix in the building changes.

Resident Survey

A resident survey was made available to Orca Place residents in September 2020. The objective of this survey was to measure the change in well-being and quality of life that residents have experienced because of the supportive housing development. The resident survey results are self-reported by residents.

- Forty per cent of Orca Place residents responded to the resident survey.
- Not all survey respondents chose to answer all questions.
- Data for each question is based on those who answered.

Housing Provider Interviews

Housing provider interviews were conducted with three Island Crisis Care staff in September 2020. The objective of these interviews was to gather information about the change in well-being and quality of life that residents have experienced because of the supportive housing development.

Housing Connections Data

Data on housing stability, and some demographic information was sourced from BC Housing's Housing Connections Database for the first residents who moved into the building. Percentages presented in this report are based on those individuals for whom data was available.

Partners

This study is being undertaken at modular supportive housing developments across the province in collaboration with non-profit housing societies and other partners.



Contact: **Research Centre** Email: research@bchousing.org Phone: **604-439-4135**

For more information, visit our website at: www.bchousing.org