

January 2021

Our Home on Eighth Modular Supportive Housing Resident Outcomes

Results at Six Months after Opening



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BC Housing's Research Centre works in collaboration with housing sector partners to foster excellence in residential construction and find innovative solutions for affordable housing in British Columbia. Sharing leading-edge research and advances in building science and new technologies encourages best practices.

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

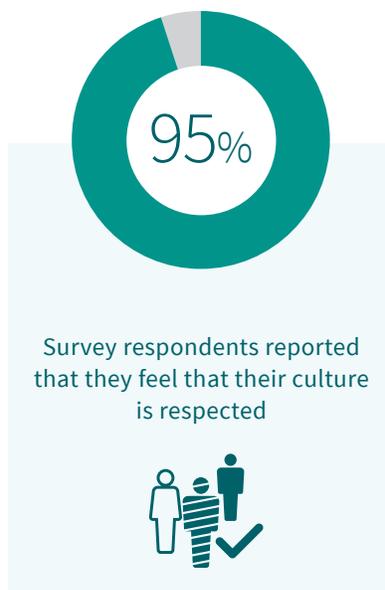
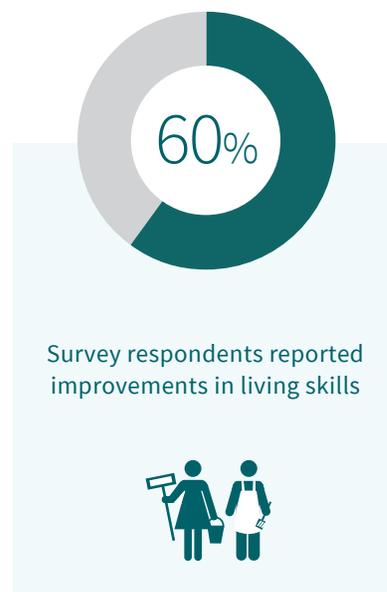
BC Housing gratefully acknowledges Port Alberni Shelter Society for sharing their insights on Our Home on Eighth, a modular housing development in Port Alberni, and for supporting this study. We would like to sincerely thank all the residents who shared their perspectives through the resident survey as part of this study.





This snapshot shows outcomes for residents of Our Home on Eighth, a modular supportive housing development in Port Alberni, B.C., six months after the building opened.

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



OUR HOME ON EIGHTH



Housing provider, Port Alberni Shelter Society operates Our Home on Eighth, providing on-site support coverage twenty-four hours every day of the week and helping residents to:

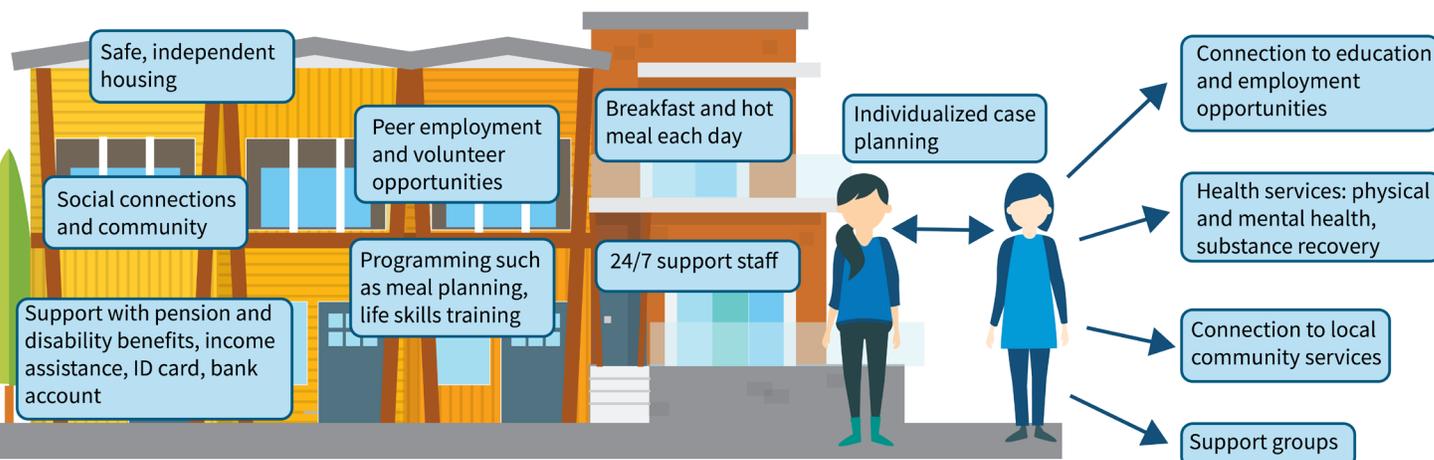
- › Maintain their units
- › Enhance their life skills, including learning to cook
- › Connect with education, employment, health, and independent housing
- › Access community information, social and recreational programs
- › Participate in case planning and needs assessments
- › Access income assistance,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

Modular units funded under Rapid Response to Homelessness program deliver results

Our Home on Eighth opened in March 2019 and is funded under the Rapid Response to Homelessness program. Our Home on Eighth provides 30 units of housing for individuals experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness in Port Alberni. The building also contains an emergency shelter on the first floor.

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

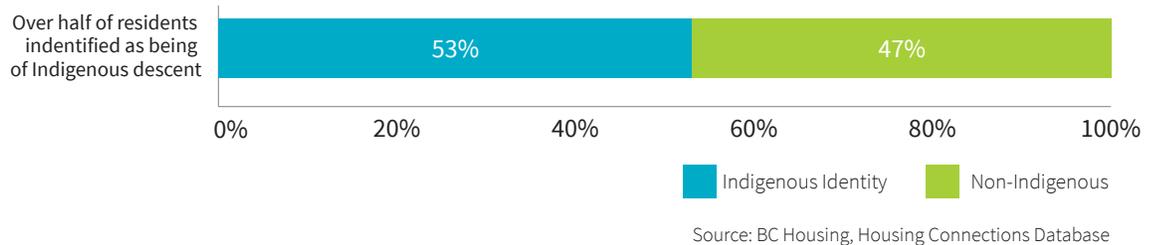
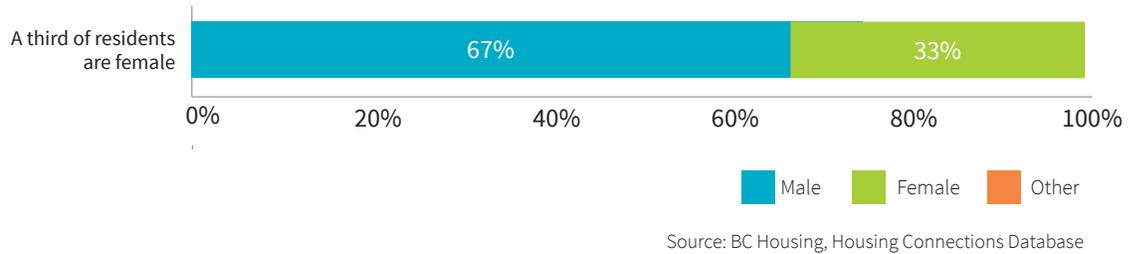
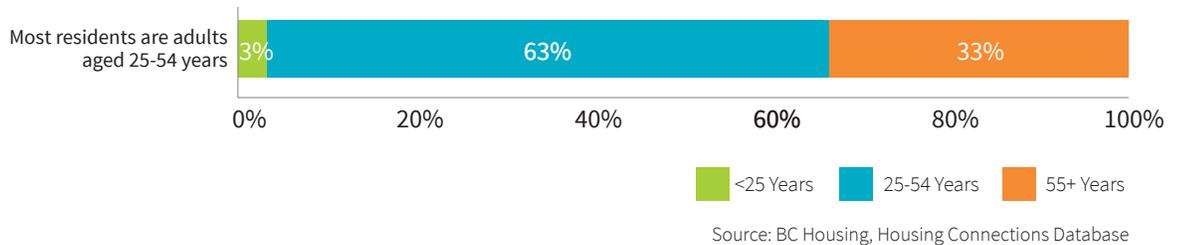
Each self-contained studio apartment is 320 square feet and includes a 3-piece bathroom, 2-burner stovetop and a full-height fridge. Each building includes 2,000 square feet of amenity space with a commercial kitchen, TV lounge, dining area, and small breakout rooms. Two units on the second floor of the building are wheelchair accessible.



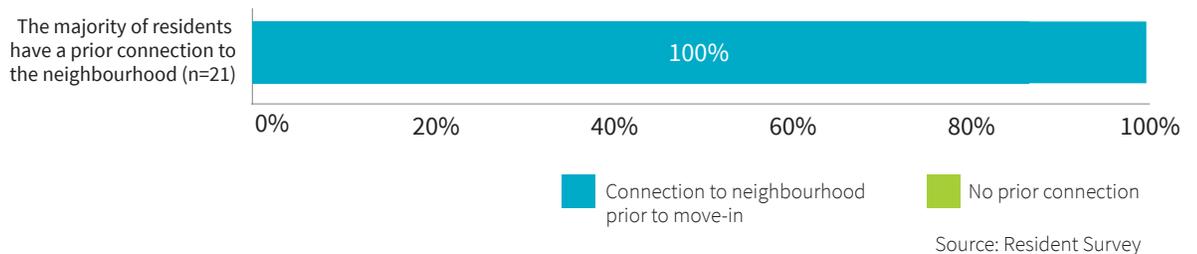


Resident Profile

Our Home on Eighth provides housing for a mixed community of residents. This includes residents with different genders, ethnicities, and ages. Residents also have a mix of vulnerabilities and support needs and range in age from 20 to 70 years of age.



All survey respondents indicated that they had a prior connection to the neighbourhood. These connections included living in the neighbourhood either immediately before moving into Our Home on Eighth or in the past, having friends or relatives in the neighbourhood, and using services located in the neighbourhood. Staff reported more than half of the residents transferred from a shelter across the street operated by The Port Alberni Shelter Society, while the remaining residents were referred through other agencies in the community.

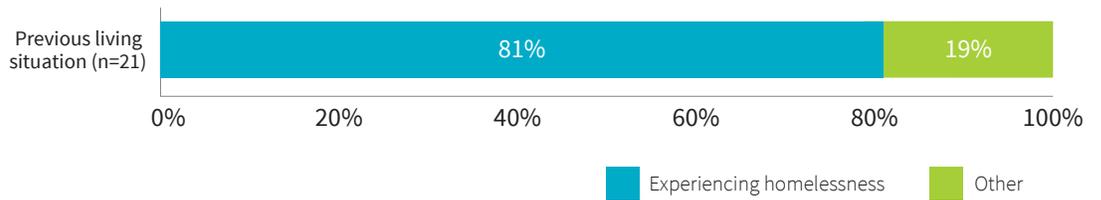




Experience of Homelessness

OUTCOME: DECREASED

Over 80 per cent of residents were experiencing homelessness immediately prior to moving into Our Home on Eighth. Nineteen per cent of residents were living in housing that did not meet their support needs.



Source: Resident Survey

Housing Stability

OUTCOME: INCREASED

Eighty-three per cent of the first residents to move in remained housed at Our Home on Eighth after six months. Five residents were no longer housed at Our Home on Eighth after six months. Several residents were asked to leave as they were not complying with program requirements.



Source: City of Vancouver

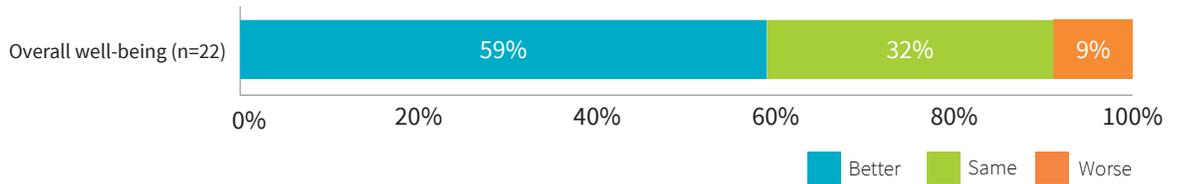


Quality of Life for Residents

OUTCOME: IMPROVED

Overall Well-being

Fifty-nine per cent of survey respondents reported improvements in their overall well-being, while 32 per cent of survey respondents reported that their well-being remained the same.



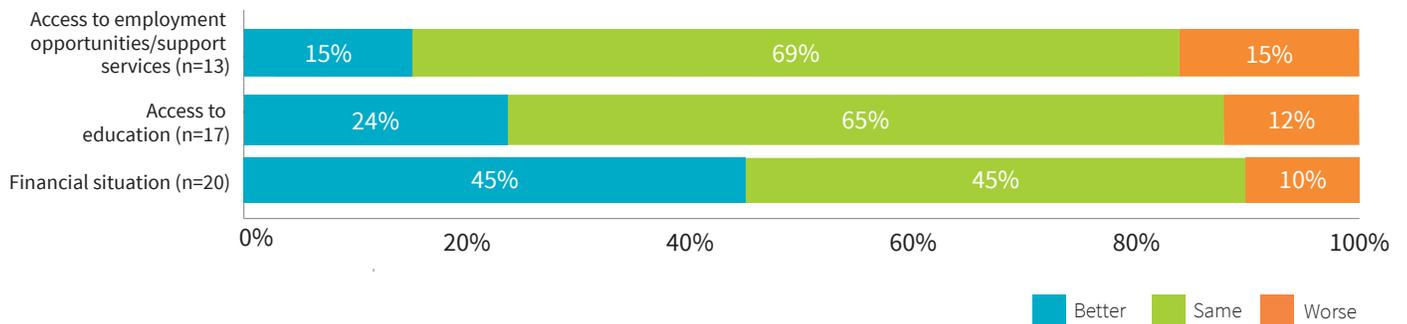
Source: Resident Survey

Employment, Income and Education

Fifteen per cent of survey respondents reported better access to employment opportunities since moving in, while 24 per cent reported better access to education.

Forty-five per cent of survey respondents reported that their financial situation had improved. Ten per cent of survey respondents reported that their financial situation had worsened.

Staff reported that one of their clients has gone back to school, while several other residents are participating in a farm program run by the North Island College. Residents also volunteer with an “events team” run by the Port Alberni Shelter Society, which helps set up for events in the community. Other residents are finding employment independently in construction, maintenance, and labour.



Source: Resident Survey

RESULTS AT SIX MONTHS



Living Skills

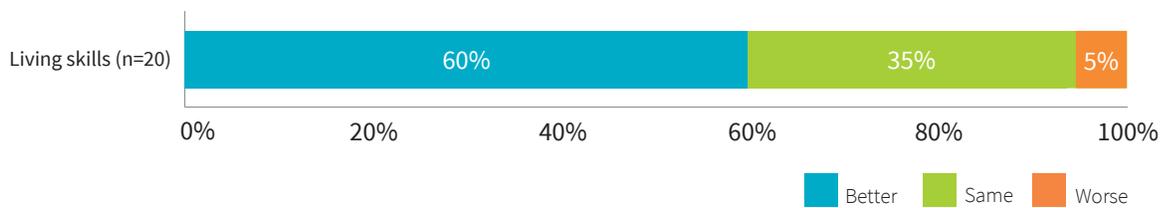
Sixty per cent of survey respondents reported that their living skills had improved, while living skills remained the same for 35 per cent of residents. Staff reported that residents are building the skills they need to live in an apartment setting.

“They have their own apartment and their own kitchenette. They take pride in their space.”

– Our Home on Eighth staff

“I see the washer/dryer is constantly in use. People are taking care of their things.”

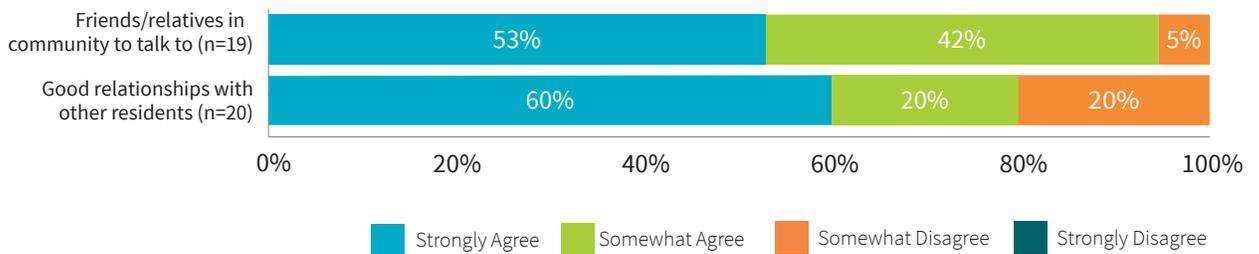
– Our Home on Eighth staff



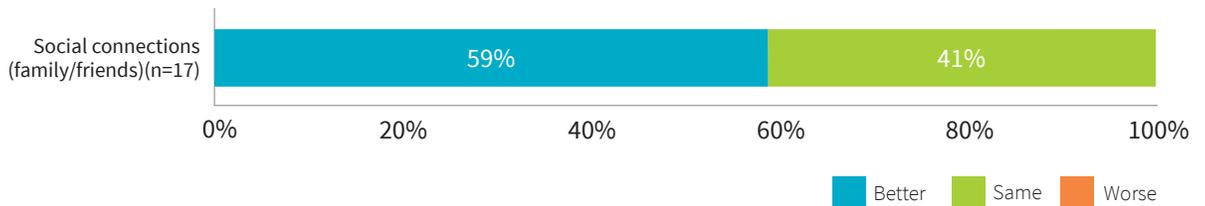
Source: Resident Survey

Social Connections

Our Home on Eighth 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 80 per cent reported good relationships with other residents. Fifty-nine per cent of survey respondents reported improvements in their social connections. Staff reported that Our Home on Eighth has a growing sense of community in the building.



Source: Resident Survey



Source: Resident Survey

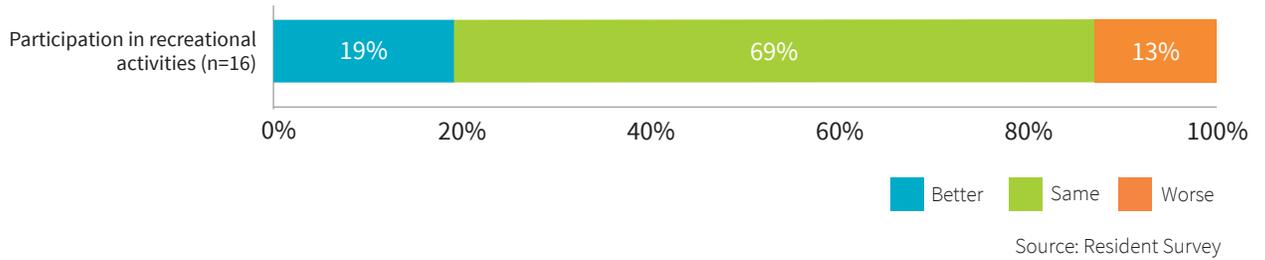
“The residents are building a sense of community and taking ownership of the space.”

– Our Home on Eighth staff



Recreation

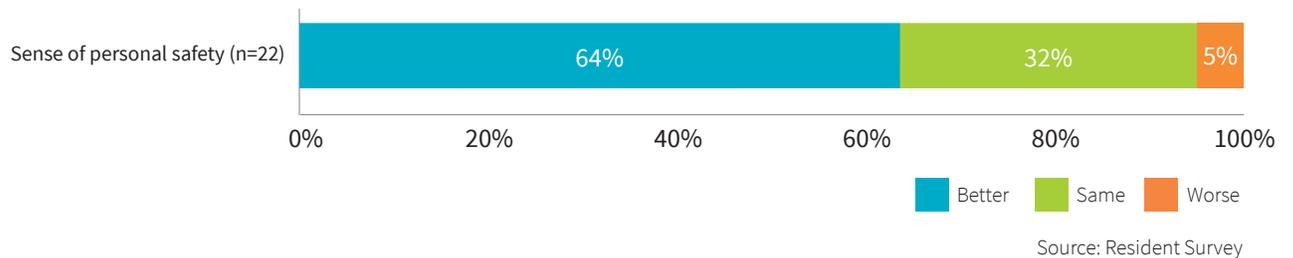
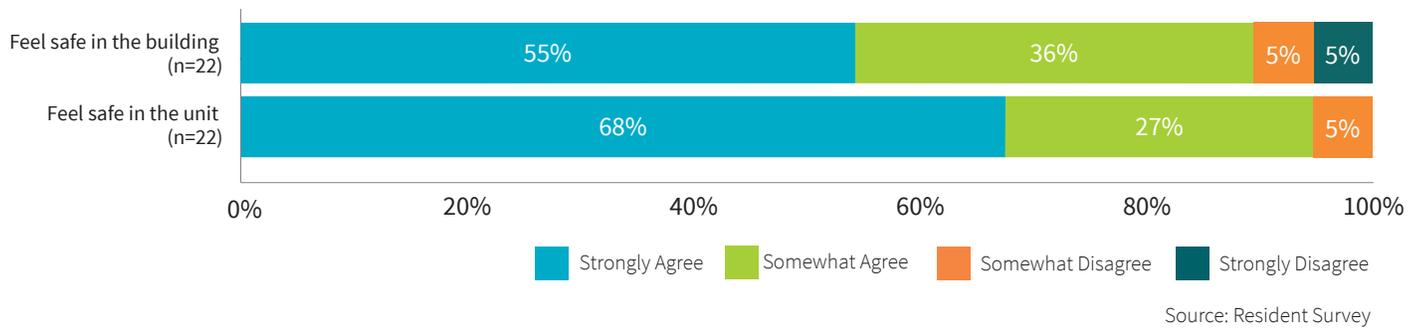
In the resident survey, 19 per cent of respondents reported improved participation in recreational activities, while participation remained the same for 69 per cent of respondents.



Safety

Most survey respondents (91 per cent) somewhat or strongly agreed that they felt safe in the building, while 95 per cent noted that they felt safe in their home.

The majority of survey respondents (64 per cent) reported an improvement in their sense of personal safety.





Satisfaction with Housing and Supports

Most survey respondents (91 per cent) somewhat or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their housing unit, while 95 per cent of survey respondents somewhat or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the level of supports they receive at Our Home on Eighth.

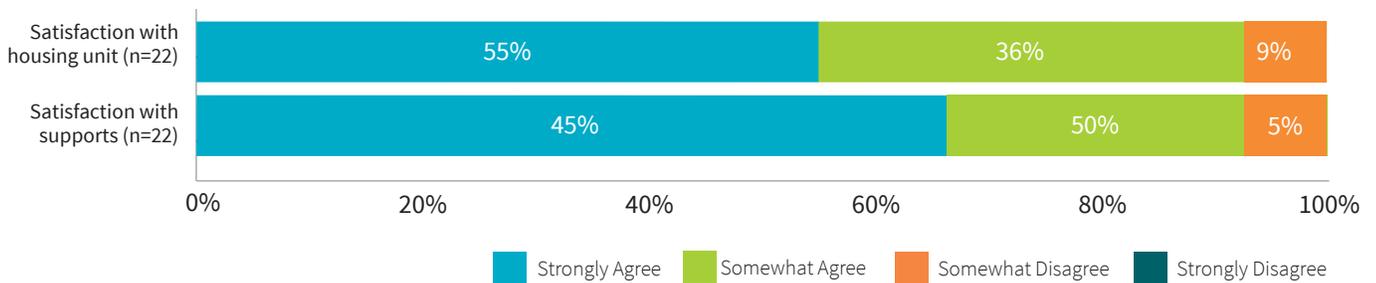
The resident survey supports staff perceptions that residents are satisfied with their housing and supports. Staff reported that they believe the majority of residents are very satisfied with their housing, once they got used to the change of moving from a shelter into permanent housing.

“People came in to see their unit for the first time and everything was new in their apartment. I saw people arrive and literally dance.”

– Our Home on Eighth staff

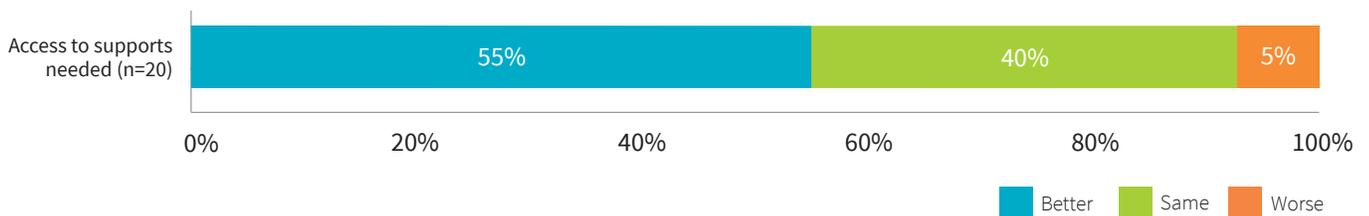
“It’s having their own space, their own home, having something they can call theirs and be proud of.”

– Our Home on Eighth staff



Source: Resident Survey

Over half of survey respondents (55 per cent) reported that access to the supports they need has improved, while 40 per cent reported that access has stayed the same. Our Home on Eighth staff reported that residents are increasingly accessing supports such as health care. They noted that having 24/7 support staff has meant that residents can access supports at any time of the day or night, which is very important for some residents.



Source: Resident Survey



Challenges

Some Our Home on Eight residents have experienced challenges since moving to their new home. Staff mentioned that some residents have had difficulty adjusting to the guidelines around guests in the building. A few residents require assistance from staff to ensure they aren't accumulating too many items in their units.

When the building opened, there were a few residents in the building who took advantage of other, more vulnerable residents. Those residents have been asked to leave the building.

The fact that the building includes both a shelter and supportive housing is a challenge for residents. While the residents living in the upstairs supportive housing units are settling in, there are individuals cycling through the shelter beds downstairs, which can be disruptive.

Our Home on Eight staff also identified challenges related to the modular building design, including:

- Very long hallways are challenging for people with mobility issues.
- There are several wheelchair accessible units on the second floor. This could present a challenge in an emergency if the elevator isn't working.
- The building doesn't have a dedicated intake/reception area for the intake of shelter clients. Intake is completed from the main office.
- The building does not have a fenced in area around the building. This poses a challenge when guests come to visit residents. It is difficult for staff to ensure that guests enter through the front door and check-in according to the guidelines.





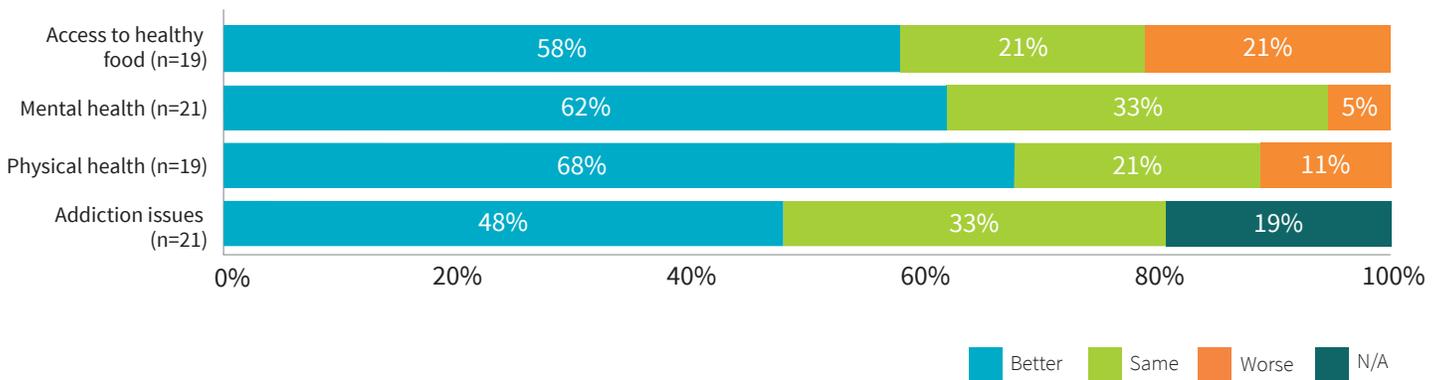
Residents' Health

OUTCOME: IMPROVED

Fifty-eight per cent of survey respondents indicated that they have better access to healthy food since moving to Our Home on Eighth.

Sixty-two per cent of survey respondents reported improvements to their mental health since moving into their home and 68 per cent of survey respondents reported an improvement in their physical health.

Forty-eight per cent of survey respondents reported improvements in addiction issues, while 33 per cent reported that their addiction issues had remained the same, and 19 per cent reported that this question did not apply to them.



Source: Resident Survey





Health Care System Usage

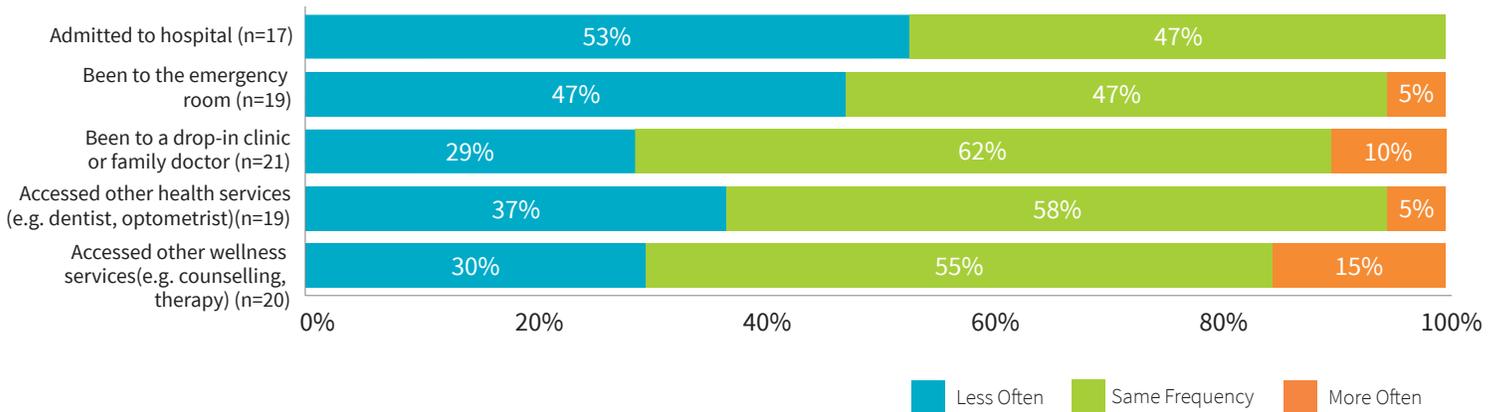
OUTCOME: REDUCED USE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

Fifty-three per cent of survey respondents indicated that they have been admitted to hospital less frequently since moving to Our Home on Eighth, while 47 per cent reported they had been admitted to hospital with the same frequency.

A similar trend was seen in trips to the emergency room. Forty-seven per cent of survey respondents reported they had been to the emergency room less frequently, and 47 per cent reported they had been to the emergency room with the same frequency.

Ten per cent of survey respondents reported that they had been to a drop-in clinic or family doctor more frequently since moving into Our Home on Eighth, while 29 per cent reported that they had accessed these services less frequently.

Five per cent of survey respondents reported accessing other health services (such as dentist or optometrist) more frequently, while 15 per cent of survey respondents reported accessing other wellness services (such as counselling and therapy) more frequently since moving into Our Home on Eighth.



Source: Resident Survey





Community Relations

OUTCOME: MIXED

Our Home on Eighth staff indicated that the relationship with the wider community is mixed. Staff felt that some neighbours did not understand the housing model of the building and did not know that there would be rules and regulations in place. Staff felt that some neighbours did not realize that there was already homelessness in the community.

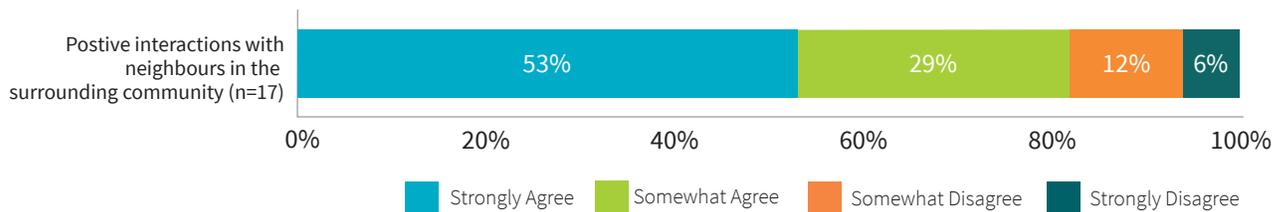
Staff noted issues caused by people who are still experiencing homelessness in the neighbourhood have been blamed on Our Home on Eighth residents.

However, staff also reported that volunteers from the community have come to help with programming in the building and drop off donations.

Resident survey responses supported staff perceptions. Most survey respondents strongly or somewhat agreed that they have experienced positive interactions with the surrounding community (82 per cent).

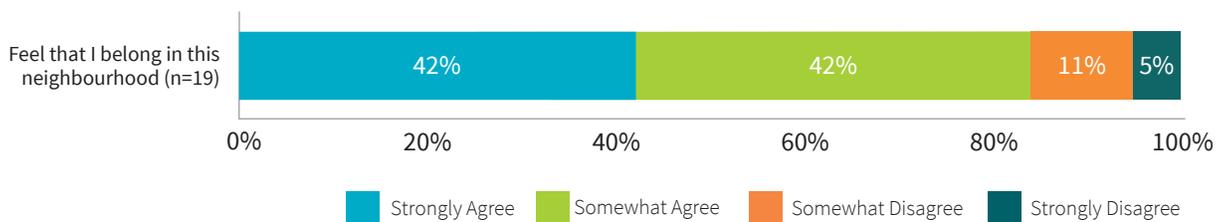
“We’re lucky, we are still in the same vicinity to the old shelter. We’re not new here, we already fit in.”

– Our Home on Eighth staff



Source: Resident Survey

Eighty-four per cent of survey respondents felt that they belong in the neighbourhood.



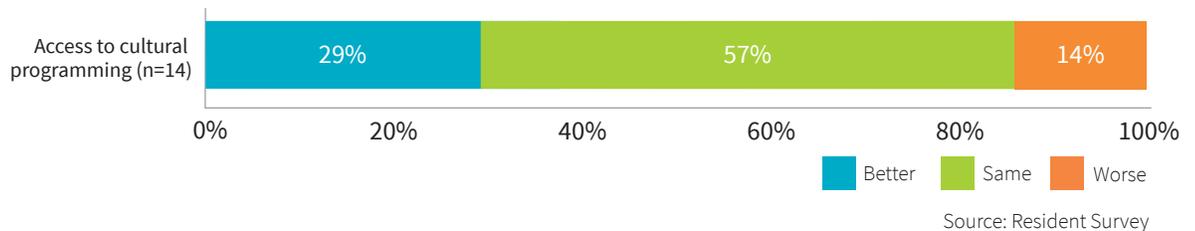
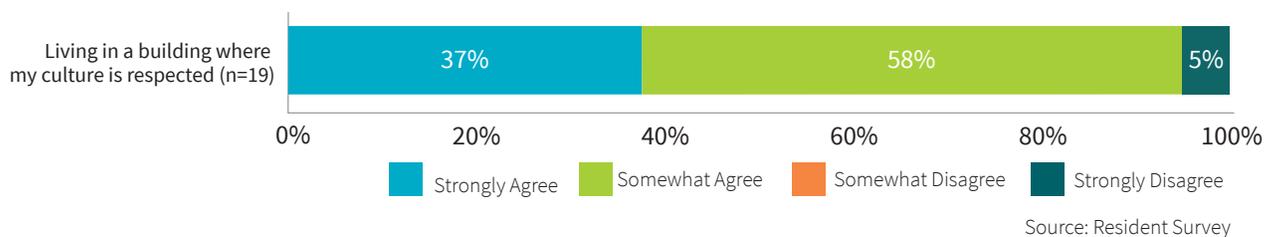
Source: Resident Survey



Access to Cultural Programming

OUTCOME: POSITIVE

Our Home on Eighth houses individuals from a range of cultural backgrounds. Ninety-five per cent of survey respondents reported that they feel that their culture is respected at Our Home on Eighth. Twenty-nine per cent of survey respondents felt that their access to cultural programming had improved, while 57 per cent of survey respondents felt that their access had remained the same.



Data provided in this report was collected six months after Our Home on Eighth opened. The outcomes from this report are based on residents who moved into the building when it opened. Outcomes may change over time as the resident mix in the building changes.

Resident Survey

A resident survey was made available to Our Home on Eighth residents in October 2019. 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.

- Seventy-three per cent of Our Home on Eighth 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 Port Alberni Shelter Society staff in October 2019. 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.

