

June 2019

Sarah Ross House Modular Supportive Housing Resident Outcomes

Results at Six Months after Opening



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Acknowledgements

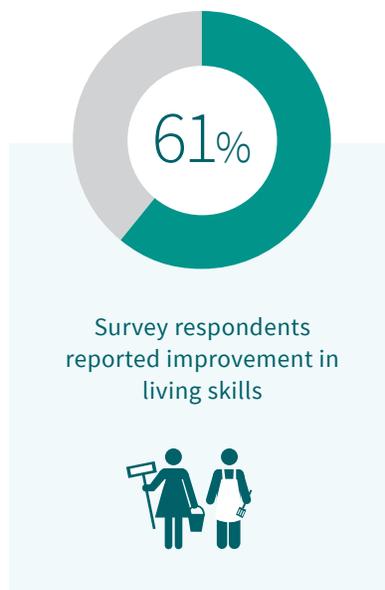
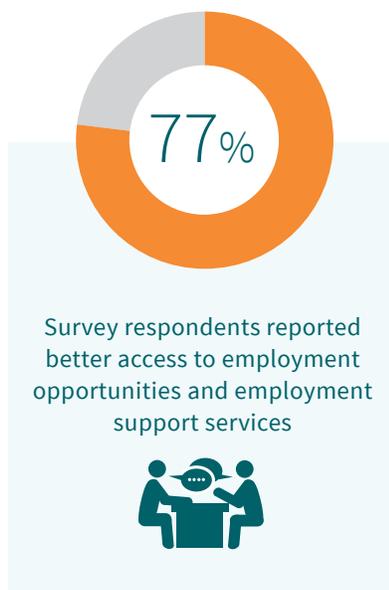
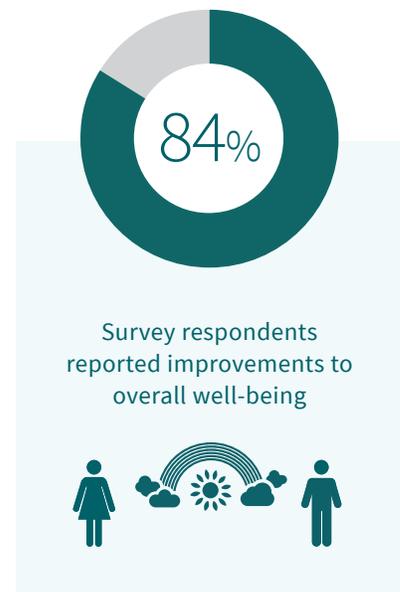
BC Housing gratefully acknowledges Atira Property Management for sharing their insights on Sarah Ross House and for supporting this study. We also acknowledge the contribution of the City of Vancouver for assisting in the development of this research and for reviewing the data and this report. We would like to sincerely thank all the residents who shared their perspectives through the resident survey as part of this study.

In Vancouver, the Rapid Response to Homelessness program is delivered as Temporary Modular Housing (TMH).



This snapshot shows outcomes for residents of Sarah Ross House (Sarah Ross) a modular supportive housing development in Vancouver, B.C., six months after the building opened.

Please refer to page 14, Research Methodology for information about data sources.



SARAH ROSS HOUSE



Housing provider, Atira Property Management (Atira) operates Sarah Ross, providing on-site support coverage 24 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 a BC Identification Card
- › Open a bank account
- › Access food

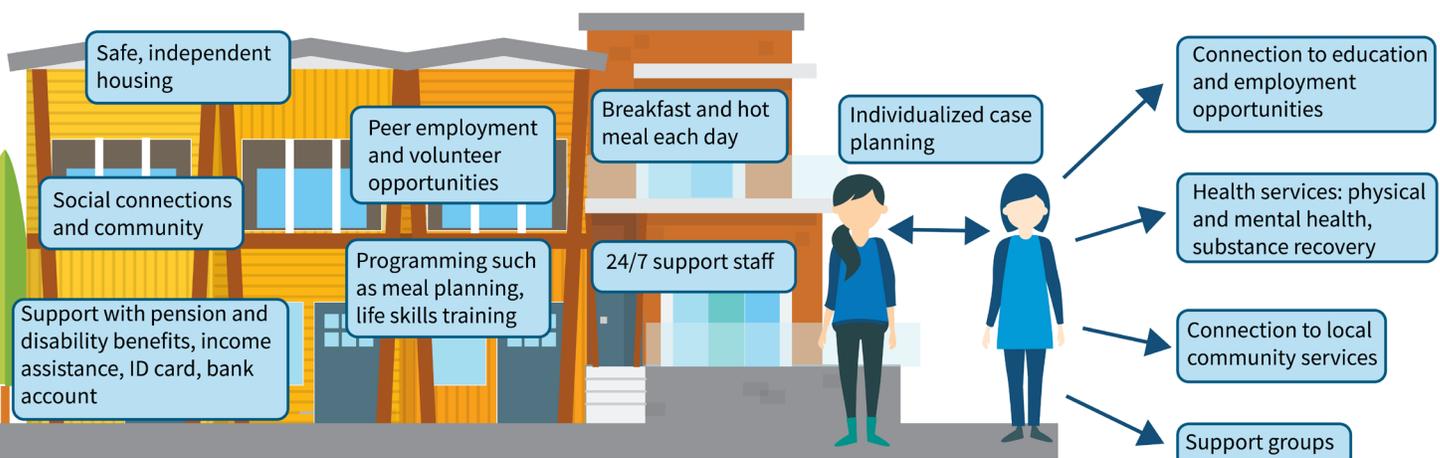
Housing improves health and employment access for residents

Sarah Ross House (Sarah Ross) opened July 2018 and is funded under the Rapid Response to Homelessness program.

Sarah Ross provides 52 units of housing for individuals experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. The building is located in the Renfrew Collingwood neighbourhood of Vancouver, 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 Province 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 three-piece bathroom, two-burner stovetop and a full-height fridge. The building includes 2,000 square feet of amenity space with an oven for social gatherings and meals. Six units on the first floor are wheelchair-accessible.

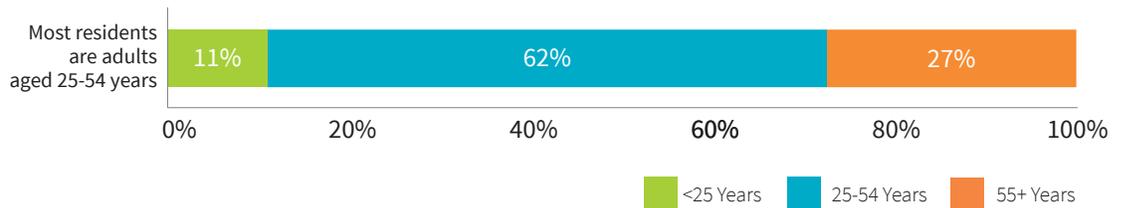


Resident Profile

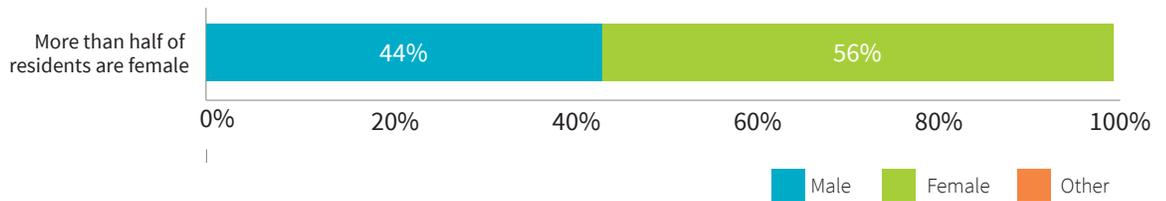
Sarah Ross provides housing for a mixed community of residents. This includes residents of different genders, ethnicities, and ages. Residents also have a mix of vulnerabilities and support needs. Staff reported that the mix of residents in the building has resulted in people forming relationships with individuals they might not otherwise meet.

“It’s funny because the connections that people make here would never happen in any other situation. (...) Connections that you wouldn’t see outside of a building like this.”

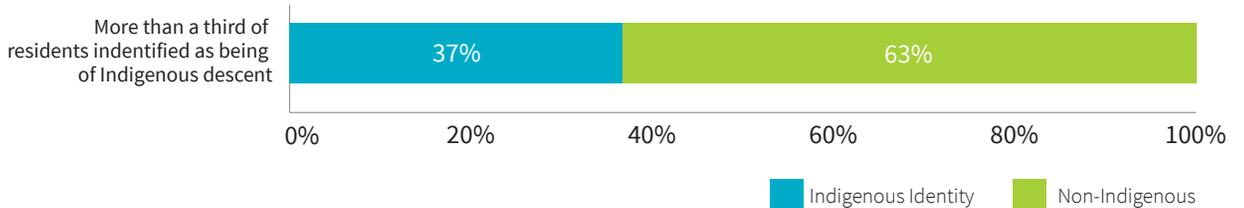
– Sarah Ross staff member



Source: BC Housing, Housing Connections Database

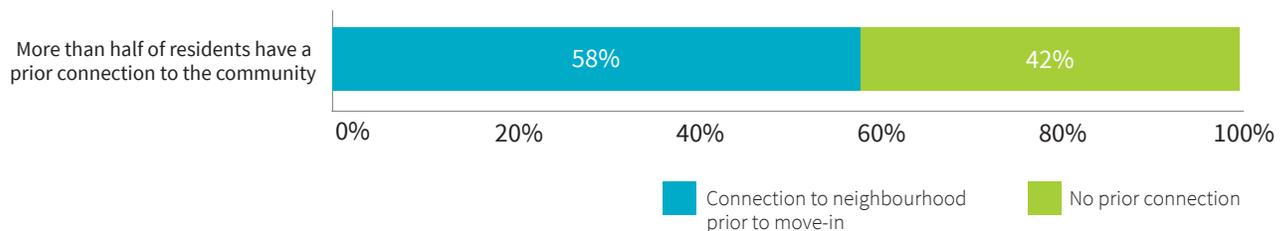


Source: BC Housing, Housing Connections Database



Source: City of Vancouver Homelessness Services Database

Fifty-eight per cent of survey respondents indicated that they had a prior connection to the neighbourhood. These connections included living in the neighbourhood immediately prior to moving to Sarah Ross or in the past, having friends or relatives in the neighbourhood, and using services located in the neighbourhood.



Source: Resident Survey

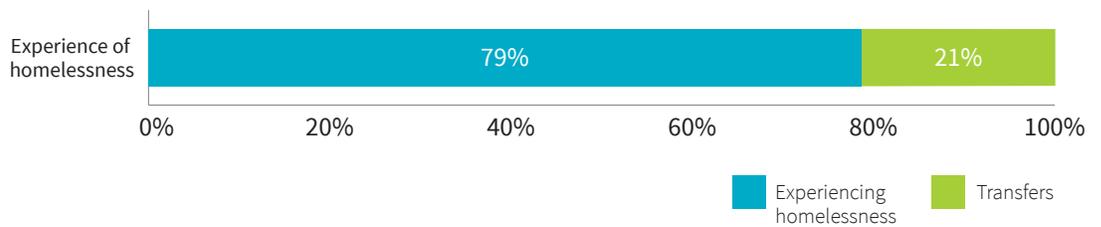
Experience of Homelessness

OUTCOME: DECREASED

Seventy-nine per cent of residents were experiencing homelessness immediately prior to moving into their Sarah Ross unit.

Twenty-one per cent of residents were living in housing that did not meet their support needs.

Because units were vacated by people who moved to Sarah Ross, others living on the street or in shelters took their places, strengthening the positive impact of the modular supportive housing program.



Source: City of Vancouver Homelessness Services Database

Housing Stability

OUTCOME: INCREASED

Ninety-four per cent of the first Sarah Ross residents to move into the building remained housed there six months after moving into their homes.

Three people were no longer housed at Sarah Ross because they had given notice to vacate and moved to other living situations. One resident was evicted.



Source: City of Vancouver

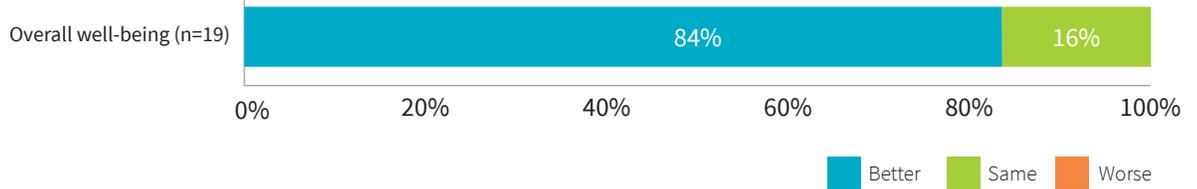
Quality of Life for Residents

OUTCOME: IMPROVED

Overall Well-being

Eighty-four per cent of survey respondents reported improvements in their overall well-being.

“People on opening day were so overwhelmed. The gratitude that everyone came in with was unreal. It’s taught people that no matter who you are, you still deserve kindness, you still deserve to live in such a nice place.” – Sarah Ross staff member



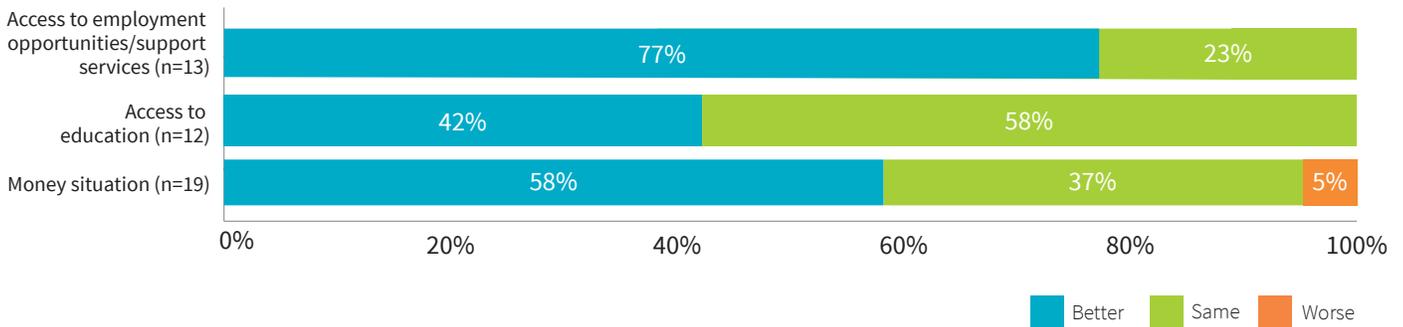
Employment, Income and Education

Source: Resident Survey

Staff reported that at a recent Atira job fair, many Sarah Ross residents submitted applications to work at the property management company in roles such as maintenance and administration. Staff also reported that one resident started school and moved out of Sarah Ross to live independently.

In the resident survey, 77 per cent of respondents reported better access to employment opportunities and employment support services since their move, while 42 per cent reported better access to education.

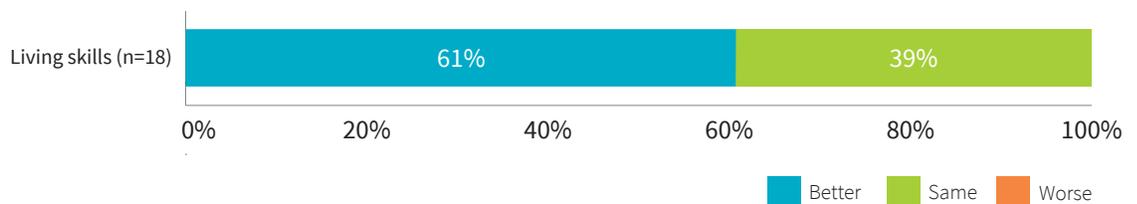
Fifty-eight per cent of survey respondents reported that their money situation had improved.



Living Skills

Source: Resident Survey

Sixty-one per cent of survey respondents reported that their living skills had improved. No survey respondents reported a worsening in this area. Staff noted that when people feel safer, their anxiety about basic survival lessens. They are then better able to deal with other areas of their lives and concentrate on making positive choices.



Source: Resident Survey

Social Connections

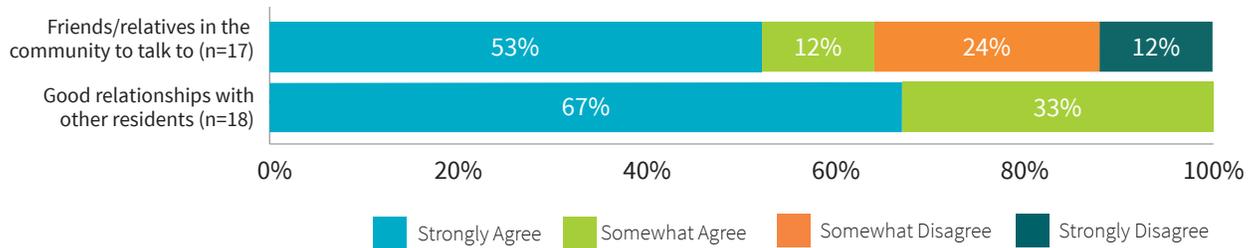
Sarah Ross residents also reported improved social connections. Sixty-five per cent of survey respondents somewhat or strongly agreed that they had friends or relatives in the community to talk to, while 100 per cent reported good relationships with other residents. Fifty-five per cent of survey respondents reported improvements in their social connections.

Staff noted that one of the positive changes that has occurred at Sarah Ross is that residents have developed friendships.

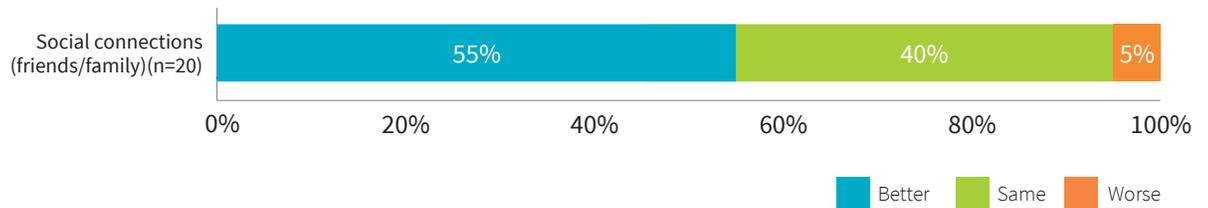
“People have become more vulnerable, allowing people in and making friendships.

You are a little more hardened on the street.”

– Sarah Ross staff member



Source: Resident Survey



Source: Resident Survey

Recreation

The nearby community centre has made it possible for residents to increase their access to recreational activities, with some residents accessing the gym, computers, and other facilities at the centre. Staff reported that all residents have been signed up to the recreation centre and for library cards. Several residents now have pets. Some educational programming is also taking place in the building. For example, a parks board program is teaching residents how to weave baskets.

In the resident survey, 31 per cent of respondents reported improved participation in recreational activities.



Source: Resident Survey

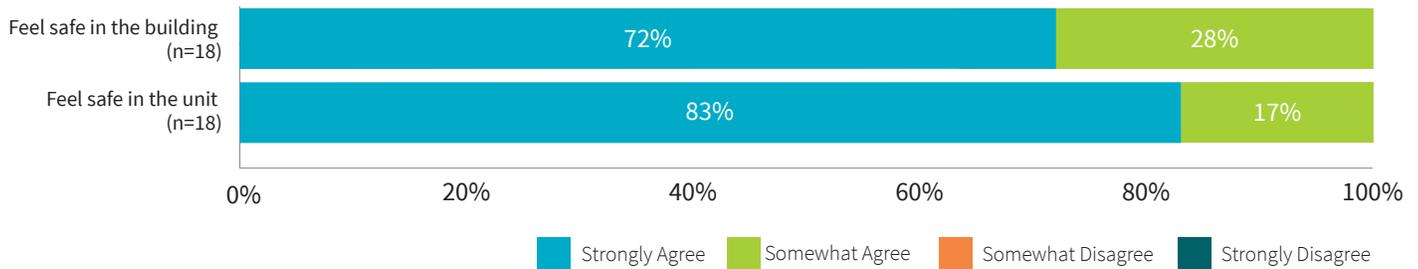
Safety

All survey respondents (100 per cent) somewhat or strongly agreed that they felt safe in the building, while 100 per cent agreed that they felt safe in their unit.

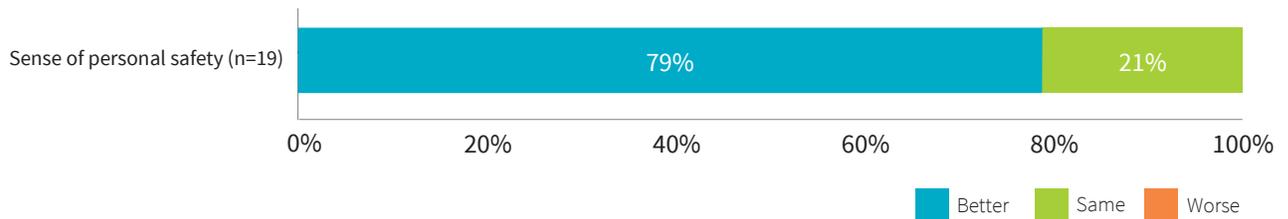
The majority of survey respondents (79 per cent) reported an improvement in their sense of personal safety. No survey respondent reported a worsening in this area.

“People who have been living with insecurity for a long time now feel secure.”

– Sarah Ross staff member



Source: Resident Survey



Source: Resident Survey

Satisfaction with Housing and Supports

Staff reported that the majority of residents are satisfied with their housing situation at Sarah Ross and that residents have developed a lot of pride in the building.

“If you put someone in a beautiful place like this, then they have pride. If you give someone something nice, they want to keep it nice. Everyone deserves to live in a clean and sanitary place.”

– Sarah Ross staff

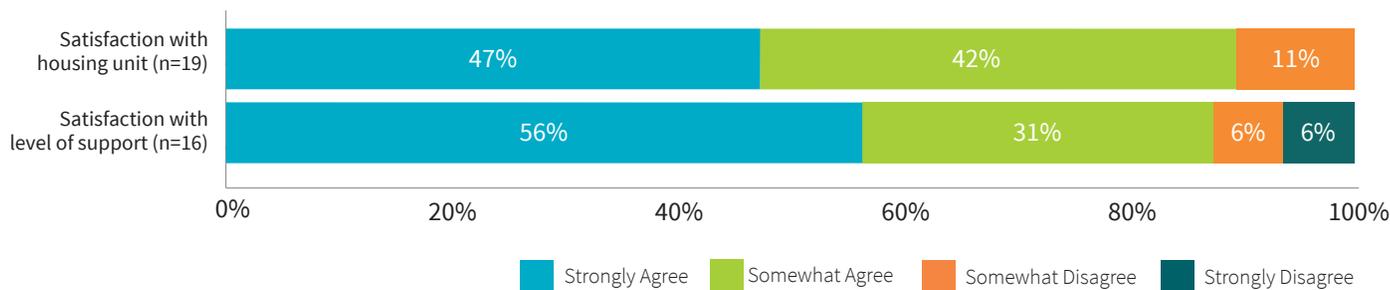
Staff felt that one of the strengths of the Sarah Ross development is the time staff have to develop relationships with residents and provide them with the supports that they need.

“Here we have more time to spend. We have the time to accompany people to appointments and make true connections with residents. Trust develops through time spent and leads to helping people change their lives.”

– Sarah Ross staff

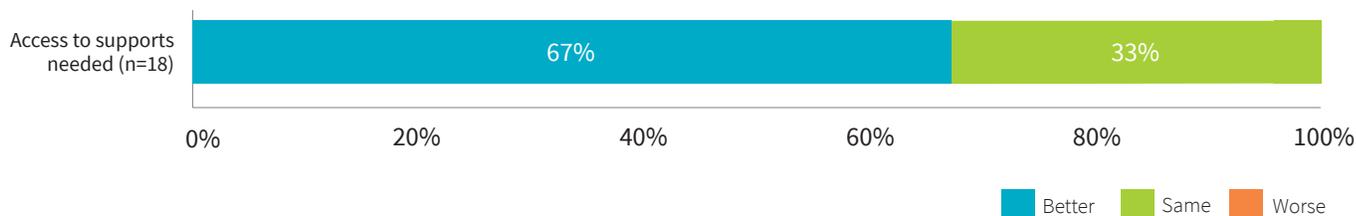
RESULTS AT SIX MONTHS

The resident survey supports staff perceptions that residents are satisfied with their housing and supports. Most survey respondents (89 per cent) somewhat or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their housing unit, while 87 per cent of survey respondents somewhat or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the level of supports they receive at Sarah Ross.



Source: Resident Survey

Most survey respondents (67 per cent) reported that access to the supports they need has improved, while 33 per cent reported that access has stayed the same. Sarah Ross staff reported that residents have begun accessing supports that they were not accessing prior to their move to the building, such as connecting with income assistance, doctors, and dental services.



Source: Resident Survey

Challenges

Sarah Ross residents have experienced some challenges since moving to their new homes. Staff noted it has taken some residents a while to open up to staff and allow them to help.

The building takes a harm reduction approach to substance use, and staff noted that this can be a challenge for some residents who are in recovery. Sarah Ross staff also identified challenges related to the modular building design, including:

- Some of the appliances and hardware used in the building are not durable enough and have broken (microwaves and window latches).
- The ventilation system is very loud and has led to complaints from residents.

“One of the barriers that people have is that they’re not used to having support. This can be uncomfortable (...). They were closed off to staff when they moved in. Now the relationships that staff have with residents is amazing.”

– Sarah Ross staff

Residents' Health

OUTCOME: IMPROVED

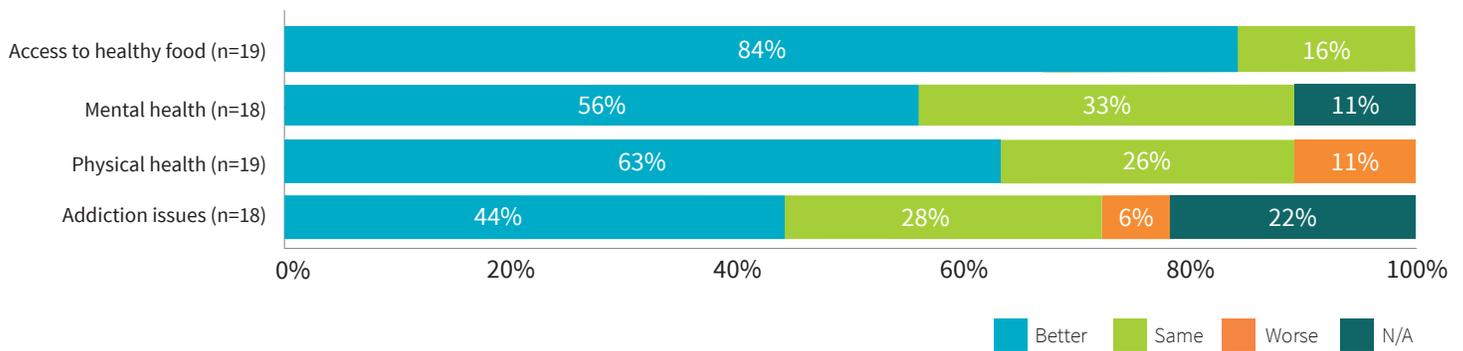
Over eighty per cent of survey respondents indicated that they have better access to healthy food since their move to Sarah Ross.

"I have definitely seen some changes for residents, they are looking much healthier, just from eating more, the food I think has a big impact"

– Sarah Ross staff

Fifty-six per cent of survey respondents reported improvements to their mental health since moving into their modular unit and 63 per cent of survey respondents reported an improvement in their physical health.

Forty-four per cent of survey respondents reported improvements in addiction issues, while 28 per cent reported that their addiction issues had remained the same, and 22 per cent reported that this question did not apply to them.



Source: Resident Survey

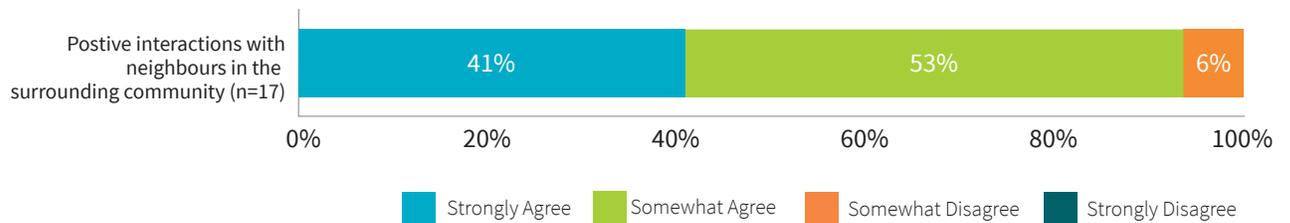


Community Relations

OUTCOME: IMPROVED

Sarah Ross staff indicated that the relationship with the wider community is fairly positive. Staff noted they are always there to help if neighbours have an issue to raise. Neighbours have dropped off second-hand clothes, dog food and baked cookies for the building.

Resident survey responses supported staff perceptions. Almost all survey respondents strongly or somewhat agreed that they have experienced positive interactions with the surrounding community (94 per cent).



Source: Resident Survey



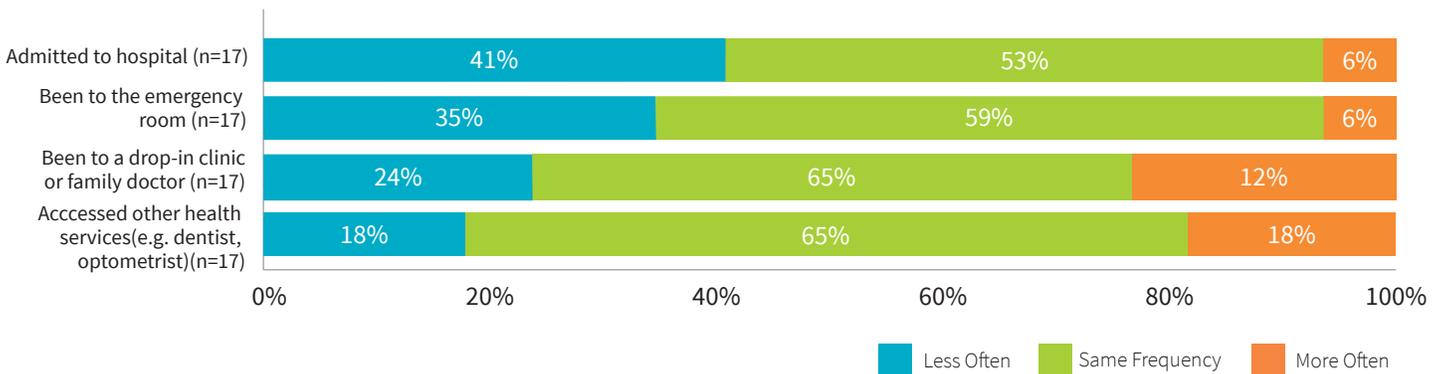
Health Care System Usage

OUTCOME: REDUCED USE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

Some residents reported that their use of emergency health services has decreased. Forty-one per cent of survey respondents indicated that they have been admitted to hospital less often since moving to Sarah Ross, while 53 per cent reported they had been admitted to hospital with the same frequency.

A similar trend was seen in trips to the emergency room, with 35 per cent of survey respondents reporting they had been to the emergency room less often, and 59 per cent reporting they had been to the emergency room with the same frequency.

Twenty-four per cent of survey respondents reported that they had been to a drop-in clinic or family doctor less often since moving into Sarah Ross. Eighteen per cent of survey respondents reported accessing other health services (such as dentist or optometrist) less often since moving into Sarah Ross, while access remained the same for the majority of survey respondents.



Source: Resident Survey





Data provided in this report was collected six months after Sarah Ross opened. The outcomes are based on the 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 voluntary resident survey was made available to Sarah Ross residents in February 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.

- Thirty-three per cent of Sarah Ross 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 Atira Property Management staff in February 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.

City of Vancouver Data

Data on some resident demographic information and previous living situation was accessed from the City of Vancouver Homelessness Services Database.

Partners

This study is being undertaken at modular supportive housing developments across the province in collaboration with non-profit housing societies and other partners. In Vancouver, the Rapid Response to Homelessness program is delivered as Temporary Modular Housing (TMH).

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

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