
AMO Ending Homelessness Symposium

CATHY COUSINS – OMSSA PRESIDENT

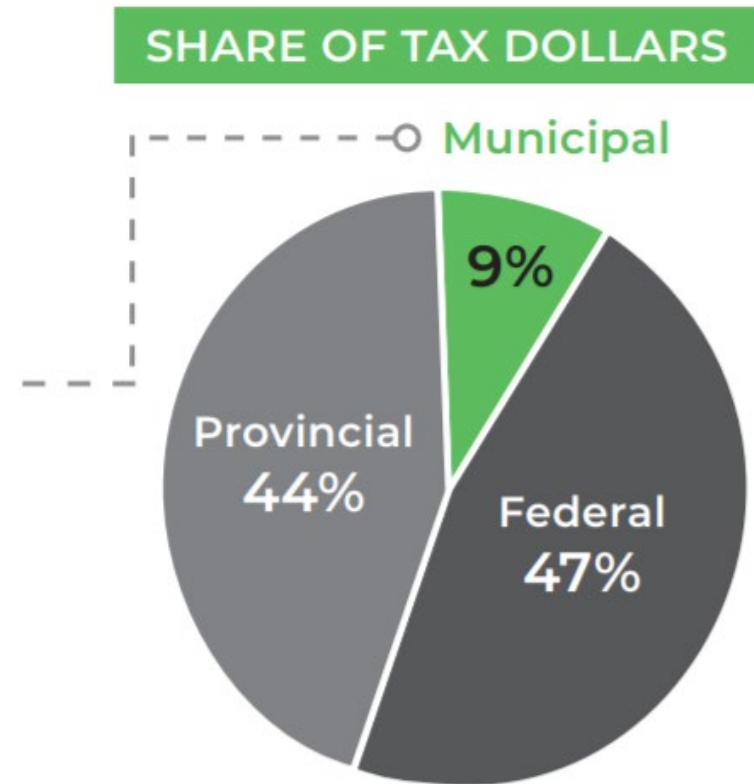


ONTARIO'S 47
SERVICE SYSTEM
MANAGERS

CMSMS AND DSSABS

Funding challenges

- Housing and Homelessness services are funded through a combination of federal, provincial and municipal contributions
- Ontario has the lowest per capita program spending for Human Services of any Canadian province
- Municipal Service Managers are challenged by the fact that they collect only 9% of all tax dollars
- For community housing municipalities contribute 58% of total funding
- Services most in demand during economic recessions or downturns



Social Services Relief Fund

Municipalities are thankful for the provincial and federal funding that came as a result of the Social Services Relief Fund and increased allocations to the HPP Program.





IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

Shelter costs and supply

Housing and Rental Supply Crisis

- Average rent in Ontario \$1474 (CMHC, Oct 2022) More efficient and effective service delivery
- Median rent in Ontario: \$1400
- Ontario Rental Vacancy Rate: 1.8%
- Average home cost Ontario: \$881,946
- Ontario Works Single Person Monthly Benefit: \$733
- Average Ontario Salary: \$52,600





Increased homelessness encampments

- Court rulings have forced municipalities and the province to consider policies on how they address homelessness encampments.
- Shelter capacity is stretched
- Weather is getting warmer and some prefer to live rough instead of within shelters due to safety, rules etc.
- Human rights approach
- Media and political pressures on municipal staff

Preparing for Post-Pandemic Ontario

Considerations for service delivery after COVID?

- Expiry of emergency federal and provincial benefits
- Inflation, rising cost of food, hydro, transportation, phone, internet, rent and housing.
- Increased encampments and visible homelessness. Evictions and a lack of supply
- Increased caseloads and lack of digital access
- Reduced public support and compassion
- Many competing priorities to address in health, social services, housing and the economy.



Key Solutions to Reduce Homelessness in Ontario

All governments must partner together to address this massive challenge

Increase Housing Prevention Program allocations to address growing demand.

Invest in mental health and addictions

Increase social assistance rates

Invest in supportive housing

Better collaboration with the health, justice and corrections systems.

Increase rental, community housing and shelter capacity



ONTARIO MUNICIPAL SOCIAL
SERVICES ASSOCIATION

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

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