

A Pandemic Response and   
Recovery Toolkit for Homeless   
System Leaders in Canada

Appendix A-7.

Situation Assessment:   
Determining Next Steps

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## A-7. Situation Assessment: Determining Next Steps

**Important Questions to Ask When Assessing the Situation**

As COVID-19 impacts the homelessness response system and progresses through its pre-pandemic or warning phase through to its disease containment response, post peak period and finally post-pandemic period, a situation assessment should be regularly completed by System Leaders. Such situation assessments will assist in identifying where the system is currently at in meeting the needs of the people it is dedicated to serving, ensuring that evidence informed practices are incorporated and determine next steps to assist with the pandemic recovery for all.

* What is the scope, scale and potential impact of COVID-19 on homelessness and housing programs?

#### Common Challenges in Situation Assessments:

* Mistaking opinion for fact
* Lack of prioritization in analysis – first things first!
* Exerting energy to find a consensus that will never happen
* Assessment is too broad
* What do we need to do, in what order, to respond to COVID-19 and provide continuity of services to people who are homeless or previously homeless and now supported in housing programs?
* How will we gather information to stay aware of what is happening in homeless services, and be reliant upon data rather than anecdotes?
* How does connectivity to other systems like public health services and resources occur at this time?
* How is the situation impacting particular population groups like those who identify as Indigenous or victims of domestic or intimate partner violence?
* How do we continue to support the mission of ending homelessness?
* What is the pandemic response mission for homeless and housing support services? How do we ensure that the pandemic response aligns with the mission to prevent and end homelessness for local people?
* How will we learn and refine activities through continuous improvement?