



Hamilton

The Homelessness Partnering Strategy

Housing First:

What is it & what does it mean for Hamilton?

May 7, 2014

Objectives for Today

- To ensure service providers have a good understanding of what Housing First is
- To help Hamilton service providers better understand the requirements under HPS as it relates to Housing First
- Help potential proponents determine whether their proposed program will fit within the Housing First framework
- Minimize competition for the limited funds



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Overview of Presentation

- History of Housing First
- What is and is not Housing First
- Expectations of the Model
- Target Groups – Chronic and Episodic Homelessness
- Systems of Care
- Equity and Housing First



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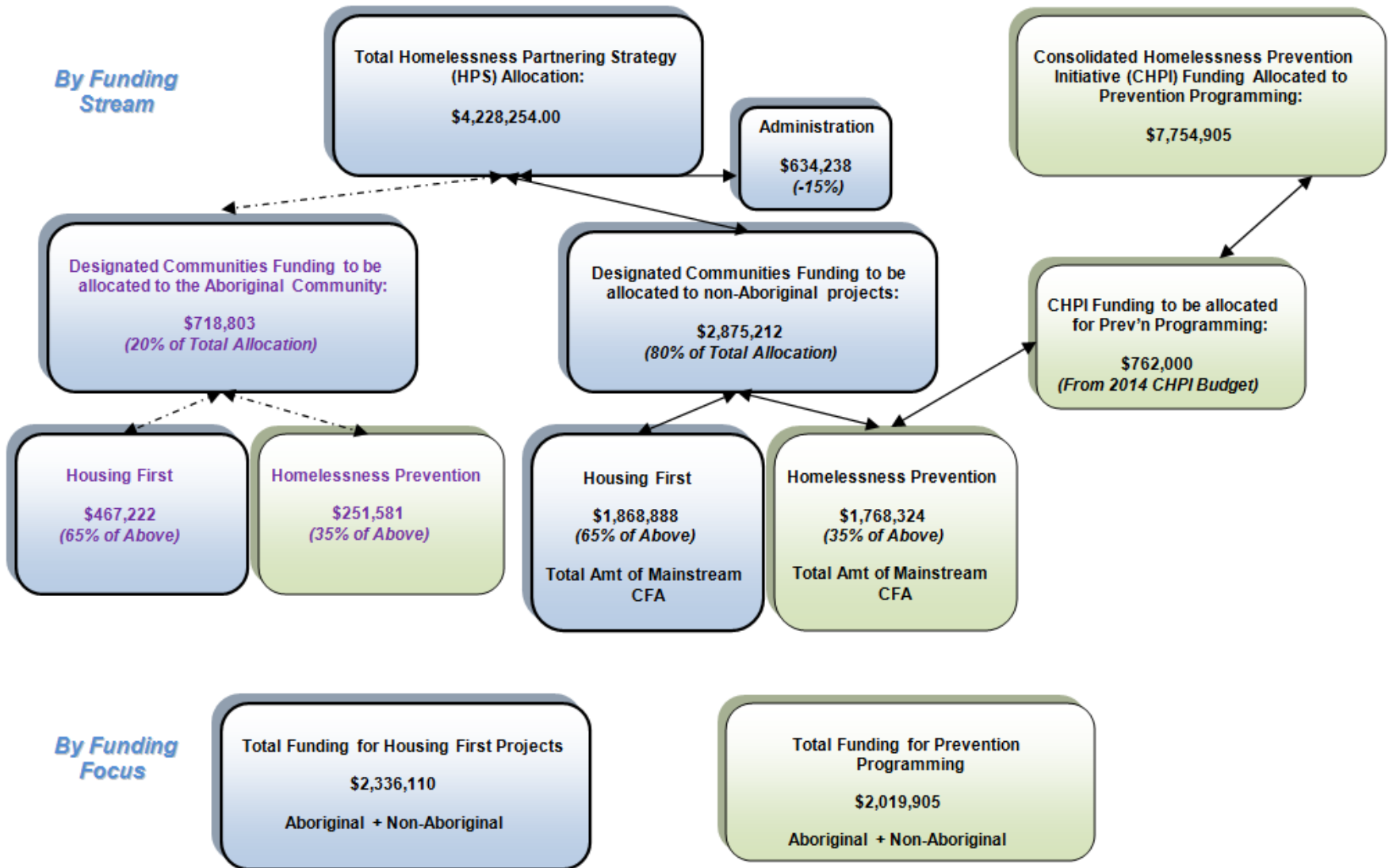
Overview of HPS

- HPS is a Federal Government program intended to prevent & reduce homelessness across Canada
- City of Hamilton has received HPS funding since 1999
- Federal Government has announced a 5-year funding cycle (April 1, 2014 – March 31, 2019) – year 1 is a transition year
- Total investment: \$21,141,270 (\$4,228,254 annually)
- 65% of Hamilton's funding must be spent on Housing First, the remaining 35% can be spent on homelessness prevention - today will focus on the Housing First component



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Housing First and Prevention Funding



Overview of HPS – Partnership with the Aboriginal Community

- Recent review of the federal homelessness funding relationship between the City and the urban Aboriginal community
- Resulted in a series of recommendations:
 - continuing the 20% allocation
 - increasing the planning integration of mainstream and Aboriginal CABs
 - enhanced data collection



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Overview of HPS – Partnership with the Aboriginal Community

- In the past, the 20% allocation was a priority all on its own - now, it must be integrated into the percentage allocations within the prescribed activities
- The 20% will not be part of the Call For Applications
- The Aboriginal community (through the Aboriginal CAB will do a separate Community Planning process and CFA)
- A summary of the review will be released...



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History of Housing First

- Roots of HF model in Canada go back to 1970 – Houselink in Toronto
- “Housing First” popularized in New York (Pathways to Homes) and Los Angeles (Beyond Shelter)
- Brought into the mainstream by Sam Tsemberis (Pathways) in 1992
- Local variations on the model include: Hostels to Homes, the HOMES Program, Transitions to Homes, Supporting Our Sisters, and Youth Housing Support



What is Housing First?

- Homelessness intervention that supports people who are homeless to move quickly from the street or emergency shelters into permanent housing with supports that vary according to participant need
- An effective tool for working on chronic and episodic homelessness while reducing pressure on other emergency services
- An evidence-based approach with measurable outcomes



What is Not Housing First?

Programs...

- that (only) alleviate barriers to housing
- that (only) help people find housing
- that (only) support participants in housing
- in which the housing is temporary
- that have indefinite supports
- with any requirements for housing/support (other than a case management visit) – requirements such as treatment, support groups, life skills development, etc.

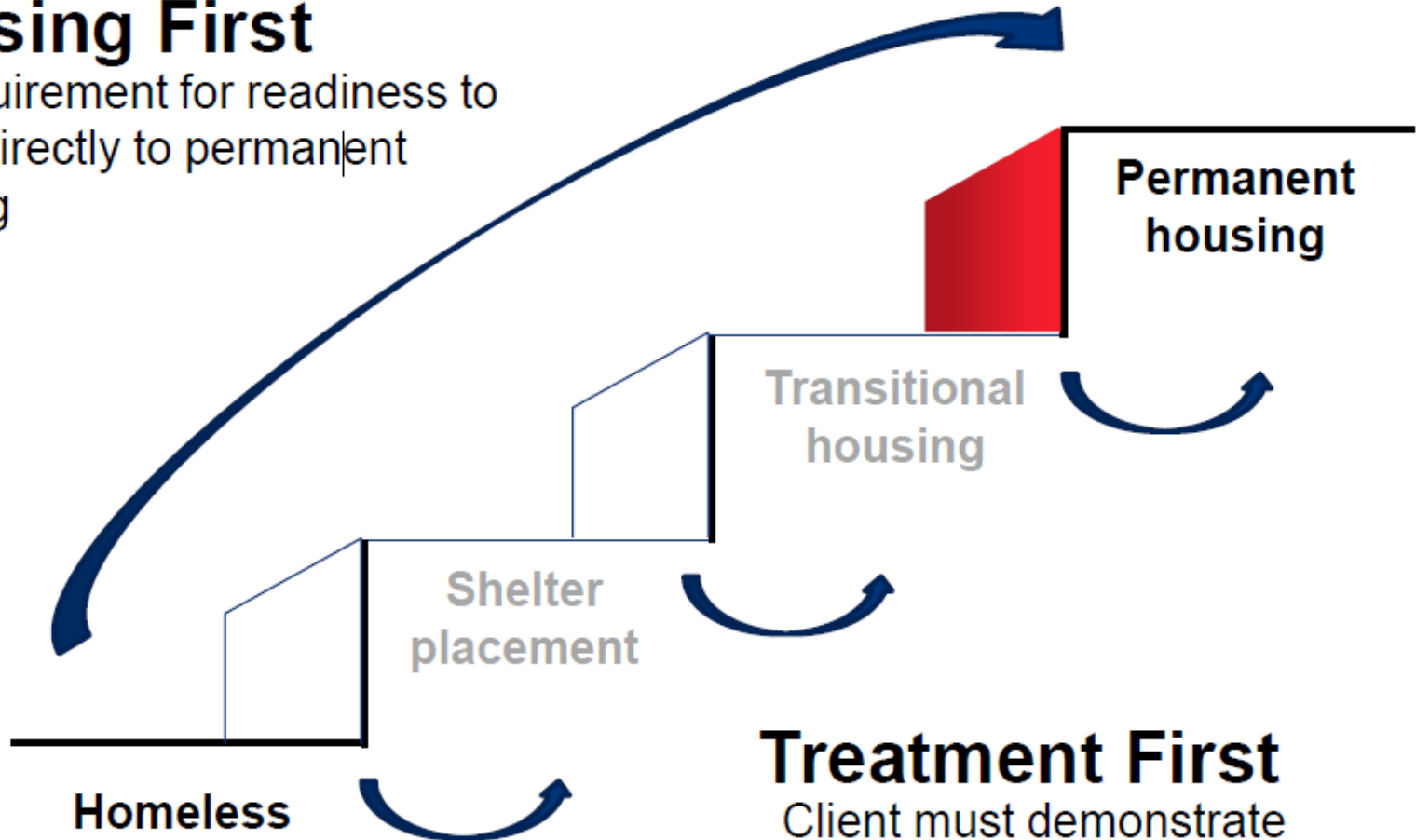


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Step Model from Sam Tsemberis

Housing First

No requirement for readiness to move directly to permanent housing



Treatment First

Client must demonstrate readiness for each step

The HPS Approach to Housing First

According to the HPS program, Housing First programs should include these four elements:

1. Identifying potential HF participants
2. Connecting HF participants to housing
3. Providing or connecting HF participants to services/supports
4. Preparing for successful exit from the program



Six Principles

1. Rapid housing with supports
2. Offering participants choice in housing
3. Separating housing from services
4. Providing tenant rights & responsibilities
5. Integrating housing into the community
6. Strength-based and promoting self-sufficiency



The Housing First Fidelity Scale

- Developed by the HPS Secretariat to inform what is expected in a Housing First approach
- Identifiable criteria for communities to gauge the extent to which they are successfully implementing a Housing First model
- 13 Components: Each component is given a rating of 1-4, with 4 demonstrating a higher level of fidelity to the Housing First model
- Helps us clearly understand ESDC's expectations

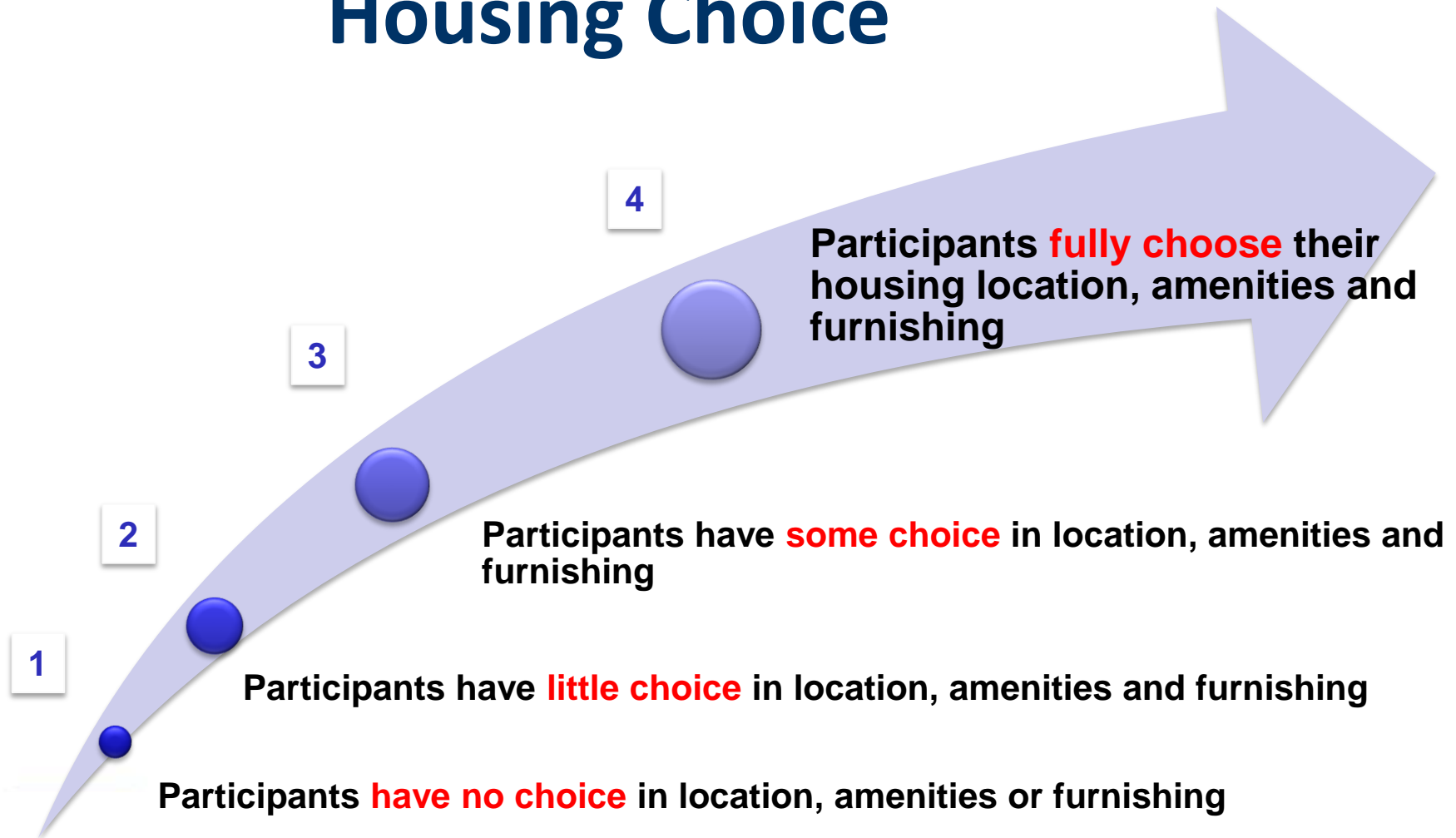


Rapid Housing with Supports



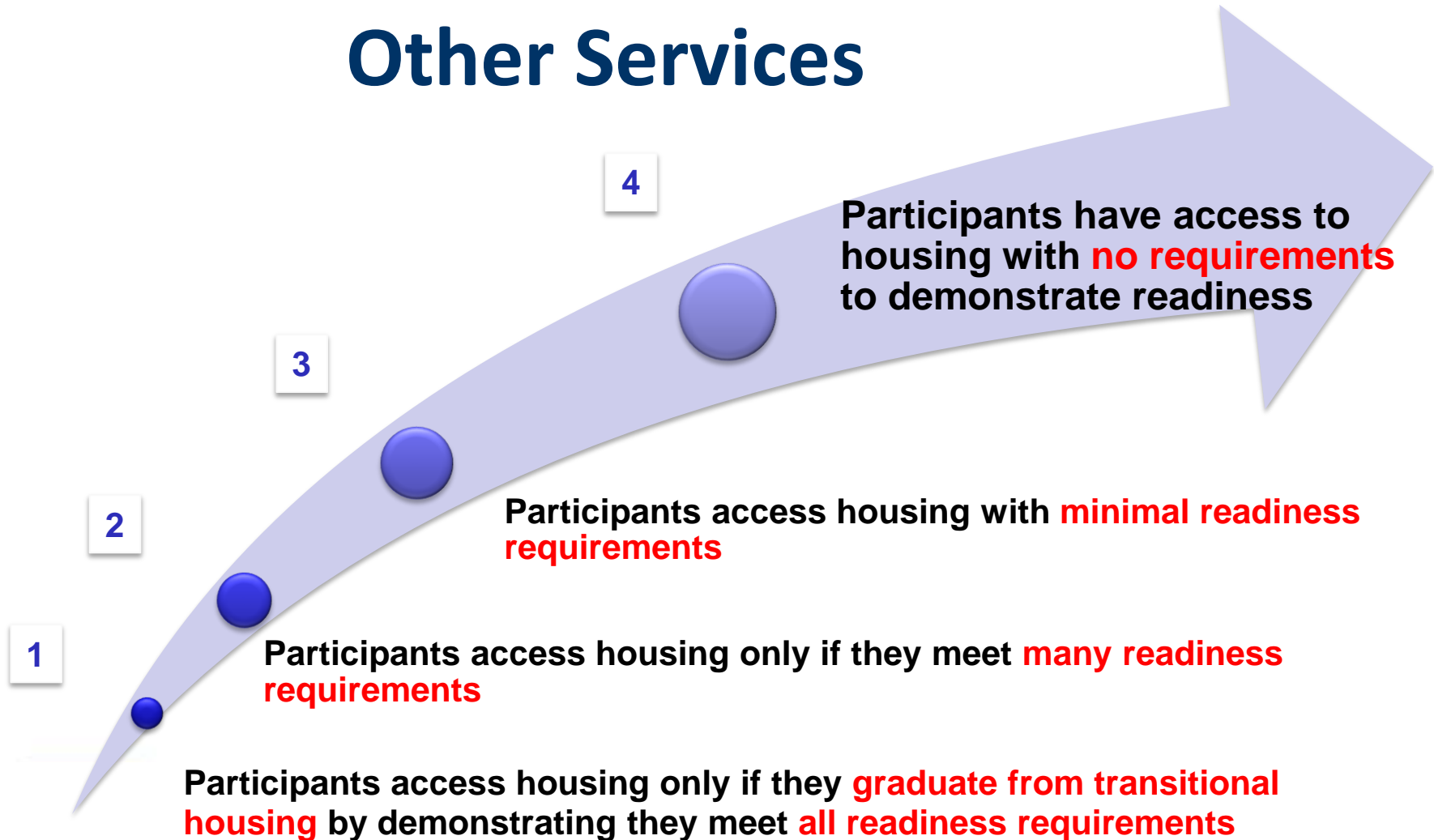
Case Study: Participants were housed within 30 days during At Home Chez/Soi (Vancouver). The project successfully rehoused 42 persons into a 2nd unit, without readiness requirements. It had a total of 98 rehousing events (2011-12)

Housing Choice

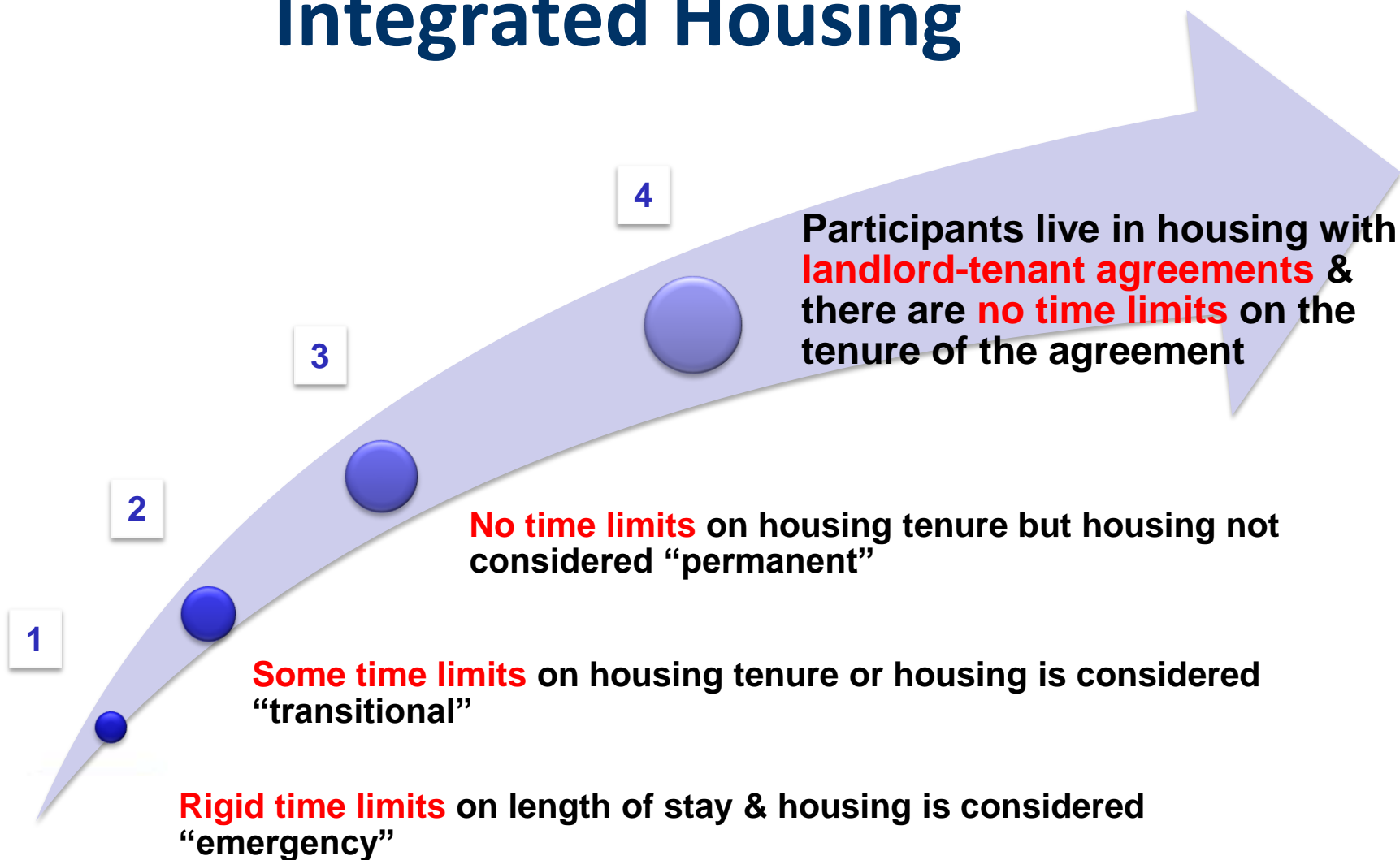


Case Study: In Toronto's Streets 2 Homes Program, participants are presented with housing options, which they may decline. Should they decline, other housing options are presented. 62% of S2H participants choose to live in private rental arrangements; however, others prefer social housing (20%) or communal living

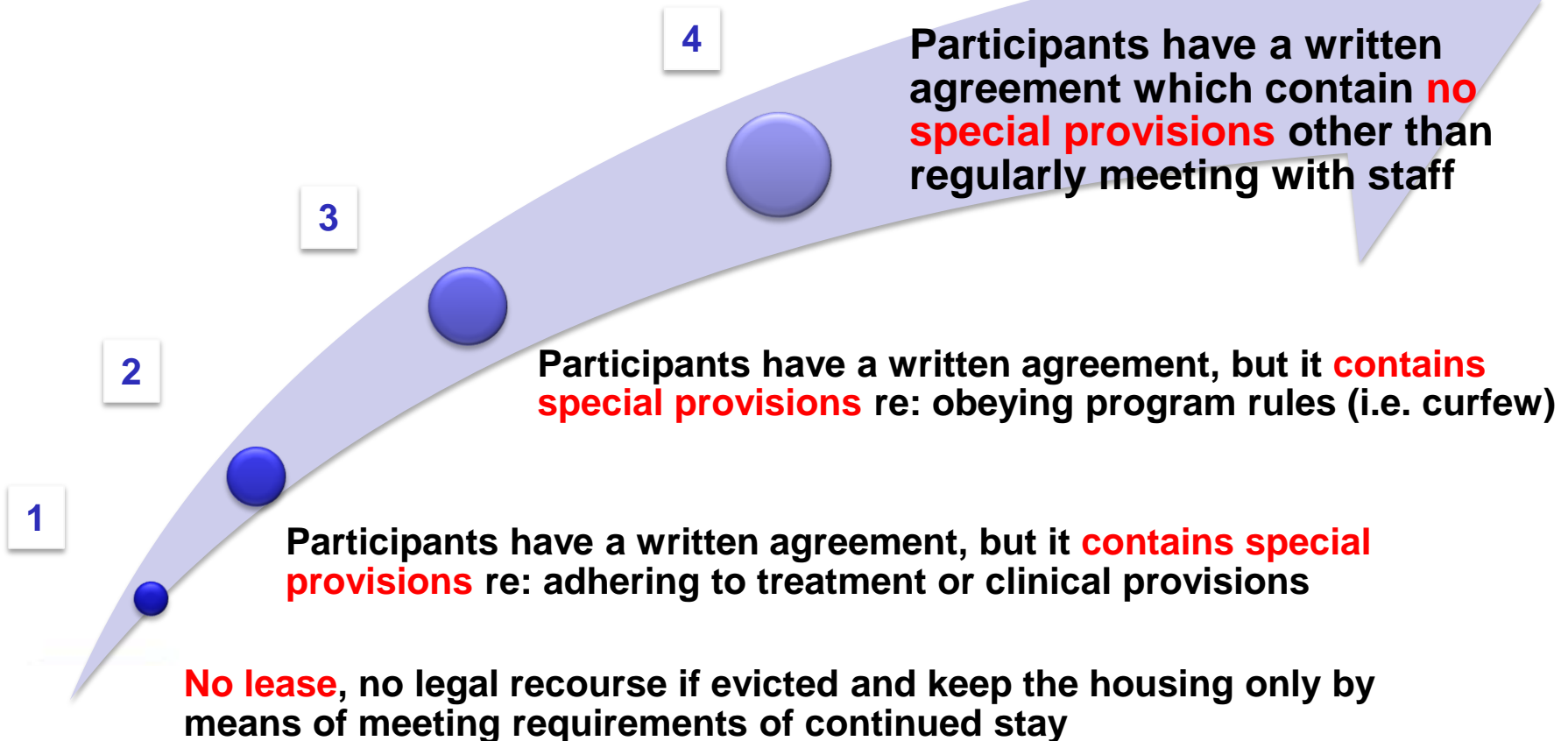
Separating Housing Provision from Other Services



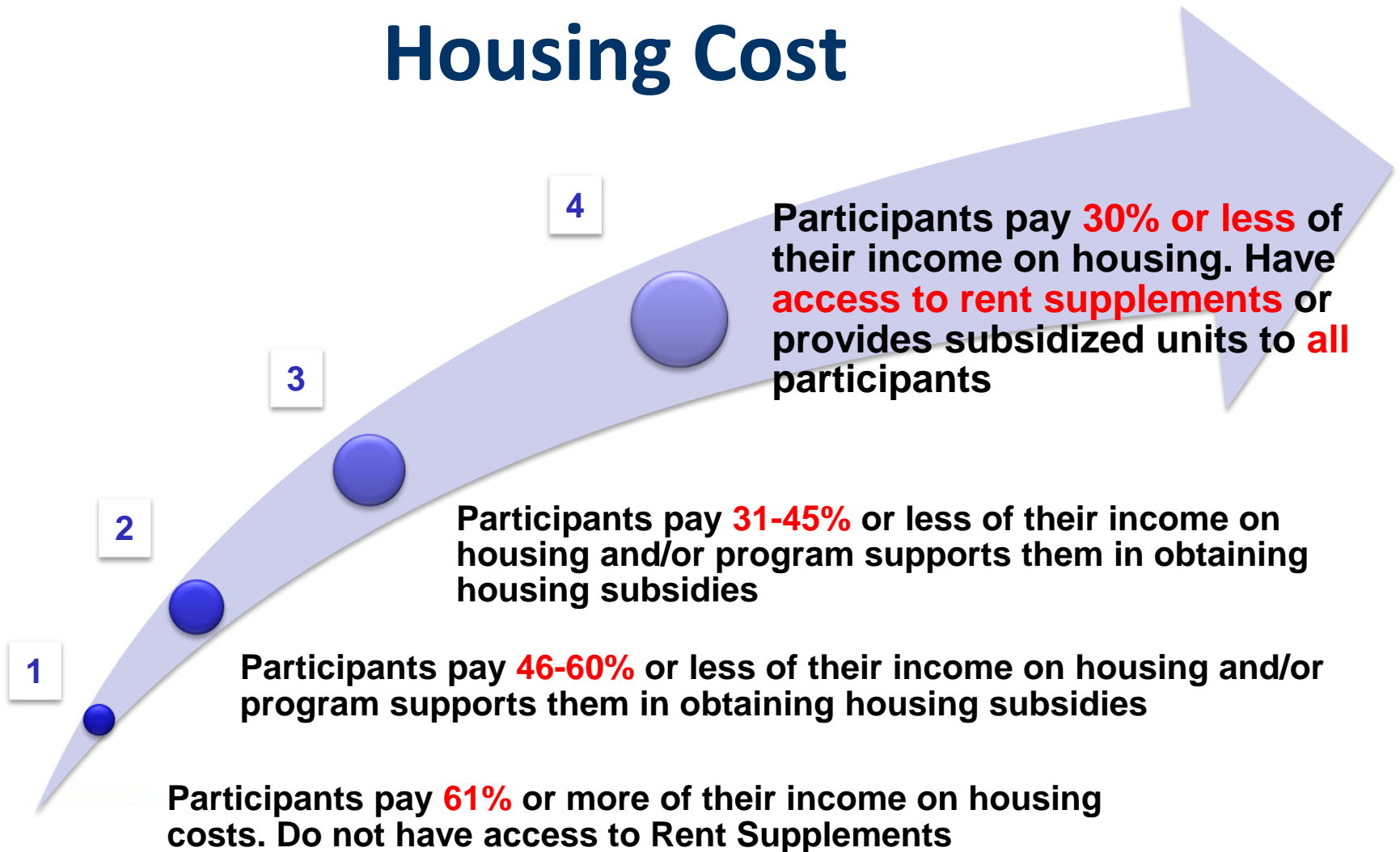
Integrated Housing



Tenant Rights & Responsibilities



Housing Cost

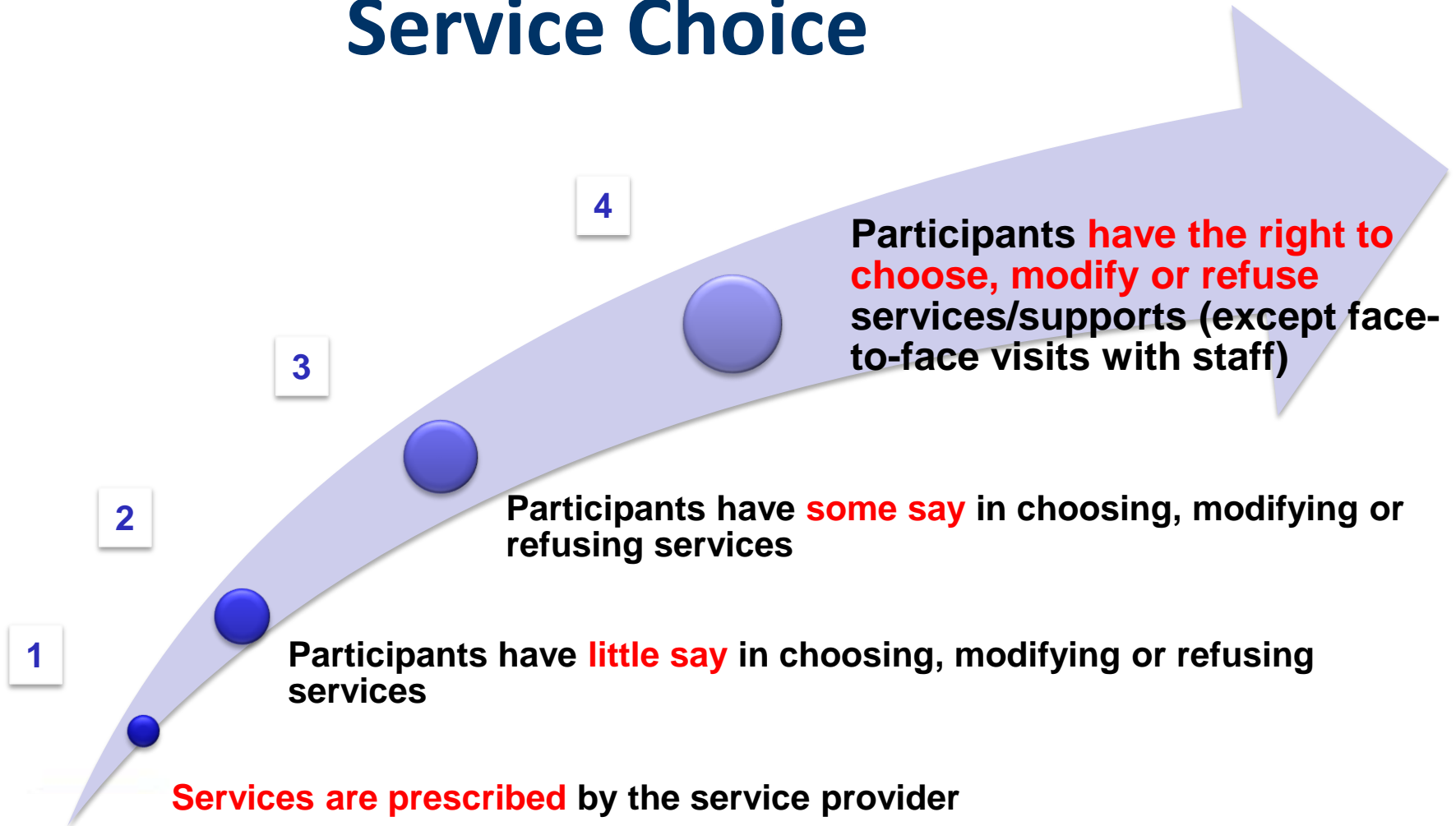


Case Study: Pathways to Housing in New York City provides a rent supplement to the amount where families pay no more than 30% of their monthly income on shelter costs.

Housing Support



Service Choice



Participant-Driven Service

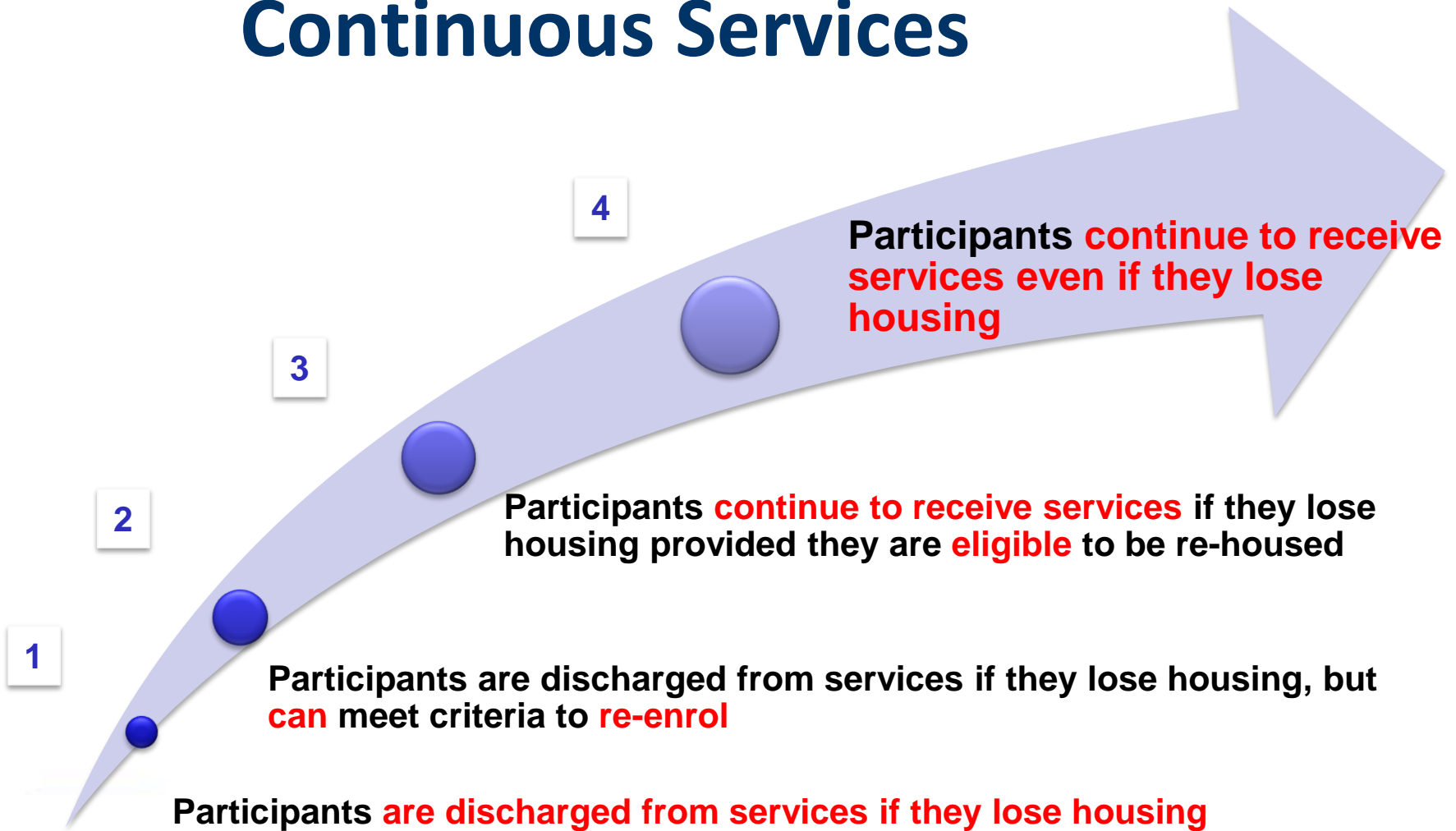


Contact with Participants

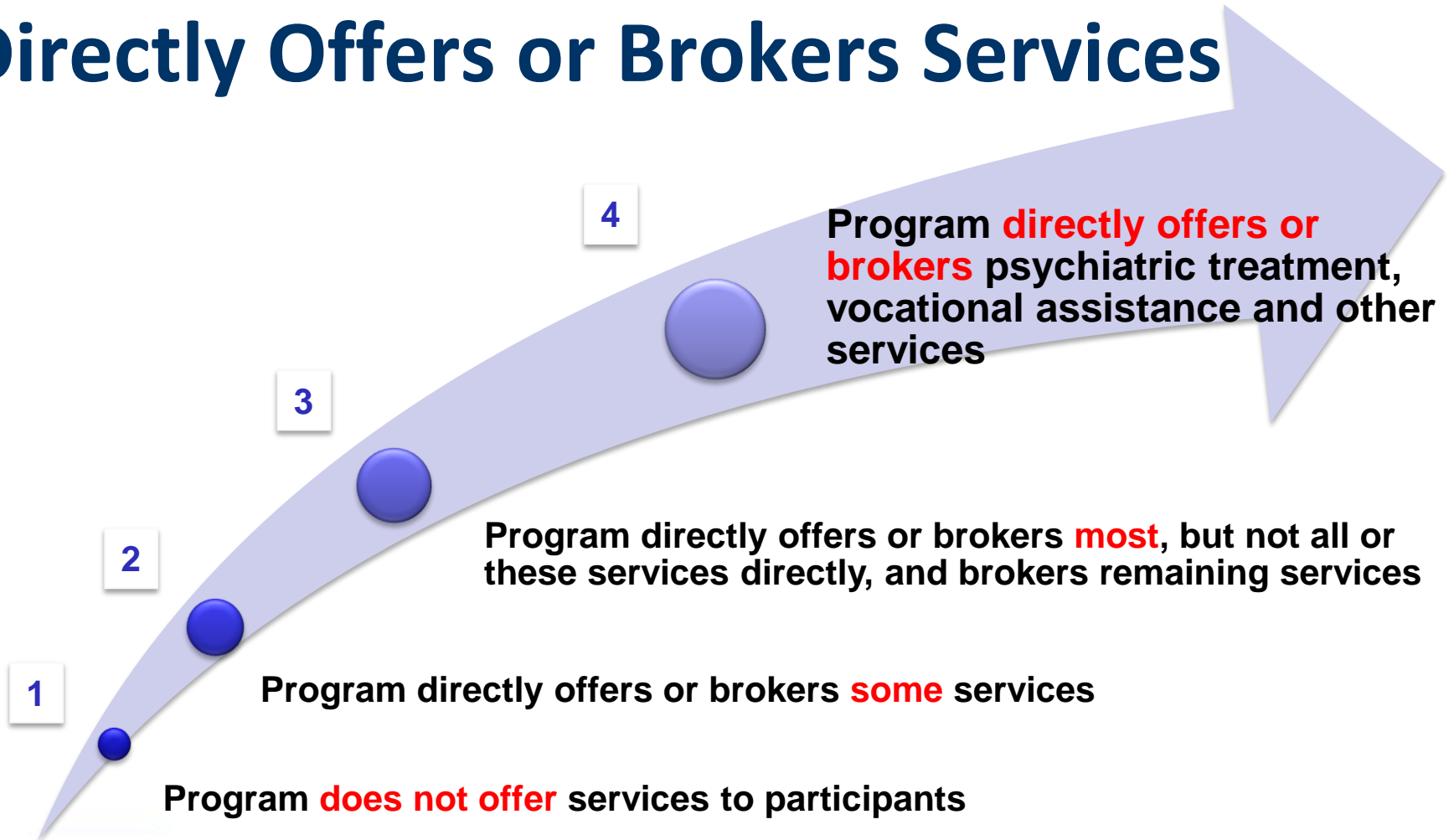


Case Study: In Denver's Housing First Collaborative (DHFC) all program participants sign and agree to meet with a member of the case management team at least twice per month.

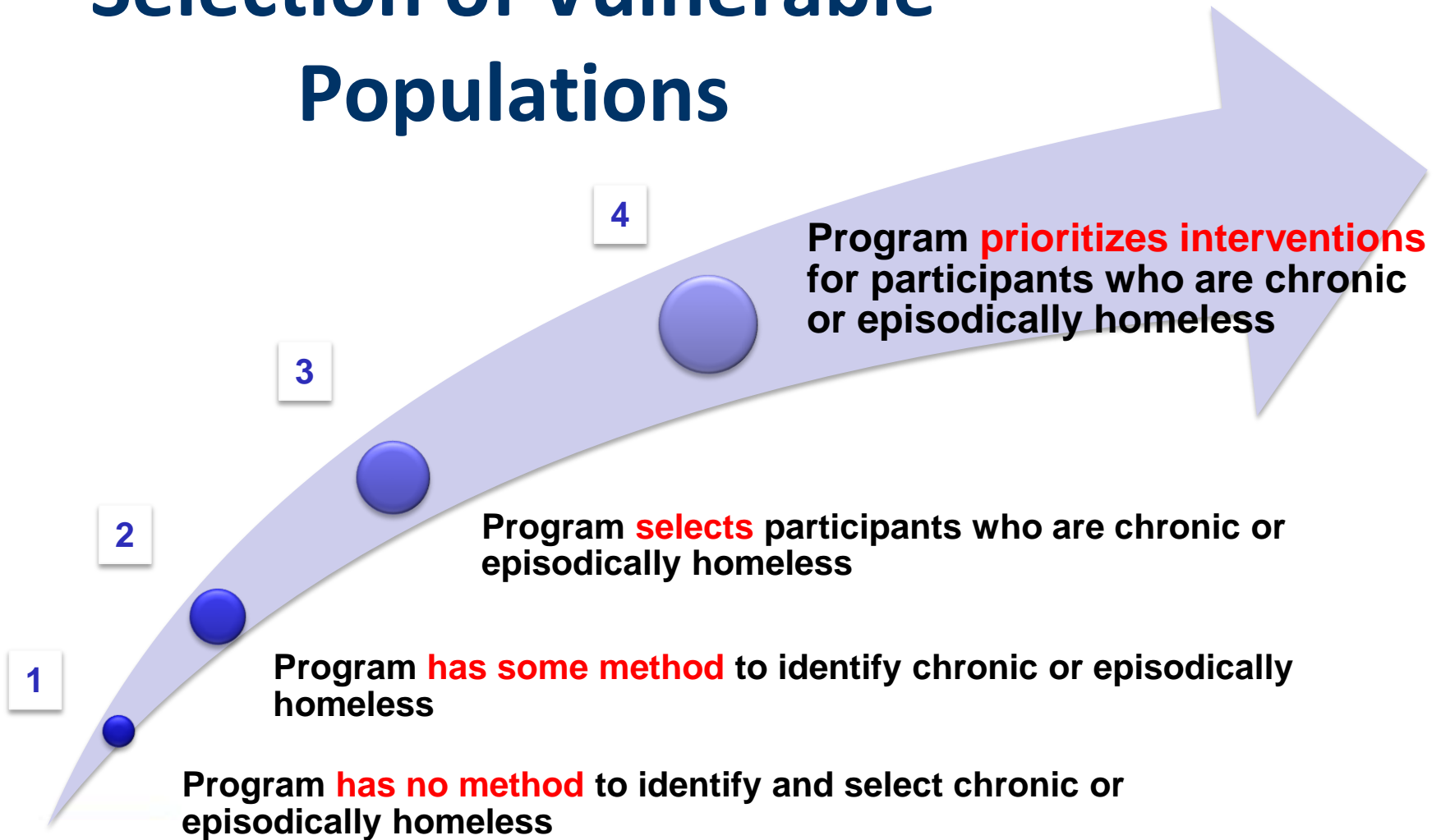
Continuous Services



Directly Offers or Brokers Services

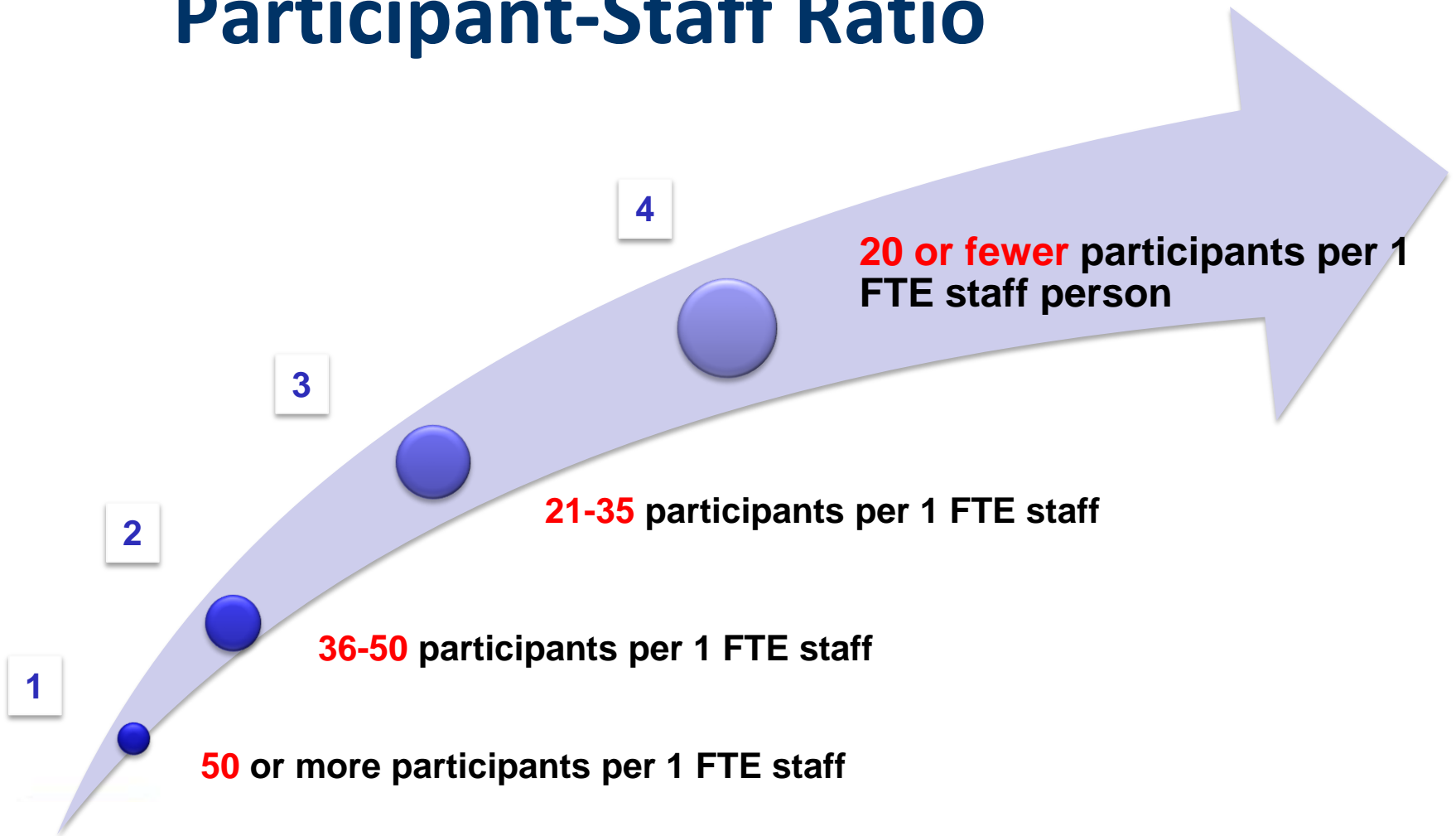


Selection of Vulnerable Populations



Case Study: Edmonton's Homeward Trust Program mandates that its service providers use the Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) at intake to determine the level and depth of supports needed for folks entering the program. All 10 Edmonton-based HF agencies use the coordinated intake tool.

Participant-Staff Ratio

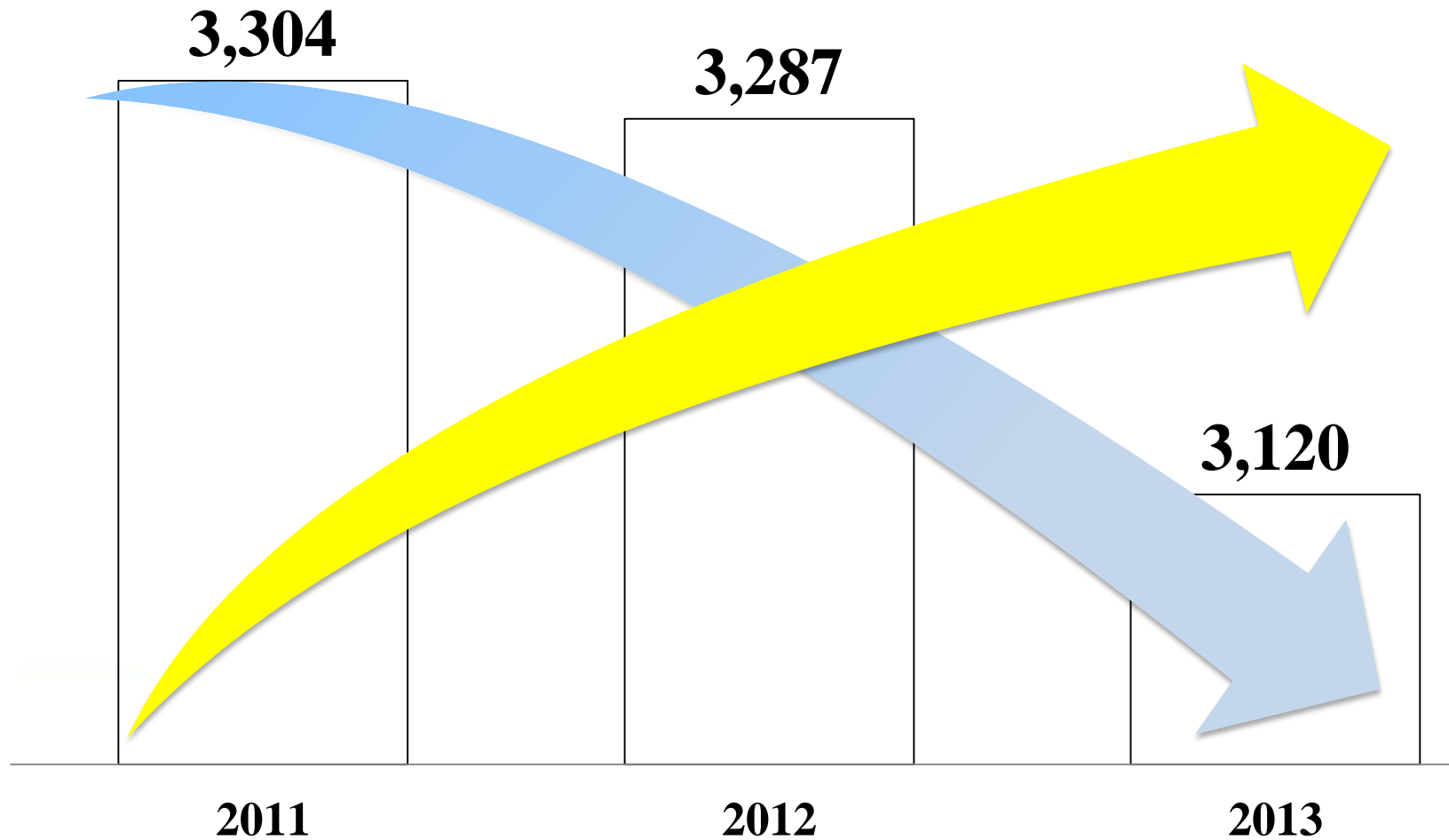


Case Studies:

Edmonton's Homeward Trust Program has an Intensive Case Management (ICM) team with caseloads of 15-17 participants.

Hamilton's Transitions to Homes (T2H) mobile Intensive Case Management (ICM) team has averaged a caseload of 17 participants since 2012.

Overall HIFIS OAGN data (2011-2013) shows that the number of unique individuals staying at a shelter is decreasing...



...but the same data shows there is an increasing trend for females, families, and youth using a shelter.

Context of Homelessness in Hamilton

- Hamilton has 315 emergency shelter beds*:

Males = 194 beds

Females = 20 beds

Youth = 21 beds

Family = 80 beds

* City-contracted beds

- Lower number of beds for women does not represent less need
- HIFIS (2012) data indicates that approximately 45% of individuals accessing an emergency shelter stayed less than or equal to 14 nights in a shelter.



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Chronic Homelessness

Chronic Homelessness:

- Individuals who are currently homeless
- Experienced homelessness cumulatively for at least 180 nights homeless (6 months)
- Communities should prioritize those who have been homeless the longest
- In Hamilton 58 unique individuals – all singles (based on HIFIS 2012 data)

Episodic Homelessness

Episodic Homelessness:

- Individuals who are currently homeless
- Experienced 3 or more episodes of homelessness in the past year
- Homelessness occurrences are separated by a minimum of 30 days
- In Hamilton 63 unique individuals – all singles (based on HIFIS 2012 data)

Targets

- **ESDC has prescribed mandatory HF indicators / measures**
- **ESDC has prescribed some target minimum / maximums**
- **Emphasis on measuring project outcomes vs project outputs**
- Indicators and point-in-time counts will contribute to measurements
- All projects must set ambitious and measurable outcomes and track participants' results to demonstrate progress towards reducing homelessness
- CABs and CEs are expected to base decisions on the evidence collected at the project/community levels



Targets

ESDC has prescribed several HF indicators/targets:

| Target Description | HPS Assigned Target | Local Target |
|--|---------------------|---------------|
| Number of individuals supported to find housing through a HF intervention | NA | 121 people/yr |
| Percentage of HF participants who remained housed at 6 months | Minimum 80% | 97 people |
| Percentage of HF participants who remained housed at 12 months | Minimum 80% | 78 people |
| Number of days for HF participants to move into permanent housing after intake | NA | 30 days |
| Percentage of HF participants who require re-housing | Minimum 30% | 36 people |
| Percentage of HF participants who return to homelessness | Minimum 15% | 18 people |
| Percentage of HF participants who have successfully exited the program to a positive housing situation | NA | 70 people |

Systems of Care

- “all services and program elements within the homelessness sector – including mainstream services – are guided by the principles of the Housing First model” (Gaetz, 2014)
- Meaningful partnerships are established so that:
 - All organizations are working from the same set of principles and toward the same goals for people
 - Roles are clearly defined
 - Agencies can specialize in the services they deliver well
 - Participant needs (not system needs) drive services
 - People are matched with the support services that best fit their needs and people access those services seamlessly



Equity and Housing First

- The Housing and Homelessness Action Plan is clear that different groups of people experience different levels of access and different barriers to housing
- Gender, age, race, sexual orientation, Aboriginal status, disability have impacts on peoples' housing and homelessness experiences
- The fundamental principles of Housing First fit well with most people – even those groups that traditionally experience barriers
- It is important the Housing First model be designed with the participant-group in mind



Added Considerations

Some population-related concerns do arise – for example:

- Many young people – especially those 16 – 21 – may not be developmentally ready for independent living
- Women’s homelessness is often hidden and not part of the traditional homeless shelter system – women may not be supported because of this
- Some Aboriginal people may prefer congregate living situations that more appropriately reflect their cultural value around community



Recap of Expectations Moving Forward

- System standardization – common assessments, service levels
- Working together as a system – meaningful community partnerships with strong referral processes in place
- Person-centredness – opportunities for participants to exercise choice and expertise in the services they receive



Next Steps

- A Council report with Hamilton's Community Priorities will go to Council on June 9, 2014
- A Call for Applications will be released in late-June or early-July
 - The Call for Applications will have two funding streams – Housing First and Homelessness Prevention
- The applications will be evaluated in the early fall
- Agencies will be notified of the decisions in December
- New projects will begin April 1, 2015



Housing First Resources

Service Canada:

www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/communities/homelessness/housing_first/index.shtml

The Canadian Housing First Toolkit:

www.mhcc.activesprint.com/welcome



[Hamilton](http://www.hamilton.ca)



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