



Toronto Community Housing Seniors Housing Unit Integrated Service Model – Phase 2 Frequently Asked Questions | September 2021

What is the Integrated Service Model, or ISM?

The Integrated Service Model (ISM) for seniors housing has been created to bring about new ways of supporting senior tenants so they can age in place with dignity and in comfort.

The City of Toronto and Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) developed the model in collaboration with Home and Community Care Support Services–Toronto Central (formerly known as the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network or LHIN).

The ISM is being implemented in TCHC’s seniors buildings by its Seniors Housing Unit. Implementation will occur over three phases and four regions between 2020 and 2022.

How far along is the implementation of the Integrated Service Model (ISM) for seniors housing?

Toronto Community Housing’s Seniors Housing Unit is moving forward with Phase 2 of implementing the model. In September 2021, the Seniors Housing Unit began implementing the model in 26 buildings in its North West Region and an additional eight buildings in its South East Region, where the ISM was launched in 18 buildings in December 2020.

Phase 3 will begin in the North East and South West regions in 2022. Once fully implemented, the ISM will support improved housing services for more than 14,000 low-income senior tenants (ages 59+) living in 83 seniors-designated buildings across the city.



Tenant information sessions about the model are being held with tenants before each phase is implemented. An information session for Phase 2 was held on September 14. Upcoming sessions include an update on Phase 1 implementation on November 16 and on Phase 3 on December 8.

Information about the sessions, including recordings and presentation materials from past sessions, can be found at torontohousing.ca/ISM.

How does this fit into Tenants First?

Implementing the Integrated Service Model is a key deliverable of the City's Tenants First plan. Toronto City Council directed TCHC and the City to develop a model to integrate health and housing services for senior tenants in 2018, based on a recommendation in the Tenants First report.

What are the goals of the Integrated Service model?

In designing the ISM, the City and TCHC established three shared goals:

- Build relationships of trust between senior tenants and housing staff by adding more employees who will focus only on serving senior tenants.
- Improve the delivery of housing services, with an increased focus on issues that impact stability in seniors housing.
- Increase access to health and community support services through enhanced integration of community agencies in seniors buildings.

Seniors will be involved in evaluating the changes through surveys and participation in advisory committees, such as the Senior Tenants Advisory Committee.



What are the major changes in the way TCHC's seniors housing portfolio will operate under the ISM?

The ISM puts in place a new staffing model for seniors buildings, creates seniors-specific policies and procedures, and links tenants to health services more effectively by introducing designated Home and Community Care Support Services Care Coordinators.

Administratively, TCHC's seniors portfolio will be organized into four regions, enabling staff to plan and coordinate programs with care and community partners more easily.

The ISM recommends the creation in each region of a Seniors Health and Wellness Hub where seniors can access community services more easily. Further engagement with tenants on the ISM will be undertaken, including the approach to the Health and Wellness Hubs.

What new positions are being added to TCHC's seniors buildings?

The ISM staffing model creates an important new tenant-facing position, the **Seniors Services Coordinator** (SSC). These employees will be assigned to specific buildings to enable closer connections between tenants and staff, and closer working relationships between TCHC staff and Home and Community Care Support Services (HCCSS) Care Coordinators.

The SSC will be the main point of contact for all tenant-facing concerns in the building. They will liaise with other building staff and HCCSS Care Coordinators, foster strong relationships with senior tenants, support early identification of tenants requiring additional supports and facilitate referrals to community agencies as required.

Two other new positions have been created through the ISM:

- **Tenant Services Administrator** (TSA) will work out of a regional office and perform administrative tenancy management functions.



- **Tenant Engagement and Services Supervisor (TESS)** will manage and support the Seniors Services Coordinators (SSCs) and will work out of the area office. The TESS will support SSCs in addressing high-needs tenants and promoting community development.

What tenant engagement has happened as part of the ISM Implementation?

Over the past year, TCHC's Seniors Housing Unit has conducted a Tenant Experience Survey to solicit the perspectives of senior tenants. Results of this survey will be posted this later this fall on torontohousing.ca/ISM under Resources.

TCHC has produced seven issues of its quarterly seniors newsletter, *Seniors Speak*, which is mailed to all households in the seniors portfolio. Additional copies of this newsletter can be downloaded/printed at torontohousing.ca/seniorspeak.

Information sessions were also held to encourage senior tenants to apply for the Senior Tenant Advisory Committee (STAC) during the recruitment period. STAC, which held its first meeting in December 2020 and meets every eight weeks, has been consulted on health and wellness hubs, the staffing model, and numerous policies and procedures. This includes the tenant needs assessment, arrears and eviction prevention, and turning 65. The September STAC meeting covered how programming is determined and evaluated in buildings, and the November meeting will focus on unit inspections and maintenance processes.

There is also an information phone number and email for the STAC, which all senior tenants can use to submit any inquiries or suggestions they have for the Integrated Service Model. The email address is STAC@torontohousing.ca and the phone number is **416-981-6601**.

Applications for tenants to apply to join the STAC are available online on the City's [website](#).



How will you track the effectiveness of the ISM?

The City, TCHC, and Home and Community Care Support Services—Toronto Central have developed 25 indicators to evaluate the Integrated Service Model. The indicators will measure the delivery of housing services with an increased focus on issues impacting seniors housing stability, access to health and community support services, and relationships of trust between senior tenants and housing staff.

What challenges for senior tenants is the new model intended to address?

Isolation and poverty put many senior tenancies at risk. As many senior tenants experience decreased health and social wellbeing, they become less able to reach out for supports. The ISM will provide senior tenants with improved access to wellness and community supports, and puts additional staff resources in place to better support successful tenancies for senior tenants.

Who will be accountable for what under the ISM?

TCHC, through the Seniors Housing Unit, is directly accountable for delivering housing services. TCHC is responsible for delivery of housing services, and TCHC staff play a key role in connecting tenants to appropriate health service providers.

The City, in turn, holds program accountability for ISM performance.

Home and Community Care Support Services and health partners liaise with TCHC staff to support early interventions and ongoing care.

How do I know what region my building is in?

The four regions are divided by Yonge Street and St. Clair Avenue. All buildings on Yonge Street are assigned to the West regions. You can find a list of all 83 buildings by region and which phase of implementation they fall under at torontohousing.ca/ISM under Resources.



What are Seniors Health and Wellness Hubs?

The ISM calls for the creation of Seniors Health and Wellness Hubs (onsite in select Seniors Housing Unit buildings) to provide senior tenants with access to a range of health, social, and wellness services delivered by external community agencies. Specific services offered in the wellness hubs would respond to building and community needs. Tenant participation would be sought in the planning and delivery of programs in the hub. Implementation of the wellness hubs is currently on hold pending further discussions with the City and engagement with tenants.

What are Care Coordinators?

The Seniors Services Coordinator will connect tenants with Care Coordinators at Home and Community Care Support Services as requested by tenants. These Care Coordinators will assist tenants with a care plan and connections to appropriate health services and supports.

As part of the ISM, there will also be a monthly table between staff in each building and Care Coordinators in Home and Community Care Support Services to identify and address complex tenancies and tenants who need services above and beyond what is normally required.

What policies and procedures are being updated to be seniors-specific?

As part of the ISM, a seniors-specific lens is being applied to operating procedures so that staff can better respond to the different experiences that senior tenants face. Examples include tenant onboarding, arrears and eviction prevention, and turning 65.

Additional new processes, such as a tenant needs assessment, are also being developed to better support senior tenants and identify their needs.



Tenants have been involved in piloting these updated and new procedures and their feedback is helping to inform further improvements. Additionally, the STAC has reviewed and provided feedback on several of the procedures as well as on related communications, and connected with other tenants to provide additional comments.

Where can I find more information about the Integrated Service Model?

You can find information about the Integrated Service Model, including recordings and materials from previous tenant information sessions as well as information about upcoming session, at torontohousing.ca/ISM.
