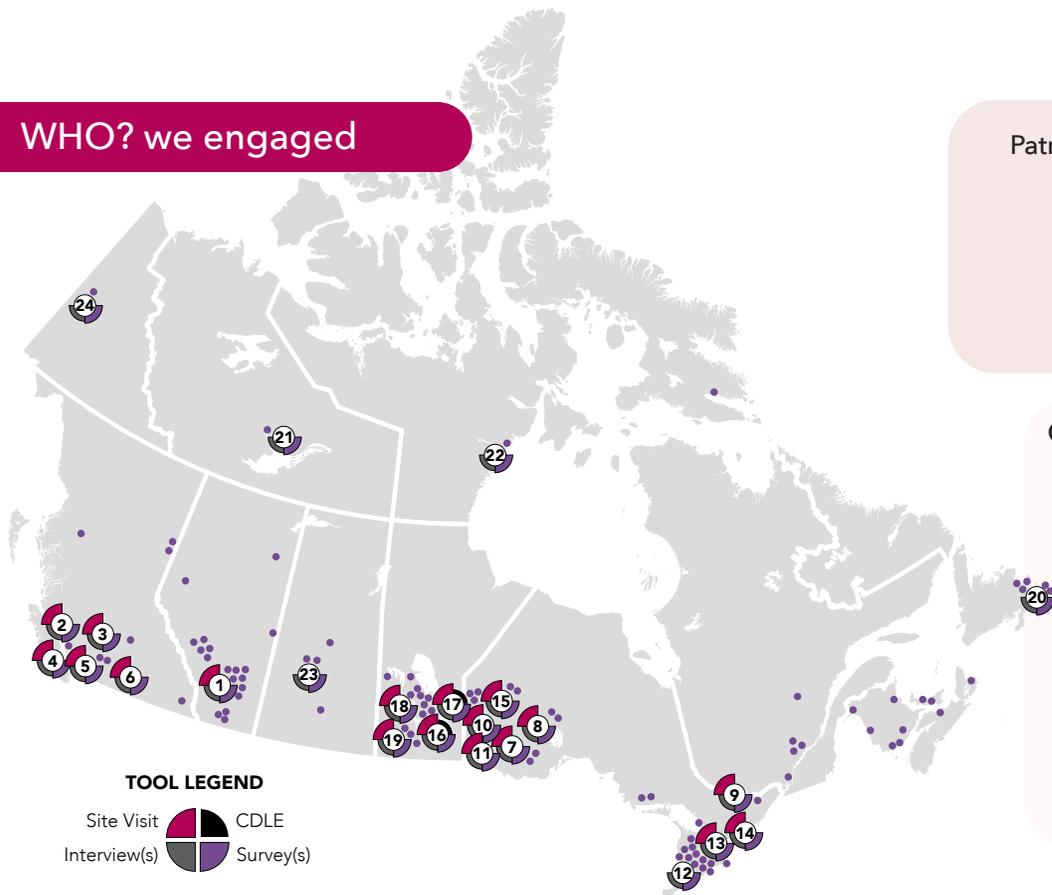


## WHY? we did it

Canadian shelters were engaged to assess barriers in built environment, information and communication technology and mental health.

Findings were shared with Employment and Social Development Canada's [Enabling Accessibility Fund](#) to help inform future funding.

## WHO? we engaged



Patron and Operator Surveys received: **90**  
 Cross-Disability Lived Experience On-site Assessments: **02**  
 On-site Accessibility Assessments: **19**  
 Patron and Operator Interviews: **24**

### Common mental health problems cited:

- Past trauma or violence (100%)
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (35%)
- Feeling overwhelmed/ anxious (70%)
- Repeated thoughts/ urges causing anxiety (45%)
- Lack attention, hyperactivity, impulsiveness (35%)

## WHAT? we found - common gaps & barriers

<p><b>1</b> exterior environments &amp; building entrances</p>	<p><b>INACCESSIBLE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Exterior routes;</li> <li>→ Building entries;</li> <li>→ Exterior amenity/ rest area*</li> </ul>	<p><b>5</b> washrooms, showers, &amp; change rooms</p>	<p><b>MISSING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Accessible, gender-inclusive washrooms;</li> <li>→ Emergency features in washroom/ showers;</li> <li>→ Private, accessible, showers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2</b> interior &amp; exterior signage &amp; wayfinding</p>	<p><b>MISSING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Architectural wayfinding &amp; tactile signage;</li> <li>→ Accessible, gender-inclusive signage;</li> <li>→ ICT integration.</li> </ul>	<p><b>6</b> operating controls, life-safety, &amp; security</p>	<p><b>MISSING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Emergency response plans with accessibility considerations;</li> <li>→ Emergency features in vertical circulation (elev., stairs, lifts).</li> </ul>
<p><b>3</b> interior stairs, ramps, handrails, &amp; elevating devices</p>	<p><b>MODERATE DEFICIENCIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Vertical circulation (elev., stairs, lifts).</li> </ul>	<p><b>7</b> diverse human experience accommodation</p>	<p><b>MISSING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Acoustic treatment of spaces;</li> <li>→ Indoor air quality treatment of spaces</li> </ul>
<p><b>4</b> interior doors &amp; accessible routes</p>	<p><b>INACCESSIBLE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Interior doors (heavy doors, knob hardware, etc.);</li> <li>→ Continuous circulation through buildings.</li> </ul>	<p><b>8</b> shelter specific accessibility considerations</p>	<p><b>MISSING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Accessible cultural spaces;</li> <li>→ Multi-sensory environments;</li> <li>→ Lighting control**</li> </ul>
<p>* MISSING/ non-existent at homeless shelters.                  ** Primarily at Homeless Shelters (not GBV)</p>		<p><b>9</b> communication, &amp; technology</p>	<p><b>MISSING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Accessible modes of communication;</li> <li>→ Digital communication affordances.</li> </ul>

Thank you for your participation.

## HOW? can we improve

### #1 ACCESSIBLE APPROACH AND BUILDING ENTRY

- Fully accessible building approach and building entry sequence.
- Accessible tactile and sensory map of site/building at building entry.

### #2 ACCESSIBLE EXTERIOR AMENITY/REST SPACE

- Fully accessible exterior amenity and rest areas complete with accessible route to building access point, with provisions of overhead shelter/shading, drinking water, access to natural environment/landscaping, and comfortable seating for those in pain.

### #3 ACCESSIBLE INTAKE/COMMUNICATION SPACE

- Fully accessible dedicated intake space, equipped with assistive communication tools; conducive to intake processes (e.g. bed bug protocols) in a dignified manner. Include a fully accessible washroom, change area, and shower (operator input req.).

### #4 ACCESSIBLE CULTURAL/QUIET ROOM

- Fully accessible cultural/quiet room (for smudging, prayer, meditation, a space for those who need to get away from chaos, to read, rest, if suffering from insomnia, etc.)

### #5 ACCESSIBLE PRIVATE SLEEPING ROOM

- Fully accessible private sleeping room(s), including accessible furniture, located on floor of building with accessible vertical access (eg. elevator).

### #6 ACCESSIBLE SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING SYSTEMS

- Fully accessible and cohesive signage and wayfinding systems. Includes signage and wayfinding to accessible and gender-inclusive washrooms, accessible entries and other particularly accessible spaces.

### #7 SENSORY ACCOMMODATION IMPROVEMENTS

- Task lighting with dimmer function in sleeping rooms/bunks.
- Audio/noise (cancellation, pink, white) devices.
- Sound baffles/treatment sound dampening for large open areas.
- Acoustic improvements to existing intake spaces and sleeping spaces.
- Acoustic treatment of HVAC in sleeping, dining, and quiet areas.
- Improve air quality (eg. smudging spaces, service/ companion animal areas.)

### #8 ACCESSIBLE WASHROOM & SHOWER WITH SHELTER SPECIFIC AMENITIES

- Fully accessible private washroom(s) and shower(s), complete with a full range of emergency provisions such as emergency call button, emergency fall floor sensors, etc.

### #9 INTEGRATION AND USE OF ICT AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

- Better integration and use of ICT and digital technologies, particular for Patron communication internally and with external resources.

#### Accessibility in the Canadian shelter system

Project summary sheet

Large print, braille, MP3 (audio), e-text and DAISY formats are available on demand by [ordering online](#) or calling 1 800 O-Canada (1-800-622-6232). If you use a teletypewriter (TTY), call 1-800-926-9105.

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