

14th European Research Conference Helsingborg, 20th September 2019

VENUE: Helsingborg Campus of the University of Lund, Sweden
Bios and Abstracts

Seminar 1: Room C217- Mobilizing Knowledge to Support Integrated Systems Approaches to the Prevention of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion (1)

Chair: Nóra Teller, HU

Melanie Redman and Steve Gaetz, CA: Designing the Adaptation and Implementation of the Welsh Model of Duty to Assist in Canada, and the Role of Evidence



Melanie Redman is the co-founder, President & CEO of A Way Home Canada, a national coalition reimagining solutions to youth homelessness through transformations in policy, planning and practice. A Way Home Canada has inspired communities and countries around the world to adopt the A Way Home brand as a way to participate in a growing international movement for change. Melanie also leads the National Learning Community on Youth Homelessness in Canada, which is a pan-Canadian community of practice for youth homelessness service providers.

Dr. Gaetz is a leading scholar on homelessness, and is director of the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness at York University. He focuses his efforts on conducting research and mobilizing this knowledge so as to have a greater impact on solutions to homelessness. Stephen has played a leading international role in knowledge mobilization and homelessness research through the Homeless Hub. In 2017 he was awarded the Member of the Order of Canada.



The notion of a Duty to Assist is a central feature of Welsh prevention legislation which was intended to overcome persistent housing exclusion in a context where housing is considered a human right. In this session, Stephen Gaetz and Melanie Redman will discuss the how the adaptation of Duty to Assist is a central feature of the Canadian Roadmap for the Prevention of Youth Homelessness, and current efforts under way to design and implement the Duty to Assist as a demonstration project to address youth homelessness in the city of Hamilton, Ontario. Such a demonstration project requires a high degree of systems planning at the local level, coordinated access, existing programming that supports the prevention of youth homelessness, and collaboration between the municipality, youth homelessness service providers and mainstream services. Using design thinking along with a consideration of a data driven approach to systems mapping, coordinated intake and accountability, this proposed pilot will be used to test the feasibility of adapting and implementing D2A more broadly in Canada. Our presentation will focus on the results of a developmental evaluation of the planning, design and prototyping process as part of our Making the Shift – Youth Homelessness Social innovation Lab. The timing of this pilot is important as it suggests a potential prevention-based strategy to actualize the recently declared Right to Housing in Canada.

Peter Mackie, UK: A Duty to Assist: Exploring the Global Mobilities of Homelessness Prevention Policy



Peter Mackie is a Reader at the School of Geography and Planning, Cardiff University. The primary focus of Peter's research is on the development of UK homelessness policy and legislation through research and advisory work, whilst also contributing to debates beyond the UK, particularly in relation to homelessness prevention. He is currently a FEANTSA Research advisor for the UK, a Knowledge Exchange Lead for the UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence, and convenor of the Wales Housing Research Network.



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The desire to address inequalities and exclusionary practices within homelessness policy led Wales to become the first country to attempt to fully reorient homelessness services towards prevention and to make preventative services universally available. At the heart of the Welsh approach is a legal duty on municipal authorities to assist everyone who seeks help and is at risk of homelessness. This presentation will briefly discuss the history and rationale for the Welsh prevention legislation and the lessons learned since implementation in 2015. The focus of this presentation will then turn to the processes that have led to significant policy mobility across the UK and globally. Legislation in Wales was largely replicated in England in 2018, has informed debates in Scotland and further afield has informed new directions in thinking and emerging pilot programmes in Canada. Findings identify key influences on the mobilities of prevention policy including; the evidence base, civil society, policy and practice windows, policy one-upmanship, as well as individuals, relations and networks. The presentation reflects on what this means if good policy is to travel faster.