

# Media Release

For Immediate Release:



## Coalition Surveys Greater Victoria on Attitude towards Homelessness

VICTORIA, BC, April 10, 2013 – Today the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness (Coalition) released data from a recent survey on the attitudes on homelessness in Greater Victoria.

### Attitudes towards Homelessness Survey Results

- 85.4 % agree that affordable housing would help reduce homelessness
- 84.5% of respondents agreed that ensuring access to affordable housing is the responsibility of the government
- Almost two-thirds (63.0%) of respondents found the statement, “it costs more in government services...for a person to be homeless than it does to provide them with housing” to be credible
- More than half of respondents (58.6%) indicated that they believed that homelessness in Victoria can be ended
- Nearly three-quarters of respondents (72.3%) have a relative or friend who has experienced mental health and/or addiction issues. Some respondents (41.6%) know someone who has been homeless with an additional 7.5% of respondents indicating that they have experienced homelessness themselves.
- Most respondents cited mental health issues (96.5%), drug and/or alcohol abuse (94.4%) and poverty (89.2%) as the main reasons for homelessness. Other common responses included; physical, cognitive, or other disability (77.8%); and/or unemployment (75.5%).
- Participant demographics by region:
  - Saanich (incl. Central and North) 34.9%
  - Victoria 21.4%
  - Western Communities (Colwood, Langford, Highlands, Metchosin, Sooke, & View Royal) 18.9%
  - Esquimalt 8.5%
  - Sidney 8.4%
  - Oak Bay 7.9%

“This is a clear message to our politicians and public policy makers that they have both the mandate and responsibility to end homelessness in Greater Victoria,” said Andrew Wynn-Williams, Executive Director of the Coalition. “Now is their chance to act.”

“Clearly, people recognize that homelessness is not a matter of choice, and is often associated with other issues such as mental health issues, addictions and poverty. Overwhelmingly,

respondents think that homelessness is the responsibility of government. There is an expectation that government will do something about homelessness, and that is a ringing endorsement for governments to do something,” said Mayor Dean Fortin, Co-Chair of the Leadership Council at the Coalition. “Solving homelessness will require the cooperation of all levels of government, to ensure that people receive the necessary supports for health and housing.”

View the [How does Greater Victorian feel about Homelessness](#) infographic online.

Survey completed by R.A Malatest & Associates Ltd.

The Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness is a partnership of local service providers, non-profit organizations, all levels of government, and the business, post-secondary and faith communities. The Coalition’s vision is to end homelessness in Greater Victoria by 2018.

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