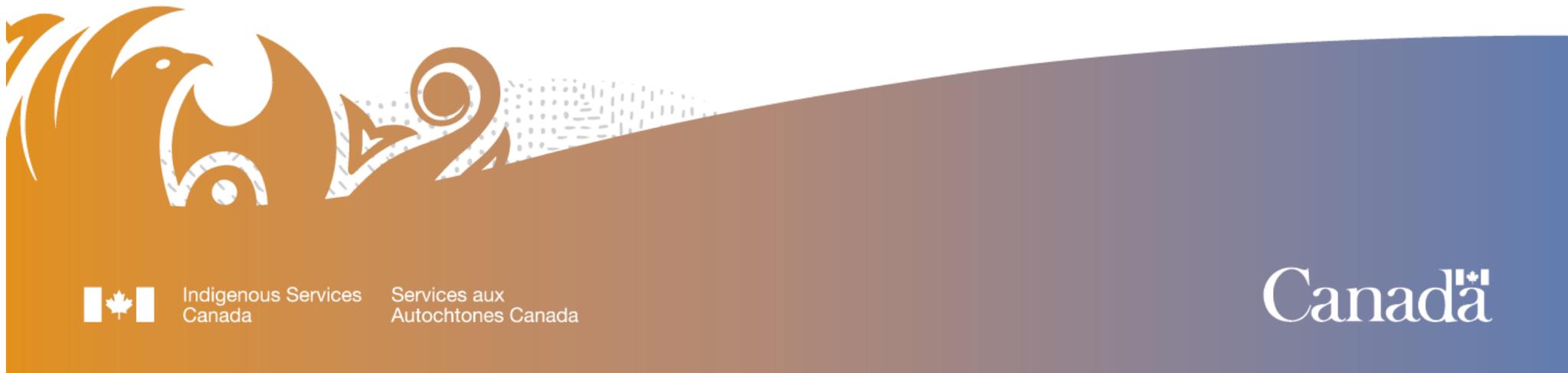




A Broader Lens to Healthy Housing

AFN National Housing and Infrastructure Forum
March 12, 2020



Purpose

- **Awareness:** the range of positive health benefits of healthy homes
- **Evidence-based solutions:** how does this apply to community housing programs
- **Stimulate thought:** how might these solutions apply, what are additional principals that are effective
- **Resources**

What is a home? What takes place there?

Basic Necessities

- Sleeping
- Personal hygiene
- Eating
- Washing clothes

Child Development

- Playing
- Teaching
- Learning
- Studying
- Inside/outside

Family

- Social network
- Sharing
- Entertaining
- Teaching

Cultural

- Ceremony
- Traditional foods
- Crafts and hobbies
- Spiritual practices

What is Health?

World Health Organisation:

“state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”

First Nations: health and wellness cannot be separated

“..a balance between various elements.. ”, including the physical, mental, spiritual, emotional, cultural, environmental, social and economic well-being of an individual, the family, community, nation, and all the relations

Ties to the land, water, family, community and identity are important components of Indigenous culture that also emphasizes wholeness, connectedness and balance.

Concepts of healthy home

World Health Organization: *Physical dwelling, home, neighborhood, community*

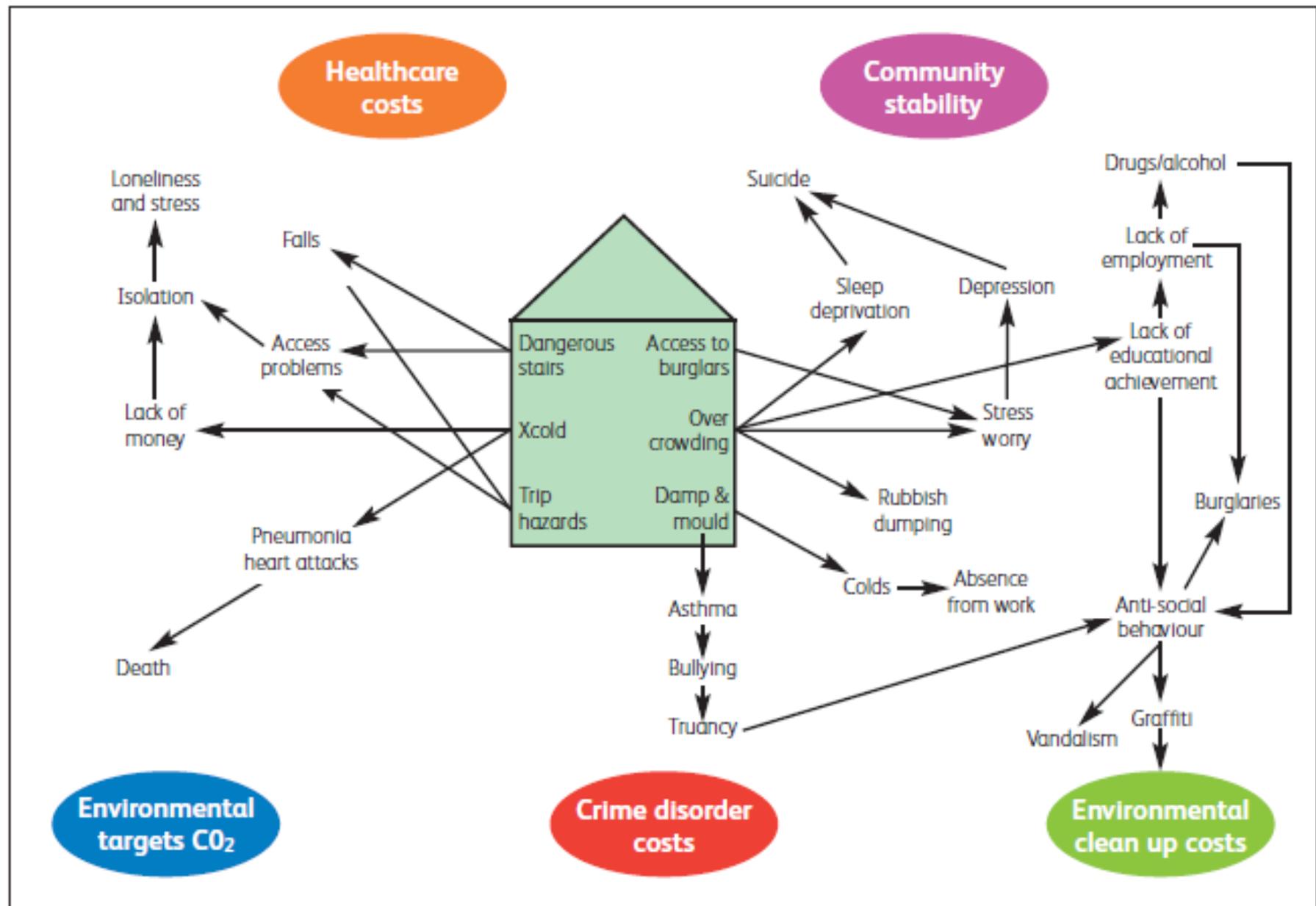
Confucius: *The strength of a Nation derives from the integrity of the home.*

Unknown source: *“have the physical and social conditions necessary for health, safety, hygiene and comfort”*

Chief Public Health Officer (2017) *“the built environment provides a foundation for healthy living and ultimately our health”*

Indigenous perspective: *“a place of spirit, of family and of community; it is where we derive our strength and pride”*

The links between public health and housing



Affordable Housing and Housing with Supports Makes Economic Sense

Homelessness is a significant health care issue and continues to produce enormous costs to our economy. According to the Mental Health Commission of Canada, an estimated 150,000 to 300,000 people across Canada are homeless, which results in \$1.4 billion each year in costs to the health care, justice and social services systems.

Source: Housing and Mental Health, CMHA

Real Cost of Poor Housing

“By taking just the costs of medical treatment and care, we are only accounting for, at most, 40% of the total costs to society of the consequences of poor housing”. Other costs which are relevant as costs to society include the capital value of the dwelling, loss of future earnings, increased spending on benefits, and the cost of moving and enforcement action by councils.

Source: BRE Group, UK (2014)

Measuring Outcomes of Affordable Housing (CMHC,2019)

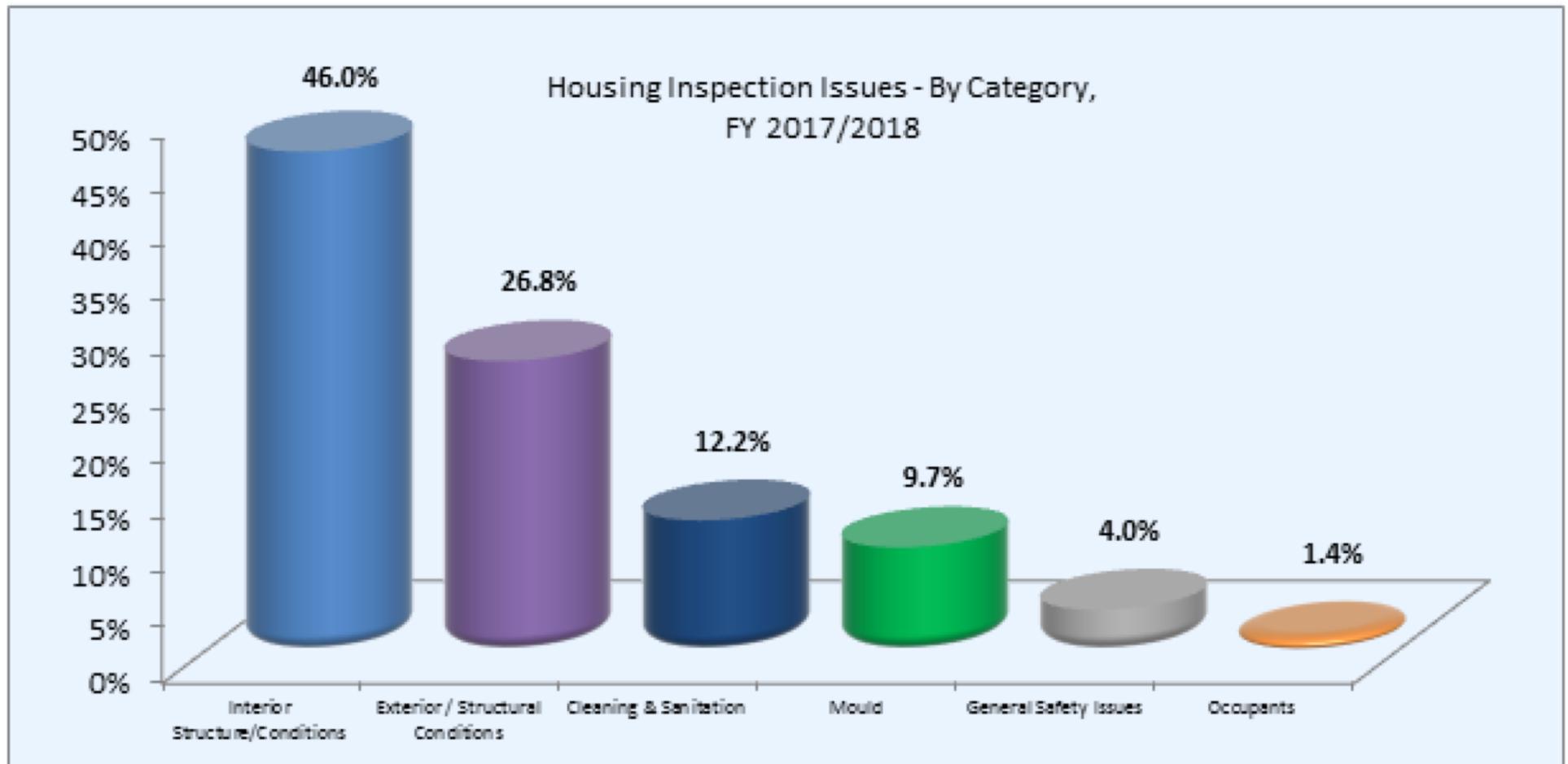
Four intermediate outcomes that have causal links from the immediate outcomes of public investment in affordable housing:

- Improved physical health
- Improved mental health
- Improved educational achievement of children
- Improved child development

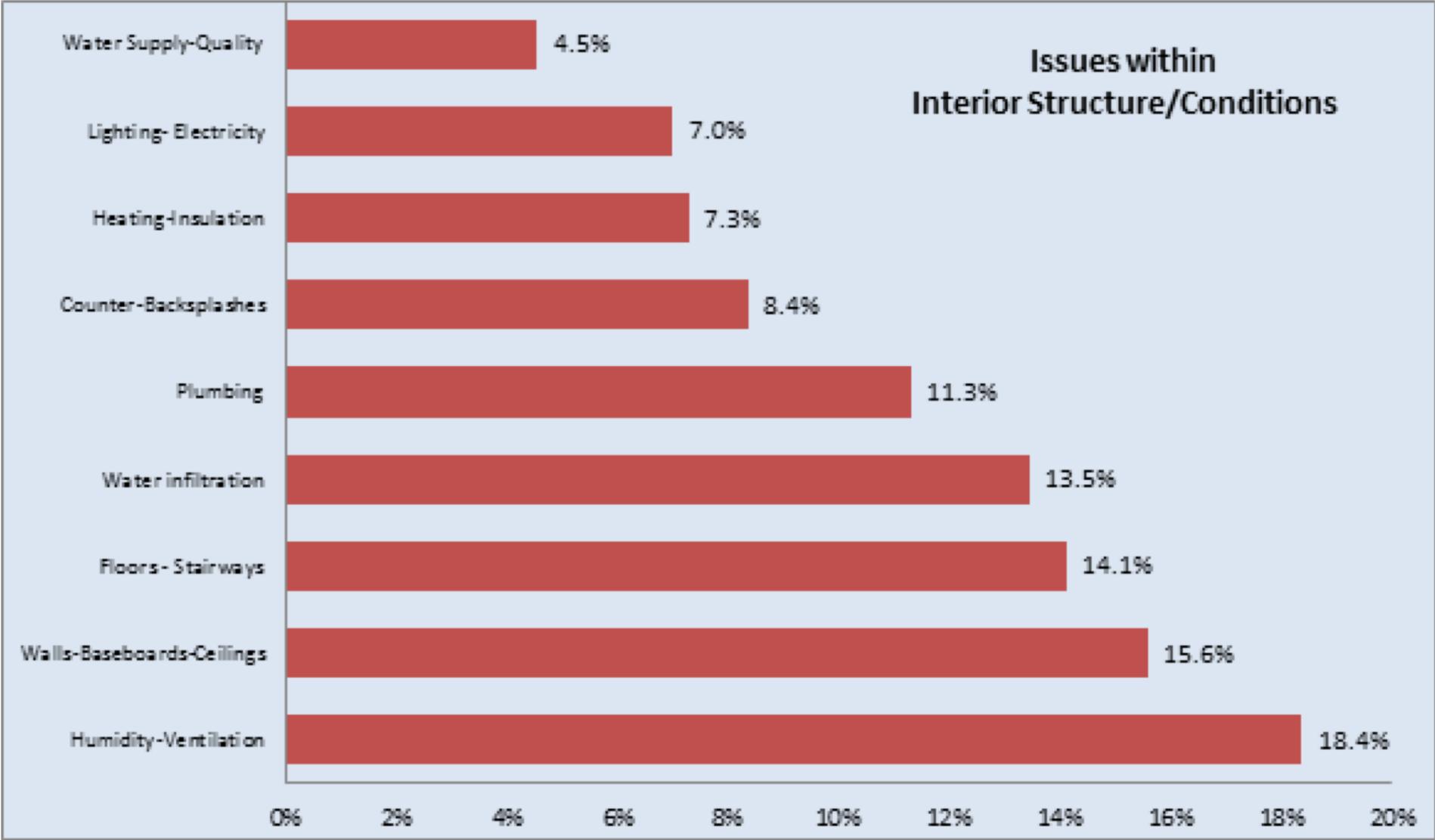
Immediate outcomes that have a significant effect on the occurrence of these intermediate outcomes:

- Improved affordability (lower rent burden)
- Better housing conditions (quality and adequacy of housing)
- Lessened overcrowding
- Increased housing stability (decreased need to move often)

Housing inspection findings – 2017-2018

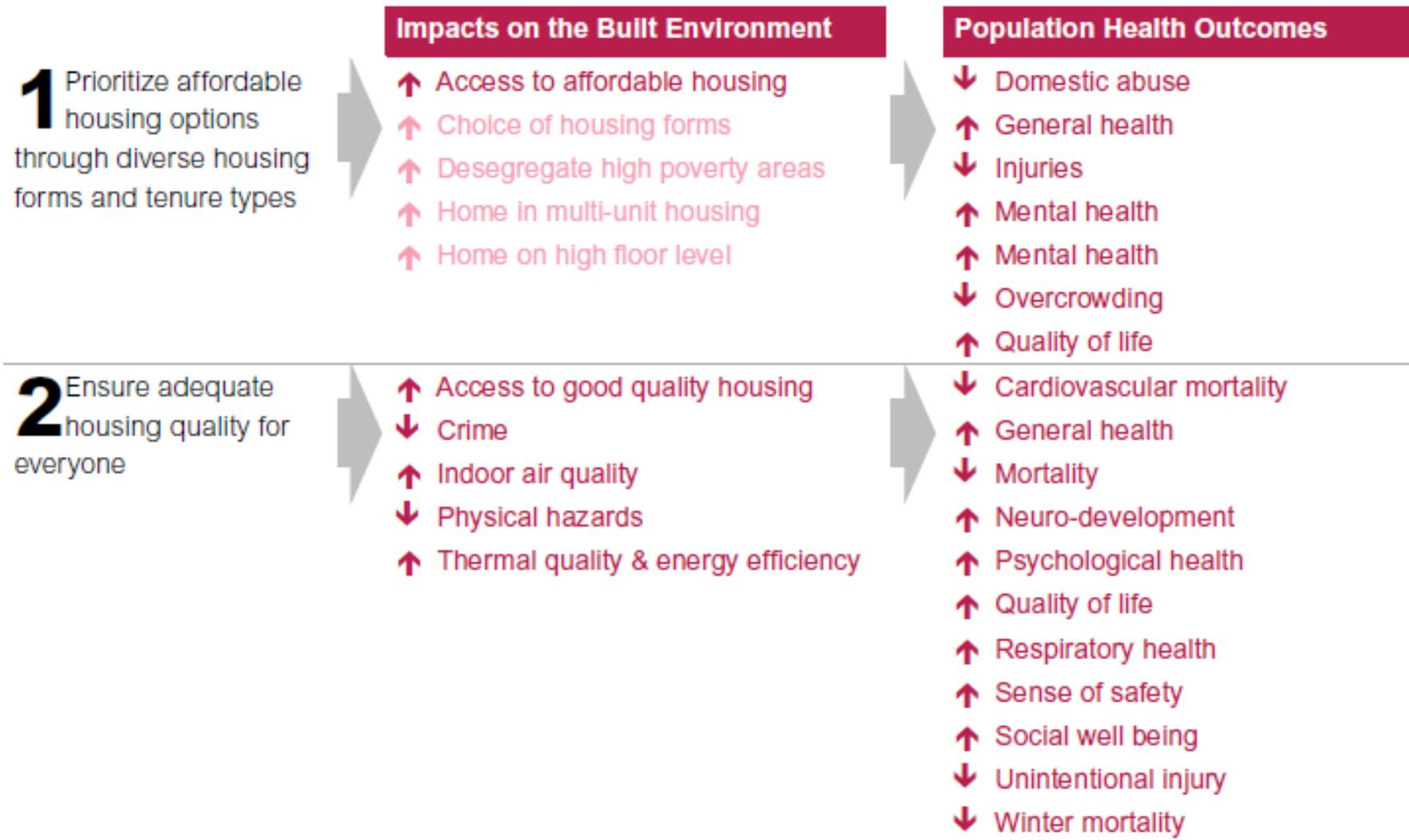


Issues within interior structure/conditions – 2017/2018



Housing Research Links

BC Healthy Built Environment Linkages Toolkit



3 Provide specialized housing to support the needs marginalized populations

- ↑ Access to housing for people with mental illness
- ↑ Access to permanent housing

- ↑ General health
- ↓ Hospitalization
- ↓ Injuries
- ↑ Healthcare use
- ↓ Risk behavior

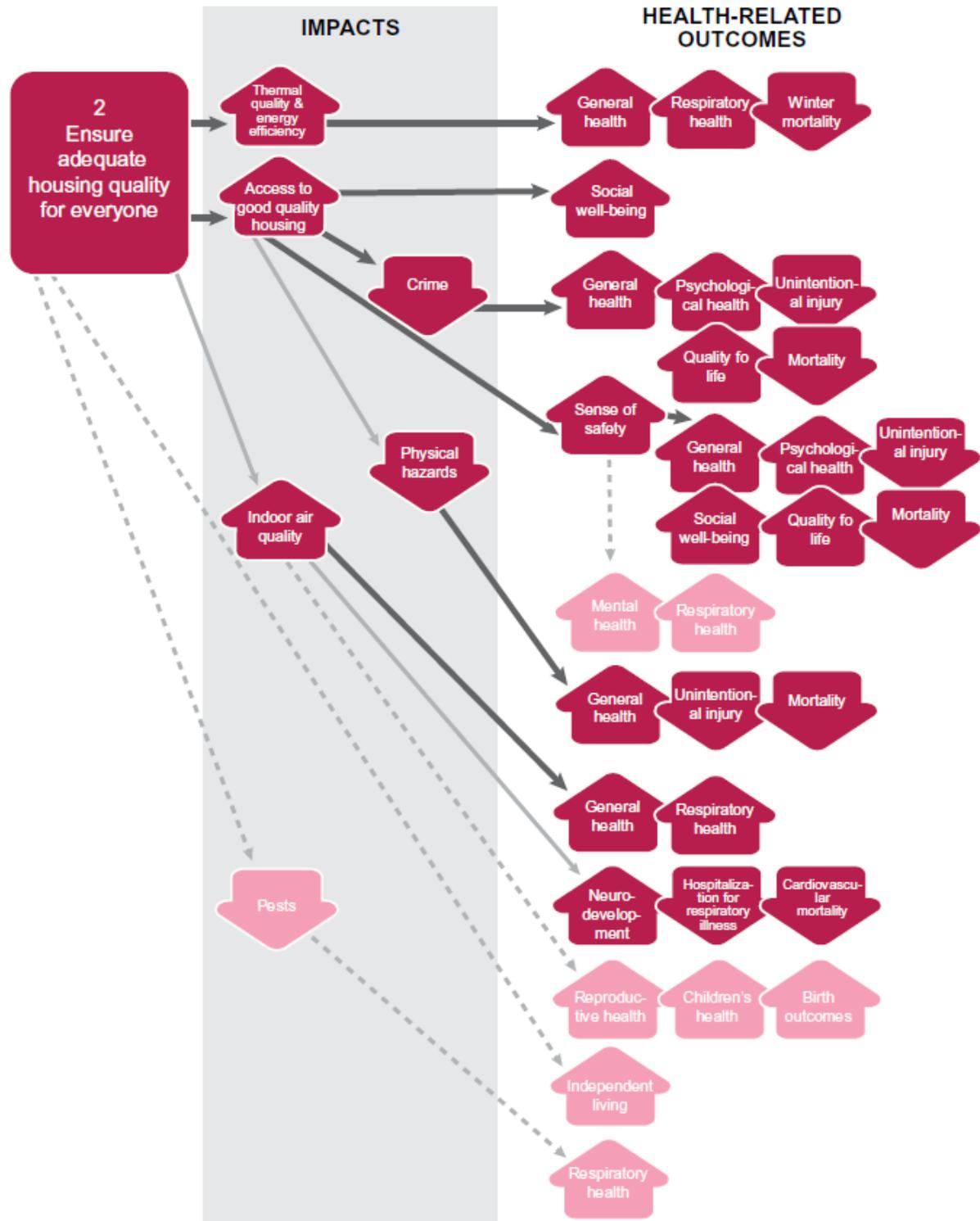
4 Site and zone housing developments to minimize exposure to environmental hazards

- ↓ Noise exposure
- ↓ Radon exposure

- ↓ Cancer
- ↓ Cardiovascular mortality
- ↑ Economic co-benefits
- ↑ General health
- ↑ Mental health
- ↑ Neuro-development
- ↑ Physical health
- ↑ Respiratory health
- ↑ Social well being

Source: BC Provincial Health Services Authority: Healthy Built Environment Toolkit

Housing Quality



Adequate housing quality

- Key findings:
 - Correlated with increased sense of safety, decreased crime, greater social well-being and improved quality of life.
 - Increased risk of unintentional injuries, illness caused by cold and damp living conditions (respiratory, winter mortality)
- Solutions:
 - Suitable ventilation: heating, insulation and venting systems support indoor air quality
 - Energy efficiency
- Priorities:
 - children with asthma, older homes, people of lower socioeconomic status

Applying these concepts:

- Goal: homes designed, built and maintained such that they are a **health benefit rather a health burden**
- How can Community apply these concepts:
 - Consider vulnerable or high risk groups – children, elders, facing insecurity or homelessness
 - Community trends – age, housing condition, unique challenges
 - Engage with health knowledge holders – community health staff, EPHO
 - Existing community vision and needs assessments - Community Health Plan, Land Management Plan, Comprehensive Community Plan
- How can government apply these concepts:
 - Seek authorities to allow for flexibility and responsiveness of funds
 - Support awareness of and navigation to appropriate funding processes
 - Leverage data to identify trends and support decision-making

Resources

- BC Healthy Built Environment Linkages Toolkit
<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/professional-resources/healthy-built-environment-linkages-toolkit>
French: http://www.bccdc.ca/pop-public-health/Documents/HBE_linkages_toolkit_2018FR.pdf
- Mental Health & Well-being: Considerations for the built environment (2019)
<http://www.bccdc.ca/pop-public-health/Documents/mental-health-built-environment.pdf>
- World Health Organization: Housing and health guidelines (2018)
<https://www.who.int/sustainable-development/publications/housing-health-guidelines/en/>

Thank you!

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