

Finding Our Way Home Launch - December 2004

Supporters filled the room at the official Launch of "Finding Our Way Home" by co-authors Deborah Stienstra and Rhonda Wiebe. The research document, which explored "Housing Options in Inner-City Winnipeg for People with Disabilities Who are Dying", was supported financially by the Winnipeg Inner City Research Alliance (WIRA).

Finding Our Way Home, according to the authors, encompasses three pertinent social issues: the lack of safe, affordable, available and accessible inner city Winnipeg housing; the lack of supports available for people living in the core area experiencing end of life transitions; and the barriers encountered by people with disabilities.

The authors' research resulted in many findings that came because of phenomenal access to the inner city community, a testament to the research partnership, which includes the Canadian Centre on Disability Studies, Fokus Housing in Winnipeg and the First Nations Disability Association. The project included interviews with 24 persons with disabilities who were facing end of life transitions, 13 of whom identified themselves as Aboriginal. Service providers were also interviewed.

The authors of the report stated, "next to nothing has been written on this subject". They emphasized that safety and security are critical issues, finding that "people with disabilities living in the core area of Winnipeg are poor, many poor people with disabilities are of First Nations descent and people living in their own homes dwell in unsafe, inaccessible and inappropriate housing". Among the recommendations, the authors stated emphatically that there is a need to "Develop hospice and palliative care options that meet the distinct social needs of people living in the core area".