

Coleman lauds community effort at housing launch

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Mi-Jung Lee: Homelessness is a humanitarian crisis that confronts us every day, but most experts agree a new strategy for getting people off the streets might finally solve the problem.

The key? Supportive housing. The newest example officially opened today in Vancouver. As Binder Sujjan reports, it could be just the beginning.

Debra Lincoln: I love because I can cook my own dinner, cook what I want.

Reporter: That's no longer a luxury for Deborah Lincoln. After living in shelters for years, she now has a home and much-needed safety after fleeing an abusive relationship.

Lincoln: He just about took my life. I felt lost. I didn't know where to go, I didn't know where to move, and Sorella saved my life.

Reporter: Sorella is a new, 108-unit supportive housing complex for women at risk of homelessness, opened officially today.

In the next few years, 13 more buildings like this will open in Vancouver. What makes them different? On-site access to service and support.

Gregor Robertson: You have to have a continuum of housing options from the street right up to affordable housing that people can move into.

Reporter: The mayor was elected on a pledge to end homelessness by 2015. A \$42m plan goes before council tomorrow. The feds and the province are also promising to chip in another \$180m.

Rich Coleman: It's not about the bricks and mortar and it's not about just the ribbon cutting. It's about the heart that goes into the building with organizations like Atira, who step up to the plate.

Lincoln: I have the spirit bear and this is the raven that can guide me.

Reporter: Lincoln agrees on-site support is key; the paddle she painstakingly painted, a reminder of what she's overcome and the journey ahead.

Lincoln: Before it was me that can end the window. Now I can say I can look out, and it's so beautiful to have that safe place.

Reporter: A place she can now call home.