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Collaborative responses to homelessness: Insights from the literature and from mid-sized Quebec communities



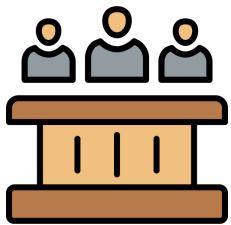
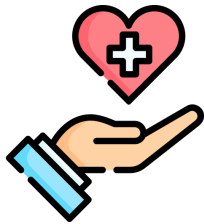
Sources of information and inspiration



Literature review on cross-sector/collaborative responses to homelessness:

Roy, L., & Coulombe, S. (2021). Les pratiques intersectorielles auprès des personnes en situation ou à risque d'itinérance. *Nouvelles pratiques sociales*, 32(2), 280-299. doi: <https://doi.org/10.7202/1085525ar>

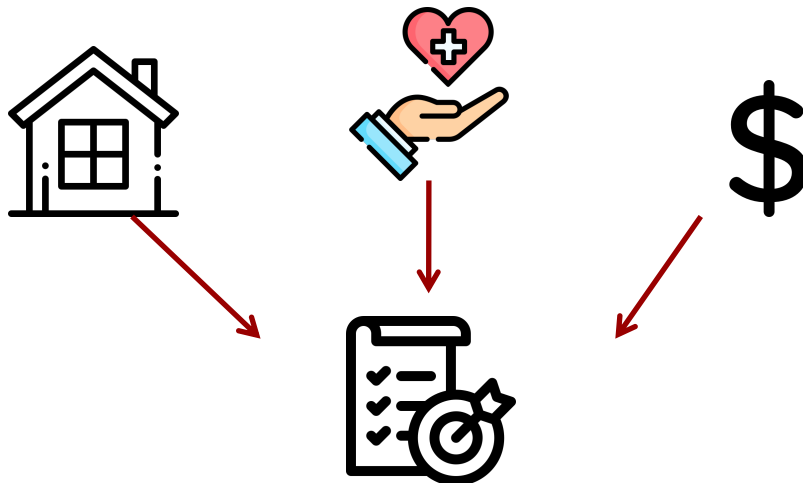
The issue



References: Latimer & Bordeleau, 2019; Omerov et al, 2020;
Zhang et al, 2018/**Picture credit:** Freepik @ Flaticon

Cross-sector collaborations

- « the liaison or sharing of information, ressources, activities, and competencies by organizations from two sectors or more, to reach a common goal that could not be achieved by one sector alone »
(Bryson et al, 2006, p. 46)



Questions

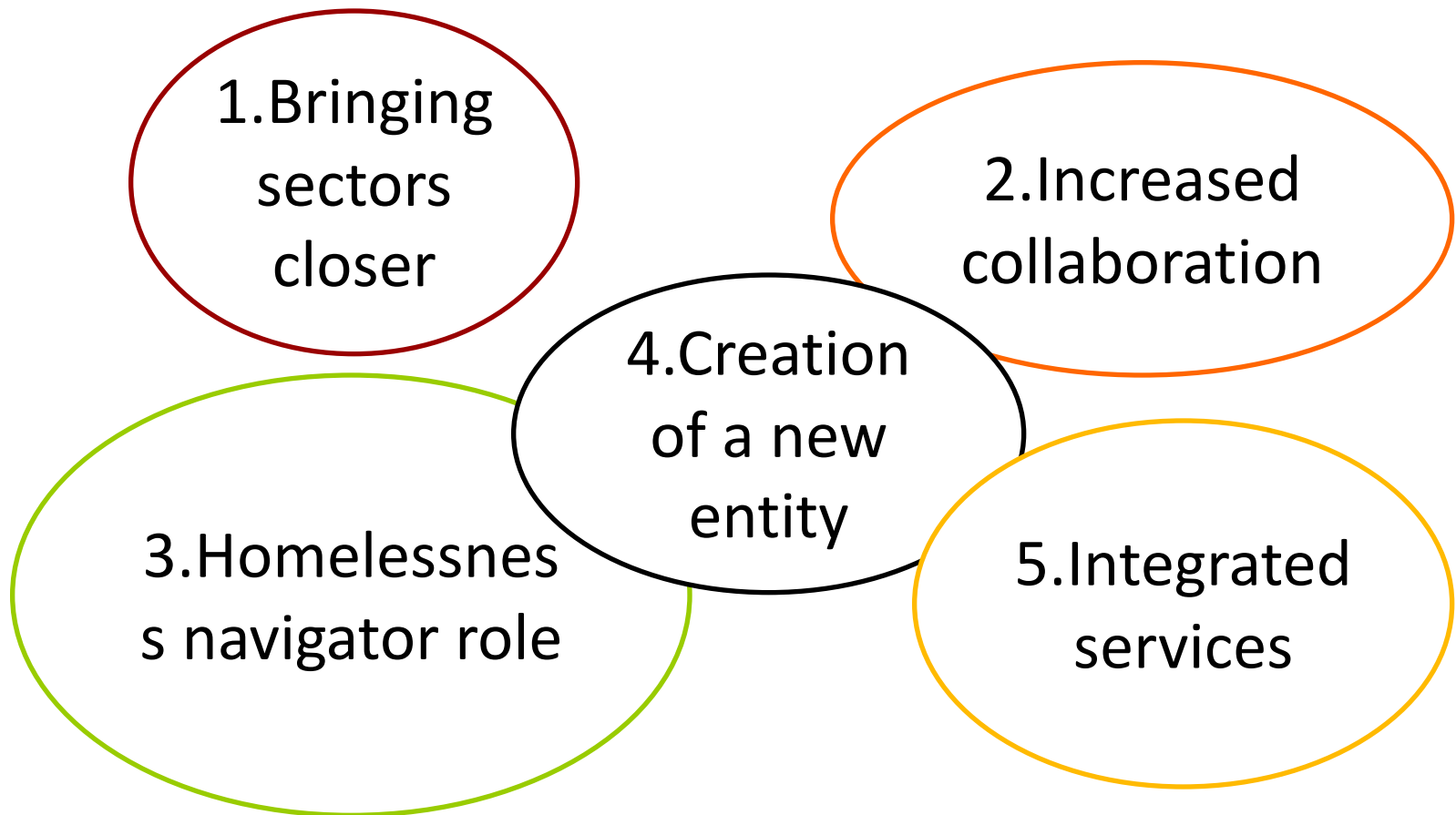
- What cross-sector practices have been developed in the field of homelessness?
- How have they been assessed or evaluated?
- What do we know about the experiences of the individuals involved?
- What do we know about the effects of those practices?
- What factors influence the implementation of cross-sector practices?



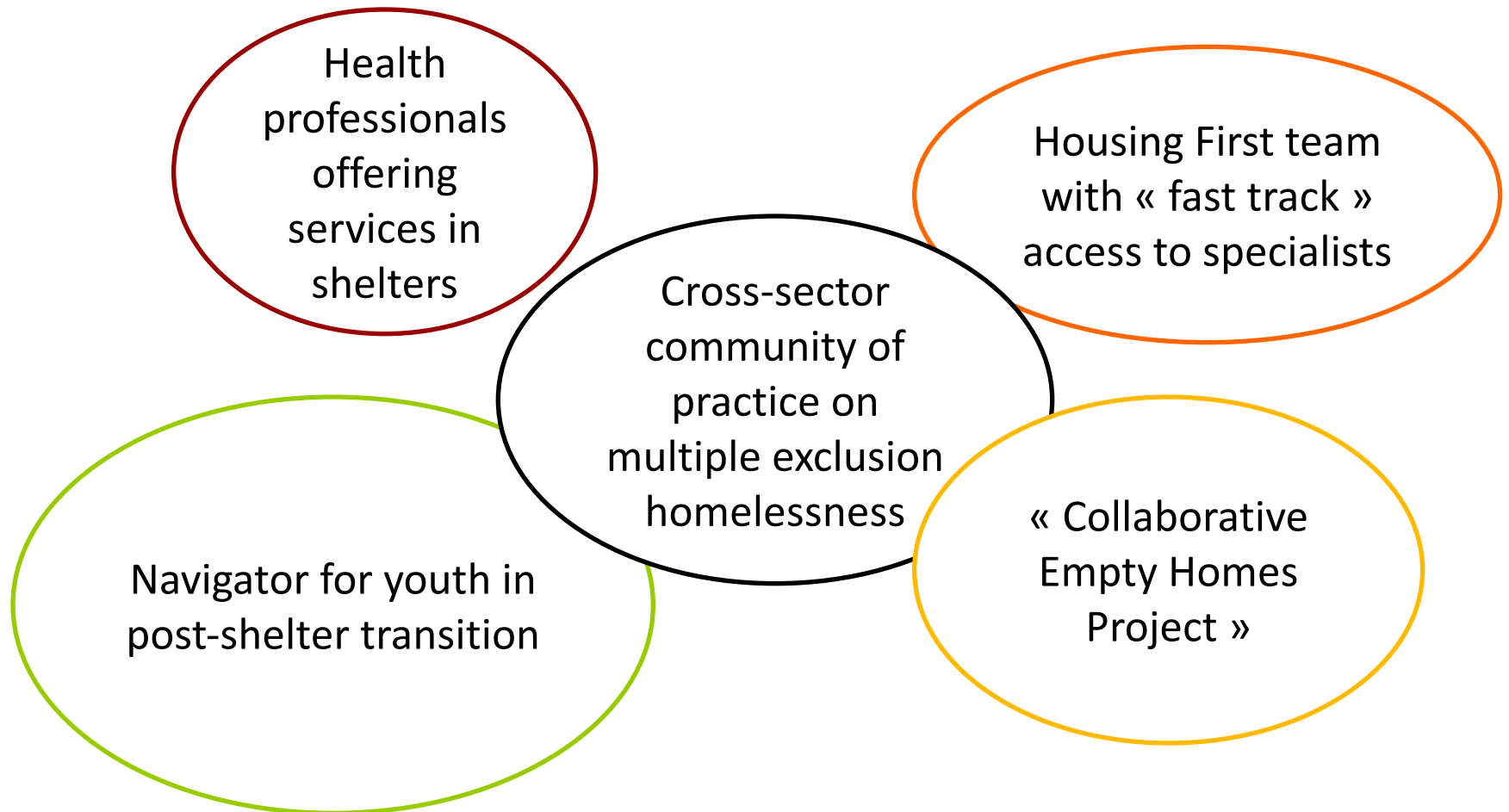
Literature review (n=44)

Characteristics	N (%)
Country of publication	
USA	18 (41%)
Canada	13 (30%)
Australia	7 (16%)
United Kingdom	5 (11%)
France	1 (2%)
Publication type	
Program description	13 (30%)
Qualitative case study	16 (36%)
Mixed methods case study	8 (18%)
Quantitative designs	6 (12%)
Source of information	
Observations or field notes	11 (25%)
Service providers	22 (50%)
Managers/decision-makers	19 (43%)
Service users	12 (27%)
Administrative data	4 (9%)

What cross-sector practices have been developed in the field of homelessness?



What cross-sector practices have been developed in the field of homelessness?



What do we know about the experiences of workers involved?

- Perception of both positive effects and constraints
- Salience of *relational work* with both service users and program partners
- Importance of *dedicated time and space* for dialogue and collective reflection across partners/sectors

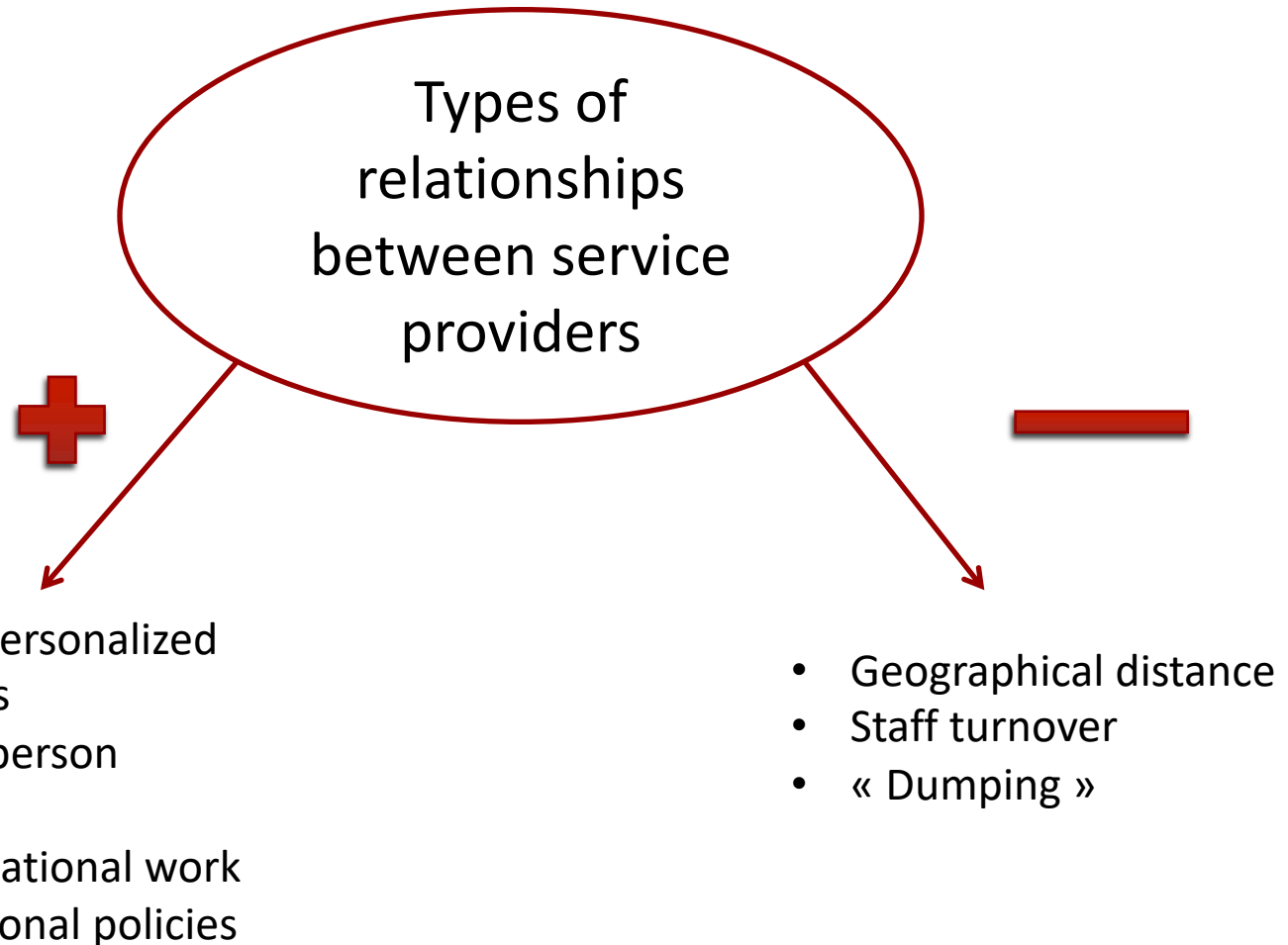
What do we know about the experiences of service users?

- Positive perception of navigator role, in particular for youth
- Ambivalent or negative perceptions:
 - Mixed perceptions of collaborations between figures of « help » and « authority »
 - Unintended negative consequences of cross-sector partnerships

What do we know about the effects of those practices?

- N=5 ****Methodological issues****
- Kidd et al (2018): Navigator role → + effect on residential stability, mental health & vocational/educational outcomes
- Some indicators that models of increased collaboration yield better outcomes than fully integrated services.

Factors affecting implementation



Factors affecting implementation

Types of
relationships
between
organizations/sector
s



- Democratic communication and decision-making processes
- Equitable division of resources
- Respect for the expertise of each
- Recognition of the historical and cultural power differentials between sectors, and planning of mitigation strategies

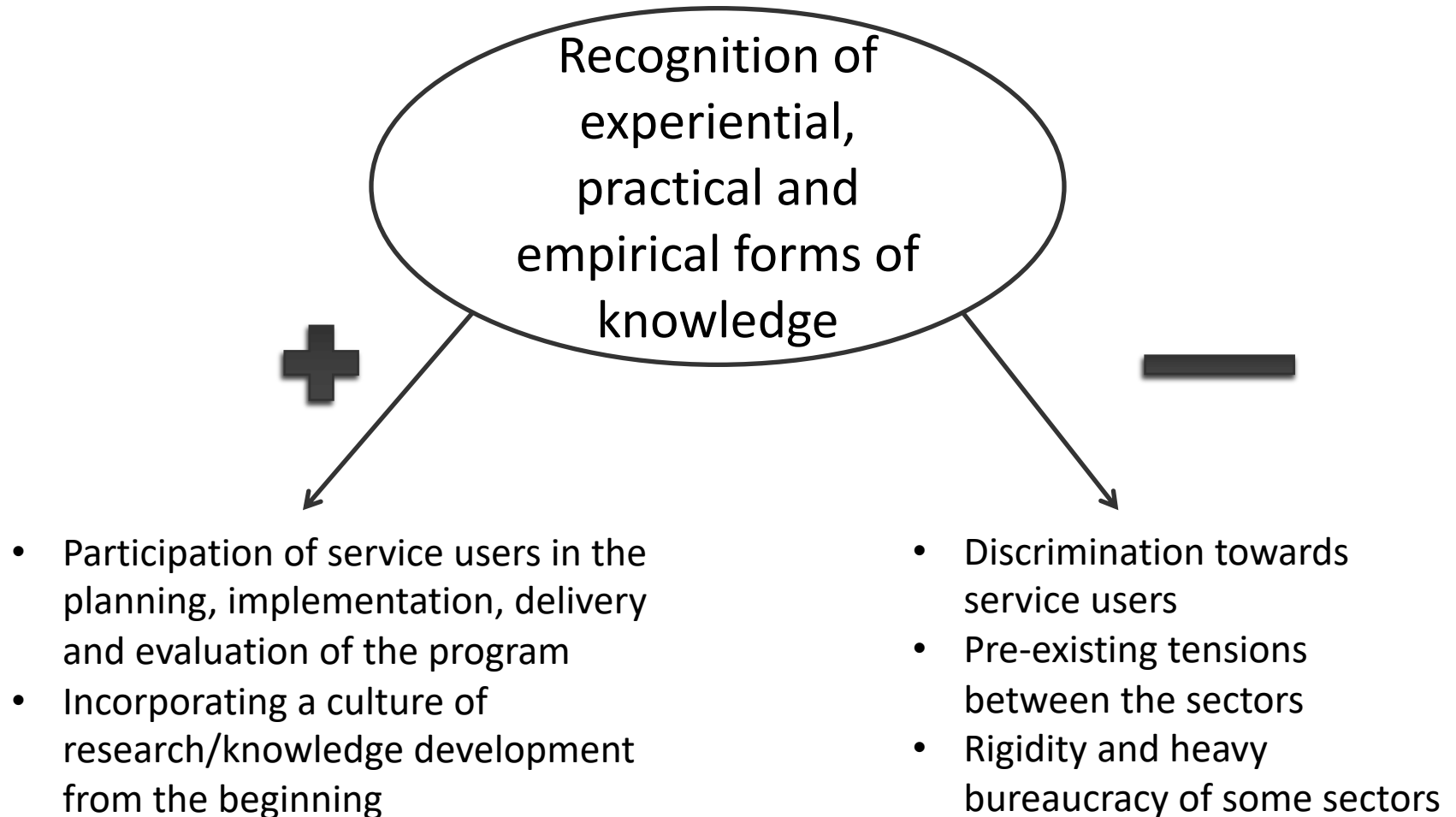


- Missing key sectors
- Hierarchical relationships between sectors
- Lack of transparent/clear communication

Factors affecting implementation



Factors affecting implementation



Key points

- Cross-sector collaborative responses to homelessness hold promises, and are not a panacea;
- Partnerships characterized by well-planned, flexible, non-hierarchical relationships between sectors and with service users seem the most promising, particularly when existing power dynamics are recognized and handled;
- Beyond existing dynamics and hierarchies, the current intervention paradigm centered on « crisis response » may impede the establishment of collective reflection and dialogue.

Thank you!

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Selected readings


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Cornes, M., Manthorpe, J., Hennessy, C., Anderson, S., Clark, M., & Scanlon, C. (2014). Not just a talking shop: practitioner perspectives on how communities of practice work to improve outcomes for people experiencing multiple exclusion homelessness. *Journal of Interprofessional Care*, 28(6), 541-546.

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Wood, L. (2019). Hospital collaboration with a Housing First program to improve health outcomes for people experiencing homelessness. *Housing, Care and Support*, 22(1), 27-39. doi: 10.1108/HCS-09-2018-0023