

Background

As part of the Province's efforts to end chronic homelessness by 2025 and the long-term goal to end homelessness, the government introduced a requirement to conduct local enumeration (counts) of people experiencing homelessness. Homeless enumeration is intended to help Service Managers and the Province better understand the scale and nature of homelessness across Ontario, as well as inform current and future policy development and program design.

To support Service Managers in the implementation of Homeless Enumeration, the Ministry of Housing developed a Ministerial Directive and Guidelines for Service Manager Homeless Enumeration. The directive sets out the mandatory requirements of Homeless Enumeration for Service Managers and the guidelines provide further details on the requirements, enumeration methods, and standards for conducting enumeration.

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) has invited the City of Greater Sudbury to participate in Everyone Counts: the 2018 Coordinated Point-in-Time (PiT) Count. The PiT count is to be conducted between March 1 and April 30, 2018 using Everyone Counts: the Guide to Point-in-Time Counts in Canada.

A PiT count of homelessness has two primary purposes:

- 1) An enumeration, or count, of people experiencing absolute homelessness: It is intended to identify how many people in the community experience homelessness in shelters and on the streets at a given time. Conducted over subsequent years, PiT counts can be used by the community to track progress in reducing homelessness.
- 2) A survey of the homeless population: Through an accompanying survey, the PiT count gives the community information on the demographics and service needs of their homeless population. This information can be used to target community resources where they are most needed.

Homelessness counts can provide a snapshot of homelessness within a community. Period prevalence counts are similar to 24-hour point in time counts but take place over a longer period such as seven or more days. In the City of Greater Sudbury, a period prevalence count was completed in 2015 and several homelessness counts were conducted between 2000 and 2009.

A Request for Proposals to conduct the Homelessness Enumeration was issued in September 2017, and the successful proponent was the Centre for Research in Social Justice and Policy at Laurentian University, led by Dr. Carol Kauppi. The proposal followed similar methodology to the previous homelessness counts conducted in

Greater Sudbury and included the requirements as set out by both the Province and Federal government. A key change to this enumeration was the efforts made to capture the number of hidden homeless within the community, which is usually experienced as couch surfing. Fifty organizations from both the downtown core and outlying areas participated in the survey to connect with people who were experiencing homelessness. The period prevalence count was conducted between March 19 and March 26, 2018.

From the final report as submitted by Dr. Carol Kauppi, attached as Appendix A – Homelessness in the City of Greater Sudbury: 2018 Enumeration, the key finding is that 1315 people stated they were homeless which included 701 who were considered hidden homeless.

In the 2018 enumeration there was an attempt to capture the number of hidden homes (couch surfers) which was not done in the 2015 count. The comparison of the numbers of absolutely homeless that was reported between 2015 and 2018 indicates:

- Number of people who are absolutely homeless has increased from 440 to 581
- Number of people at risk of homelessness has decreased from 979 to 863
- Number of people indicating they have experienced chronic homelessness has decreased from 325 to 321
- Number of children under the age of 18 decreased from 155 to 50
- Number of people who had military service decreased from 76 to 61

Next Steps

City of Greater Sudbury will provide the results of the homelessness enumeration to both the Province and the Federal government. Locally the information from the Homelessness Enumeration will help to inform services, allocate resources, identify gaps, create partnerships, and align priorities, to better meet the needs of persons experiencing homelessness in the community. The Province has required that Service Managers complete another Homelessness Enumeration in 2020.

Resources:

Ministry of Housing - <http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page15240.aspx>.

[*Everyone Counts: the Guide to Point-in-Time Counts in Canada.*](#)