



**November 29, 2016 – MEDIA ADVISORY**

## **‘Everyone Counts’ - St. John’s first homeless count part of local plan to end homelessness**

On November 30, End Homelessness St. John’s (EHSJ) will conduct the community's first ever Point-in-Time (PiT) Count of the homeless population by surveying individuals in a wide range of settings across the city. St. John's has joined a growing movement of Canadian communities using biennial Counts to help shape their plans to end homelessness.

‘Everyone Counts’ will enumerate people living on the streets, in emergency shelters and short-term housing, the hidden homeless (couch surfers), and people in public systems (such as health & correctional institutions) who have no fixed address. The Count will also include a focused youth outreach approach to enhance our knowledge of hidden homelessness among this population, which comprises 25-30% of our city's emergency shelter users.

More than 100 trained volunteers have been mobilized and trained by End Homelessness St. John's to count and survey individuals experiencing homelessness. The information collected will provide a “snapshot” of homelessness in the city by indicating the *minimum* number of people experiencing homelessness in St. John’s on a single day. The survey will help End Homelessness St. John’s gather additional information about the demographics and service needs of people affected by homelessness.

“‘Everyone Counts’ will inform our Community Plan to End Homelessness,” said End Homelessness St. John’s Chair Shawn Skinner. “The results will help us set priorities for action and target resources toward long-term solutions to homelessness. Successive biennial counts will measure our progress towards ending homelessness in St. John’s.”

Partners of ‘Everyone Counts’ include Canada’s Homelessness Partnering Strategy, the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, the NL Statistics Agency, NL Housing, the City of St. John's, the United Way of NL, Memorial University's Centre for Social Enterprise, and Choices for Youth's Youth Leadership Council.

End Homelessness St. John's is a multi-stakeholder, community-led, 'collective impact' board that brings together all sectors to implement a community plan to end homelessness in St. John's by 2019.

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### **Media Participation:**

Ensuring the safety & confidentiality of our survey participants is End Homelessness St. John's utmost priority. Therefore, members of the media are not invited to accompany our Count volunteers as they conduct surveys in the community on November 30. However, the media are invited to contact us to attend our Count training session for volunteers at The Gathering Place on November 29 from 2-4pm; and media may also arrange a visit to our Count headquarters at The Gathering Place on November 30 between 6:30-8:30pm while the Count is underway.

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