



May 2, 2017

St. John's first homeless population count reveals the urgent need for housing and support services

At 9:30 AM on Tuesday, May 2, 2017 at St. John's City Hall's Foran Room, End Homelessness St. John's (EHSJ) will present the results of 'Everyone Counts', our community's (and our province's) first-ever homeless Point-in-Time (PiT) Count. The report reveals at least 166 persons, including 38 youth, were homeless in St. John's on November 30, 2016, the day the Count was conducted.

This number represents the *minimum* number of people experiencing homelessness in St. John's on one day. This is just the tip of the iceberg: during the course of a year, EHSJ estimates that approximately 800 people experience homelessness in St. John's.¹

In addition to enumerating the number of people experiencing homelessness on a given day, Counts provide an opportunity for those experiencing homelessness to share their stories. Of the 166 people enumerated on November 30, 2016, 84 (50.6%) participated in the survey. Their responses provided useful information about the demographics and service needs of this population.

Importantly, the Count confirms that the vast majority of people experiencing homelessness want housing but they encounter barriers obtaining it – including, but not limited to, low income and high rental rates. Furthermore, the majority of those surveyed cited the need for support services to address the challenges they face.

“The Count reinforces the work we are doing as we implement our 2014-2019 Community Plan to End Homelessness in St. John's,” said EHSJ Chair Shawn Skinner. “It supports our plan by providing information about the demographics of our local homeless population as well as insight into the factors that cause and perpetuate their homelessness. Our findings underscore the fact that those experiencing homelessness want housing and appropriate supports. When these critical needs are met, those who once experienced homelessness can thrive.”

'Everyone Counts' also included a focused youth outreach approach. The methodology for this approach was developed in partnership with the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, Choices for Youth and its Youth Leadership Council, and EHSJ's 'Everyone Counts' Advisory Committee. The learnings from this approach were used to inform the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness 2018 PiT Count Toolkit, which will be shared nationally.

¹ EHSJ (2014). St. John's Community Plan to End Homelessness. Retrieved from <http://www.nlhhn.org/PDF/YYT-Community-Plan-2014-2019.pdf>

End Homelessness St. John's is a multi-stakeholder, community-led, 'collective impact' board implementing the *2014-2019 St. John's Community Plan to End Homelessness*.

Everyone Counts was funded by the Government of Canada's Homelessness Partnering Strategy, United Way Newfoundland and Labrador, Memorial University Centre for Social Enterprise, and the City of St. John's.

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The report will be available online on May 2, 2017 at 9:30 a.m.

https://workspaceonhomelessness.ca/pitcounts/resources/english/community_point_in_time_count_reports/st_johns_2016

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