DURHAM 2017 PIT COUNT REPORT

MEASURING THE SCOPE AND NATURE OF HOMELESSNESS IN DURHAM

Community Development Council Durham
& Durham Mental Health Services

JUNE 2017

Message from the Durham Region Homelessness Partnering Strategy Community Advisory Board

One may be wondering what the Durham Region Homelessness Partnering Strategy Community Advisory Board, or CAB, is. CAB is a group of community individuals and organizations from the Region of Durham who regularly meet to provide advice on the distribution of the Government of Canada's Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) program locally. They are passionate about affecting change for those in our community experiencing homelessness and work hard to maximize this change.

As a part of the HPS, communities are required to conduct a PIT Count. Initially, this news was met with a bit of cynicism and degree of reluctance. However, now that the first PIT Count has been conducted, it is fair to say that the process was well worth it, the funds used to conduct the PIT Count have been very well spent, and the direct and indirect results of the Count have proven to be invaluable.

As the chair of the CAB and the Community Entity representative, we would like to thank CDCD and DMHS for their dedication, their expertise in planning and implementing the PIT Count, and their desire to bring positive change to the community of Durham. We would also like to thank our fellow CAB members for their efforts in wrestling with the PIT Count decision and for seeing it to fruition. Finally, a small 'army' of volunteers also gave of their time to make the Count happen. Nothing would be possible without them. If you were one of those volunteers, thank you for your heart of compassion and your desire to help those experiencing homelessness. It shows that the Region of Durham has a great capacity to care about the hurting in our community and to do something about it.

Finally, the numbers in this report are more than just numbers. They are real people in our community....they are our neighbours and fellow human beings. They are sons and daughters, fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers. They are going through difficult circumstances and they need the best that we can give them. It is for them why this PIT Count is so important. It not only lets us know who they are, some of the struggles through which they are going, but also, when compared against the 2018 PIT Count, it will give us a picture of what we are doing well, and where we need to do better.

Sincerely,

_____

Clarence Keesman
Executive Director, The Refuge
Youth Outreach Center

Chair, Durham Region Homelessness Partnering
Strategy Community Advisory Board

_____

Barb Fannin
Community Investment Coordinator

United Way of Durham Region
Community Entity representative,

Homelessness Partnering Strategy

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Durham 2017 Point-in-Time (PiT) Count was the first PiT Count undertaken in Durham Region. By many measures, it was a huge success and has contributed to our understanding of the state of homelessness in Durham. While Community Development Council Durham (CDCD) and Durham Mental Health Services (DMHS) were contracted out to plan and execute Durham's PiT Count, this initiative would not have been possible without the helpful guidance and technical assistance of numerous organizations and individuals across our community. This initiative has showcased what is possible when community members, allies, advocates, and stakeholders come together to work towards the goal of addressing homelessness. The Durham Region Homelessness Partnering Strategy's Community Advisory Board would like to thank the following organizations and individuals for all their support:

About Durham Region Homelessness Partnering Strategy Community Advisory Board

The Durham Region Homelessness Partnering Strategy is a unique community-based program from the Government of Canada aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness. The United Way of Durham Region acts as the 'Community Entity' and oversees the Community Advisory Board (CAB). The CAB is the local organizing committee responsible for guiding HPS in Durham Region and is comprised of many local stakeholders. All are committed to helping end homelessness in Durham Region.

About Community Development Council Durham

Community Development Council Durham (CDCD) is an independent, not-for-profit social planning organization that has been working to enhance the quality of life for individuals, families and communities in Durham for more than 45 years. CDCD's mission is to identify regional community development needs and inform relevant policy and programming, while supporting and delivering effective services.

About Durham Mental Health Services

Durham Mental Health Services (DMHS) is a charitable, not-for-profit agency providing services and supports to individuals and families who are living with mental health concerns. Operating under the direction of a volunteer Board of Directors, staff work in partnership with clients, offering services that are person-centred and sensitive to individual needs. DMHS is proud to serve our community, raising awareness of mental health issues, fighting the stigma too often associated with them, and offering support and assistance to help people suffering from mental illnesses.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On February 15th-17th, 2017 Community Development Council Durham (CDCD) and Durham Mental Health Services (DMHS), in collaboration with numerous partners, conducted Durham's first Point-in-Time (PiT) Count. With the assistance of 150 volunteers, those who were experiencing sheltered or unsheltered homelessness, or were provisionally accommodated in a public institution or transitional shelter, were surveyed, enumerated or tallied. The results of the PiT Count provide a snapshot of the minimum number of people experiencing homelessness in Durham Region and provides community members and decision makers with additional data to help inform funding and policy decisions. In addition, the results of the PiT Count establish a benchmark against which progress can be measured when future PiT Counts are conducted.

KEY FINDINGS

271 Individuals Experiencing Homelessness

A total of 271 unique individuals were found to be experiencing sheltered or unsheltered homelessness between February 15th-17th, 2017. These individuals were staying in emergency shelters, violence against women (VAW) shelters, public institutions, transitional housing shelters, outdoor areas, and other places not suitable for human habitation. 214 of the 271 individuals experiencing homelessness were non-dependents (i.e. singles, family heads, partners or other adults) and 57 were dependents/children. As with all other PiT Counts, the 271 individuals identified should be considered as a minimum count as those who are precariously housed, living in motels, or 'couch-surfing' were not captured.

34 Families Experiencing Homelessness

34 families were identified through the PiT Count. Families varied in size, between 2 and 7 members, and account for 98 unique individuals experiencing homelessness.

52% Male vs 47% Female

52% of participants identified as male, 47% as female, and 1% as a gender other than male or female. These rates were slightly different from national trends where approximately 60% identified as male, 40% as female, and less than 1% as an alternative gender.

Overrepresentation of Indigenous Homelessness

26% of survey participants identified as Indigenous or having Indigenous ancestry. This stands in stark contrast to the 1.5% of Durham's residents that identified as being a part of the Indigenous community.

20% Unsheltered

Of those identified as experiencing homelessness, the majority (70%) were staying in an emergency or VAW shelter. The next four most common locations were: Other Location Unfit for Human Habitation (i.e. 24/7 coffee shop or fast food restaurant) (8%), Public Space (7%), Public System (6%), and Transitional Shelter/Housing (5%). Taken together, 70% were emergency sheltered, 20% were unsheltered, and 11% were provisionally accommodated.

48% Chronically Homeless

48% of those surveyed (or 44 unique individuals) indicated that they have been experiencing chronic homelessness (i.e. they have spent more than 180 cumulative nights in a shelter or place not fit for human habitation over the past 12 months).

7% Episodically Homeless

The majority (64%) of those surveyed had experienced one episode of homelessness over the past 12 months, while 13% experienced two episodes, and 16% three or more episodes. 7% were experiencing episodic homelessness (i.e. they experienced three or more episodes of homelessness in the past year adding up to less than 180 days).

50% Experienced Homelessness Before the Age of 25

Of those identified as experiencing homelessness through the survey, 50% indicated that they experienced their first episode of homelessness before the age of 25.

82% Have A Service Need

82% of survey participants stated that they required access to physical and/or mental health services. Of these participants, the top three service needs were for: 1) mental health issues (66%), 2) addiction or substance use (47%), and 3) serious or ongoing medical conditions (46%).

83% Receive Social Assistance

83% of survey participants stated that they received assistance through either Ontario Works (OW) or the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).

74% Unsheltered Homeless Population Identified in Oshawa

74% of survey participants who were experiencing unsheltered homelessness were identified in the municipality of Oshawa. 11% were identified in Ajax, and 6% in Whitby and Pickering, respectively.

CONTENTS

GLOSSARY

Family Homelessness	A combination of two or more persons (including dependents/children) who are experiencing homelessness and who are linked by a common relationship, most often through kinship.
Chronic Homelessness	Persons who have cumulatively experienced six (6) months or more (≥180 days) of homelessness in the past year (12 months).
Enumeration	A data collection method used for the PiT Count to collect administrative data on the number of people residing at emergency, VAW, or transitional shelters, as well as public institutions (i.e. hospitals). Administrative data collected also includes: age, gender, aboriginal status and family status.
Episodic Homelessness	Persons who have experienced three (3) or more episodes of homelessness in the past year (12 months) adding up to less than six (6) months (≤179 days).
Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS)	A community-based program funded by the Government of Canada aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness by providing direct support and funding to 61 designated communities and to organizations that address Aboriginal homelessness across Canada.
Indigenous Homelessness	Persons who are experiencing homelessness and identify as First Nations, Métis, Inuit or Non-Status/Have Indigenous Ancestry.
Non-Youth Homelessness	Persons who are experiencing homelessness and are 25 years of age or older, or persons who are experiencing homelessness between the ages of 16-24 but are attached to a parent or guardian.

GLOSSARY

Non-Indigenous Homelessness	Persons who are experiencing homelessness and do not identify as First Nations, Métis, Inuit or Non-Status/Have Indigenous Ancestry.
Non-Chronic Homelessness	Persons who have cumulatively experienced less than 6 months (≤179 days) of homelessness in the past year (12 months).
Point-in-Time (PiT) Count	A collaborative and community-driven initiative to measure sheltered and unsheltered homelessness. It aims to enumerate individuals and families in a community who are, at a given time, staying in shelters or "sleeping rough" (e.g., on the street, in parks), providing a "snapshot" of homelessness in a community. PiT Counts include a survey that provides communities with information on the characteristics of their homeless population. This information can be used by communities to direct resources to areas of greatest need. When completed in subsequent years, it can also be used to track changes in the homeless population over time and measure progress in reducing it.
Survey	A data collection method used for the PiT Count whereby persons identified as experiencing homelessness were asked to voluntarily participate in an 18-question questionnaire in order to collect detailed information on their characteristics (e.g., age, gender, veteran status, Indigenous identity, etc.).
Tally	A data collection method used for the PiT Count whereby persons were identified as experiencing homelessness based on physical markers.
Youth Homelessness	Persons who are experiencing homelessness, are between the ages of 16 and 24, and are not attached to a parent or guardian.

INTRODUCTION

> ❝ Every segment of our society must be treated with dignity and respect and be given the opportunity to make a meaningful contribution. The face of homelessness is changing and we have to adapt to provide the adequate support to communities to build capacity to help homeless populations lead valuable lives.❞
>
> — THE HONOURABLE JEAN-YVES DUCLOS, MINISTER OF FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Access to adequate, affordable and safe housing is the foundation for a healthy and prosperous life. When people are displaced from their home and experience homelessness, they face daunting barriers that may derail their lives for long periods of time or sometimes permanently. The reasons that people may be experiencing homelessness are difficult to pinpoint because they often include structural (e.g. economic) and personal (e.g. domestic abuse) factors. Despite this difficulty, non-profit organizations, grassroots groups, and the government in Durham Region have been working diligently over the years to assist those experiencing homelessness. Collectively, these efforts have undoubtedly helped thousands of people across Durham within the past decade, and with the addition of a Point-in-Time (PiT) Count the Durham community is able to further push the needle in addressing homelessness, by building on the current data collection techniques. To this end, Community Development Council Durham (CDCD) and Durham Mental Health Services (DMHS) collaborated to carry out Durham's first Point-in-Time (PiT) Count to enumerate and survey those experiencing homelessness across the region. The data obtained from this PiT Count, and subsequent ones, will allow stakeholders and decision makers to determine the impact services and programs are having on those experiencing homelessness. More immediately, however, the data will set a benchmark for the minimum number of people experiencing homelessness in Durham, as well as increasing our understanding of the experiences, demographics, socio-economic status, and service needs of those experiencing homelessness.

This report confirms that homelessness continues to exist in our community and that more work needs to be done. The PiT Count data reveals that many of those experiencing homelessness in Durham Region are suffering from extreme housing insecurity due to a number of factors. While the results on the following pages lack personal stories, the data provides a different perspective. The most striking being that homelessness can affect almost anyone regardless of gender, age, and socio-economic status. However, as with many social issues in our society, certain groups of individuals are disproportionately affected by homelessness.

"What does it feel like to be homeless?"

> ❝ It's a lonely place and that's a fact when all you own is on your back. Social isolation and social deprivation are a norm. To be homeless is to be without a place that you can enter, close the door, and be safe and secure. You are a problem to be dealt with rather than a person to be supported.❞
>
> — DANIEL CULLEN (OVER 8,000 CUMULATIVE DAYS OF LIVED EXPERIENCE)

BACKGROUND & METHODOLOGY

Background

Communities across Canada have been carrying out Point-in-Time (PiT) Counts for several years. For example, Vancouver, Calgary, and Toronto have been conducting their own versions of the PiT Count since the early 2000's. Through Government of Canada's Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) Sub-Project, Community Development Council Durham (CDCD) and Durham Mental Health Services (DMHS) were contracted by the Homelessness Partnering Strategy's Community Advisory Board to conduct Durham's first PiT Count. Planning of the PiT Count began in August 2016 and was based on 11 principles:

1 **Community-Owned and Community-Driven.** Members of Durham's community, especially those who work closely with individuals experiencing homelessness, are passionate about reducing and ultimately ending homelessness. Their passion and knowledge should be channeled and leveraged to ensure the PiT Count is successfully executed and that the results are used to help address homelessness in their community.

2 **Inclusivity.** During all phases of the project, all major stakeholders should have a say. This means actively working hard to include marginalized voices such as youth, indigenous, racial minorities, veterans, women and sexual minorities (LGBTQ) who are experiencing homelessness.

3 **Transparency.** While this initiative is likely to lead to positive change, the limitations of the PiT Count should be made clear from the outset and should be understood by all stakeholders.

4 **Collaboration and Collective Impact.** Only by working with all major stakeholders will this initiative be successful. It is crucial to engage stakeholders from the outset to build buy-in, and engage them throughout the initiative to leverage their resources and information.

5 **Social Justice.** It is acknowledged that homelessness of any amount is unacceptable. It is also acknowledged that homelessness is the result of systemic or societal barriers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, individual/household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural, familial breakdown/trauma, domestic violence, or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination.

6 **Safety.** The safety of volunteers and survey participants is of utmost importance. Appropriate measures are to be taken to ensure everyone's safety and wellbeing.

7 **Respect.** Survey participants will be treated with dignity and respect. This will be reinforced through volunteer training.

8 **Methodologically Sound.** The PiT Count will be planned and implemented according to the best practices advocated by the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, and the Government of Canada.

9 **Objectivity.** The purpose of the PiT Count is to develop an objective picture of homelessness in Durham Region.

10 **Evidence-based Decision Making.** The results of the PiT Count are intended to be used by policy-makers and service providers to optimize their current resources and assets so that they can have a greater impact.

11 **Galvanize Political Action.** In addition to optimizing resources, the results of the PiT Count are intended to be used to galvanize political action at all levels of government to adequately address homelessness in Durham Region.

BACKGROUND & METHODOLOGY

Goals

With these principles in place, 4 goals were established based on the HPS requirements and input from the PiT Count steering committee:

1 **Enumerate Durham's homeless population.** The PiT Count will provide a baseline measurement of the number of people in Durham Region who are experiencing unsheltered or sheltered homelessness within a short period of time.

2 **Develop a comprehensive understanding of the socio-demographic characteristics and service needs of those experiencing homelessness in Durham Region.** This information can be used to target community resources to where they are most needed.

3 **Raise awareness in Durham** about the state of homelessness.

4 **Complete and submit a PiT Count Report to the Duhram Region Community Advisory Board and Committee of the Whole highlighting all the major findings of the Count.**

Definition of Homelessness

Homelessness cannot be concretely defined. As a result, the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness has created a fourfold typology to describe the different kinds of homelessness a person can experience: 1) Unsheltered, 2) Emergency Sheltered, 3) Provisionally Accommodated, and 4) At-risk of Homelessness[1]. While all four types of homelessness present a state of housing insecurity that warrants attention, the PiT Count largely focuses on the first two due to the strengths and limitations of the PiT Count methodology. Table 1 breaks down the specific types of homelessness that Durham's PiT Count captured through three different data collection methods: tally, enumeration and survey. The tally involved trained volunteers identifying individuals experiencing homelessness based on physical markers and recording their observed gender and approximate age. The enumeration involved gathering administrative data from agencies on the number of people experiencing homelessness as well as basic demographic information. And the survey involved several screening questions and a questionnaire conducted by trained volunteers.

Table 1 - Types of Homelessness Captured by Durham's PiT Count

Typology	Living Situation	Tally/ Enumeration	Survey
Unsheltered	**1.1 People living in public or private spaces without consent or contract**	Yes	Yes
	1.2 People living in places not intended for permanent human habitation	Yes	Yes
Emergency Sheltered	**2.1 Emergency overnight shelters for people who are homeless**	Yes	Yes
	2.2 Violence Against Women (VAW) shelters	Yes	Yes
	2.3 Emergency Shelter for people fleeing a natural disaster or destruction of accommodation due to fires, floods, etc.	No	No
Provisionally Accommodated	**3.1 Interim Housing for people who are homeless**	Yes	Yes
	3.2 People living temporarily with others, but without guarantee of continued residency or immediate prospect for accessing permanent housing	No	No
	3.3 People accessing short-term, temporary rental accommodations without security of tenure	No	No
	3.4 People in institutional care who lack permanent housing arrangements	Yes	No
	3.5 Accommodation/ Reception centres for recently arrived immigrants and refugees	No	No
At-risk of homelessness	4.1 People at imminent risk of homelessness	No	No
	4.2 Individuals and families who are precariously housed	No	No

[1] Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (2012) Canadian Definition of Homelessness. Homeless Hub: www.homelesshub.ca/homelessdefinition/

BACKGROUND & METHODOLOGY

Scope

Durham's PiT Count captured a snapshot of individuals and families experiencing homelessness across Durham Region. In line with other communities, the PiT Count took place over a short period of time: February 15th – 17th. On the night of the 15th, trained volunteers canvassed outdoor, indoor locations, and shelters to identify and survey those experiencing homelessness. On the 16th and 17th a smaller group of trained volunteers canvassed non-profit/public agencies (i.e. libraries, food banks, drop-in centres) during the day to identify and survey those who had been missed the night before (See Appendix 1 for a full list of agencies that were canvassed). The geographical reach of the PiT Count included all eight of Durham Region's municipalities and townships: Ajax, Brock, Clarington, Oshawa, Pickering, Scugog, Uxbridge and Whitby.

Based on the definition of homelessness used by PiT Counts, individuals and families surveyed include those staying in emergency shelters, Violence Against Women (VAW) shelters, transitional housing, holding cells, residential withdrawal management facilities, hospitals, and those staying outdoors in parks, makeshift shelters, on the street, and in other public areas. Importantly, individuals and families couch surfing (living with others temporarily, but without guarantee of continued residency or immediate prospect of accessing permanent housing) were not captured by the PiT Count because of methodological limitations. Those experiencing 'hidden homelessness' can make up a sizeable proportion of the homeless population in communities, especially among specific populations like women, youth and newcomers.

Community Participation

The success of Durham's first PiT Count was contingent on the support of the homeless-serving sector, people with lived experience, other key stakeholders, and community members. The homeless-serving sector was engaged to assist with the planning of the PiT Count and to provide crucial feedback on the design of the survey. Those with lived experience were also consulted to obtain general feedback on the initiative and to identify outdoor locations where unsheltered homeless individuals may be located. Key stakeholders (i.e. Durham Regional Police Service and Lakeridge Health) and other community members played an equally important role, largely through volunteering their time to conduct surveys and ensure that the PiT Count was executed successfully. In total, 150 volunteers participated in the PiT Count between February 15th and 17th. These volunteers played a number of different roles, including: general surveyors, team leads, mobile support personnel and area captains.

> " I thought it [the PiT Count] was amazing. When I looked around at the volunteers most were newer Canadians. In my team of 5 people, 3 had come to Canada as refugees and now were successful members of our Community and willing to spend their night in the cold helping others. Amazing!"
>
> — PIT COUNT VOLUNTEER

> " I believe in this Count. I think it is very important and Durham Region needs this."
>
> — PIT COUNT VOLUNTEER

When volunteers were asked whether they would recommend volunteering for a future opportunity like this to their friends and family, 78% agreed and 19% somewhat agreed.

> " Everyone should do this!"
>
> — PIT COUNT VOLUNTEER

BACKGROUND & METHODOLOGY

Ethical Considerations

Individuals who are experiencing homelessness make up one of the most vulnerable populations in any community. To minimize the risk of harm that may come as a result of participating in the PiT Count survey (e.g. mental distress from possible triggering questions), several steps were taken. As with all PiT Counts, participation in the survey was completely voluntary and the only identifying information collected was age and gender. After data collection, all data was de-identified. To ensure that informed consent was collected, volunteers informed potential participants of the purpose of the study and how

their data was going to be used. Volunteers were also trained to approach those who appeared to be able to provide their informed consent. Further, surveys were only conducted with participants 16 years of age or older because those under 16 were not deemed capable of providing their informed consent. Other ethical considerations were made, such as: (1) having volunteers, instead of staff, conduct surveys at emergency/VAW shelters, (2) informing participants of the honorarium they received for participating in the survey only after they provided their informed consent, (3) only publishing de-identified aggregate data, and (4) providing participants with the telephone number for the PiT Count Coordinator for any follow-up questions about the survey.

Methodology

Survey

SCREENING QUESTIONS	QUESTIONNAIRE
Prior to conducting the survey, potential participants were informed what the PiT Count entailed and the potential benefits that could come from the study. To prevent double counting, the first screening question asked potential participants whether they had already completed the survey with another volunteer. The second screening question asked potential participants whether they would like to participate in the survey. This ensured that participation in the survey was completely voluntary. If the participant agreed to participate in the survey, two more screening questions were asked to determine their eligibility to move onto the 18-question questionnaire. Eligibility was determined by the living arrangement indicated by the participant and whether that matched with the study's definition of homelessness (see Table 1).	In total, 18 questions were included in Durham's PiT Count survey. Following HPS guidelines, the survey included all 14 core questions, which primarily focused on collecting data on socio-demographics (i.e. age, gender identity, etc.), followed by questions regarding the individual's experiences with homelessness (i.e. the length of time they experienced homelessness in the past year) (See Appendix 5). 4 additional questions were included in the survey based on the recommendation of the steering committee, individuals with lived experience, and front-line workers in the homelessness sector. It was determined that the information gleaned would be beneficial to the community's understanding of homelessness. These questions provided valuable data on whether people were experiencing homelessness as a result of being discharged from a provincially-funded institution, as well as on their: service needs, educational attainment, and number of interactions with particular public institutions.

BACKGROUND & METHODOLOGY

Tally

In some instances, it was not possible to survey an individual due to safety or privacy concerns. In these instances, a tally sheet was used to identify people who, based on physical markers, were likely to be experiencing homelessness. Volunteers used a checklist to visually determine whether an individual was experiencing homelessness. In addition to capturing the number of 'observed homeless', data was also collected on the tallied individuals observed gender and approximate age.

Enumeration

As participation in the survey was voluntary, not every individual residing at an emergency, VAW, or transitional shelter participated. However, to capture the true number of people experiencing homelessness in Durham Region, data on those who chose not to participate was still necessary. As a result, shelters completed enumeration forms that detailed the number of clients that accessed a bed, as well as the age, gender and aboriginal status of each client. Enumeration forms were also completed by Lakeridge Health and DRPS for clients/inmates who stated they had 'no fixed address' or provided an address for an emergency shelter.

Data Entry, Analysis and Integrity Check

Surveys were entered into the National Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) on a password protected computer at CDCD. Only members of the PiT Count research team had access to the surveys which were kept in a locked cabinet. For data entry, the guidelines set out by HPS were followed as closely as possible. Once all surveys were entered, a data integrity check was conducted to ensure that survey information was entered correctly into HIFIS. Data was then exported to Excel for data analysis. Once all results were calculated, a second data integrity check was completed to ensure that all calculations were error free.

Limitations

PiT Counts are the most commonly used method in Canada to capture a snapshot of the minimum number of people experiencing homelessness in a community, but its limitations must be recognized. First, a PiT Count is not able to capture those who are experiencing 'hidden homelessness', such as those couch surfing or residing in a motel room. In some communities, those experiencing hidden homelessness can make up the majority of those who are homeless.[2] Second, the unsheltered count relied on volunteers to identify individuals experiencing homelessness in public areas. Due to safety concerns and other limitations, individuals who did not appear to be homeless, who are well-hidden, or who were actively avoiding being counted may have been missed. Third, there is a chance that some individuals may have been double counted. While individuals were asked by surveyors if they had already participated in the survey (to prevent double counting), they were provided with $10 as compensation for their time spent participating in the survey, which may have led some to desire participating more than once. Fourth, marginalized populations, such as those part of the LGBTQ community, may have been undercounted because some individuals may not have disclosed such information due to prior experiences with stigmatization or discrimination. And fifth, because the PiT Count was carried out over a short period of time, anyone who was not experiencing homelessness during that specific time will be missed. As a result of these limitations, it is expected that the Durham PiT Count (similar to all PiT Counts) underrepresents the total number of people experiencing homelessness. The findings from this PiT Count should, therefore, be seen as a minimum count of those who were experiencing homelessness between February 15th-17th, 2017.

---

[2] Kauppi, Carol, et al. 2017. Homelessness and Hidden Homelessness in Rural and Northern Ontario. Wellington County, ON: Rural Ontario Institute.

THE CONTEXT IN DURHAM

Homelessness is often the result of a number of structural and individual factors. These structural factors include housing, economic and demographic trends that can affect people's susceptibility of experiencing homelessness. For example, while population growth can be a positive trend, if it is not accompanied by a corresponding increase in housing supply, the result can be increased housing prices and decreased housing affordability for people on a limited, stagnant or fixed budget. This section will briefly explore the structural factors in Durham Region that could be influencing the rate of homelessness.

Population Growth

According to the Durham Region's 2016 Monitoring of Growth Trends report, Durham's population is rapidly growing. Since 1991 Durham has added another 238,792 residents, which represents a 59% increase. In the short term, between 2011 and 2016 Durham's population increased by 6% from 608,124 to 645,862. This positive growth trend is expected to continue as Durham's population is forecasted to increase by an average annual rate of 2.41 percent between 2016 and 2021.[3] A similar story is seen with household growth in Durham. In 1991 there were 136,565 households and in 2016 there were 233,936, an increase of 71%. This positive growth is also expected to continue as Durham is projected to see an average annual growth of 2.68 percent in households between 2016 and 2021.[4]

The population growth Durham has witnessed over the past number of years has not been evenly spread across all age groups. Some age groups, as a proportion of the total population have seen a decrease while others have seen increases since 2006. One notable trend has been the decrease in the proportion of Durham's 0-14, 15-29 and 30-44 age cohort, and an increase in the 45-64 and 65+ age cohort. As a result of this trend, the average age of Durham's population is on the rise. This could have consequences, as older adults and the elderly have different needs than their younger counterparts. This is especially true for those experiencing homelessness.

[3] Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development. 2016. Monitoring of Growth Trends. Durham ON: The Regional Municipality of Durham. (https://www.durham.ca/departments/planed/planning/stats-n-facts/2016-INFO-33.pdf)

[4] Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development. 2016. Monitoring of Growth Trends. Durham ON: The Regional Municipality of Durham.

THE CONTEXT IN DURHAM

Housing Trends

Rent

In Durham, approximately 17% of households rent an apartment, which translates to approximately 40,000 households. This form of housing is one that most low-income households concentrate in due to several reasons, the most important being its relative affordability compared to home ownership. As a result, it is important to look at housing trends such as the cost of renting an apartment in Durham Region. Between 2006 and 2016, the average cost of renting an apartment—of any size—rose steadily in Durham. For example, the average cost of renting a 1 bedroom, 2 bedroom or bachelor apartment increased by roughly 27-29%. In dollar figures, this means that the average cost of renting a 1 bedroom increased by $220, from $758/month to $978/month. The average cost of renting a 3+ bedroom in Durham has increased more slowly at 19% during the same time-frame. This translated to an $198 increase in the average cost of renting a 3+ bedroom, from $1,067/month to $1,265/month (Appendix 3: Figure 24).

Vacancy Rate

A partial explanation for the rent increases seen since 2006 is the steady decrease in vacancy rates in Durham. In 2006 the vacancy rate was at 3.91% and in the years since there has been a gradual decrease in vacancy rates, reaching a low of 1.6% in 2015 before rebounding slightly to 2.0% in 2016. In general, a vacancy rate in the range of 2-3 percent is considered to be indicative of a balanced market.[5] Durham, as a result, is currently on the lowest end of that range.

Housing Completions

One reason for the decrease in vacancy rate is the low number of rental units built in comparison to owner units (i.e. freehold and condominiums). For example, in both 2015 and 2016, owned units accounted for over 90% of all new housing units completed and rental units accounted for less than 10%. This translates into 4,398 owner units and 316 rental units built over those two years.

[5] CMHC. 1991. Understanding private rental housing investment in Canada. Ottawa, ON: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. (https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/pdf/61601.pdf?fr=1493218349276)

Housing Affordability

Another notable trend in the housing market is the percentage of households spending more than 30% of before-tax income on shelter costs, which is a common measure of housing affordability. Based on Figure 1 it can be seen that the rate has been steady between 1996 and 2011.[6] However, what is notable is that the percentage of those paying more than 30% of before-tax income on shelter costs is considerably higher among tenant households (i.e. those renting apartments) than owner households (i.e. those who own their home). This figure makes it clear that tenant households are consistently and disproportionately affected by affordability challenges in Durham.

Household Type spending more than 30% of Before-Tax Income on Shelter Costs in Durham, 1996-2011
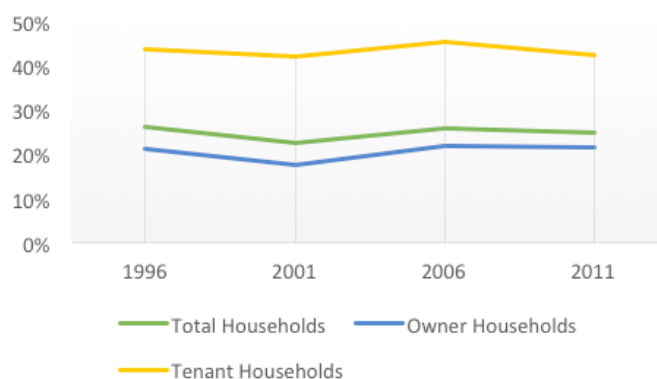
Figure 1 (Source: Census & National Household Survey)

The challenge of rental affordability is especially pertinent for those on social assistance or a fixed income, such as seniors who receive Old Age Security. As Table 2 demonstrates, the maximum income provided by Ontario Works (OW), Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), Old Age Security (OAS), Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), and Ontario Guaranteed Annual Income System (GAINS) means that–in most cases–households are spending more than 50% of their income on shelter costs. For example, a single person household who receives $1,128 from ODSP and rents a 1 bedroom at the average market rate ($978) would have to dedicate 87% of their income towards their shelter cost. Based on this assessment, a 2015 Wait List Report by Durham Region concludes that "low income households in Durham – especially those receiving social assistance – have limited affordable housing options in the private market and are at high risk of homelessness...."[7]

Table 2 - Average Market Rents and Social Assistance and Pension Incomes

	1 Bedroom		2 Bedroom		3 Bedroom	
Average Market Rent (2016)	$978		$1,116		$1,265	
Maximum Income (2017)	Single	% Rent	Sole support + 1 child or Senior Couple	% Rent	Couple + 2 children	% Rent
OW	$708	138	$1,612	69	$2,440	52
ODSP	$1,128	87	$1,951	57	$2,900	44
OAS/GIS/GAINS	$1,526	64	$2,363	47		

Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation & Ministry of Community and Social Services

In order to afford a place to live, many families and singles/couples on social assistance or a fixed income apply for Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) housing. However, at the end of 2015, there were 5,730 low income households active on the wait list. Due to the low turnover of RGI Units, wait times have been increasing year over year across all household categories, especially among one bedroom units. From the same 2015 Wait List Report, information provided outlines that for families on the regular, chronological wait list the average wait time was almost 9 years prior to being housed. The 2015 Wait List Report also outlines that most non-senior singles and couples are unlikely to be housed from the wait list without priority until they turn 60 years old and become eligible for seniors' housing.

[6] Numbers for 2016 were not available during the writing of this report because Statistics Canada will not be releasing census data on housing until October 25, 2017.

[7] Commissioner of Social Services. 2016. 2015 Centralized Wait List Statistics for Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) Assistance. Durham, ON: The Regional Municipality of Durham (http://www.durham.ca/departments/social/housing/homeless/2015WaitingListReport.pdf)

THE CONTEXT IN DURHAM

Low Income

The Low-income Measure After-Tax (LIM-AT) is a measure of relative poverty. In 2010, approximately 10% of economic families in Durham were considered low-income using the LIM-AT, which translates to roughly 21,400 households. [8] [9] For these households, affording rent can be a real struggle. For example, a single person household making the LIM-AT Cut off of $19,460 (or $1,622/month) and renting a 1 bedroom apartment in Durham (at average market rent in 2010) would have to use 50% of their income on shelter costs, leaving little money for other expenses.

Table 3 - LIM-AT Cut-offs by Household Size, 2010

Number of Persons in Household	LIM-AT Cut off ($)
1 person	19,460
2 persons	27,521
3 persons	33,706
4 persons	38,920
5 persons	43,514
6 persons	47,667
7 persons	51,486

Source: 2011 National Household Survey (http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/ref/dict/table-tableau/t-3-2-eng.cfm)

Summary

In the past decade there have been a number of different trends that have increased the cost of living for tenant households in Durham. Population growth and the average cost of rent in Durham has been on the rise, while vacancy rates have dropped considerably in the past 10 years. While there has not been a notable increase in the number of tenant households paying more than 30% of their before-tax household income on shelter costs since 1996, tenant households are still disproportionately affected by affordability challenges compared to their owner counterparts. Affordability becomes especially challenging for those under the LIM-AT cut-off or on social assistance, as these households are often paying more than 50% of their income on shelter costs. Couple this with long RGI wait lists, which represents the bulk of affordable housing in Durham, and many tenant households are clearly struggling to keep a roof over their head.

While these trends only provide a partial picture of the structural factors that could influence the number of individuals in Durham that are experiencing homelessness, the story that the data reveals is compelling. This story, however, is not exclusive to Durham. Many other communities across Ontario and Canada are struggling to provide enough affordable housing for its residents and vacancy rates in neighbouring communities, like Toronto, are even lower. Nonetheless, these factors must be taken into account when considering the scope and nature of homelessness in Durham.

[8] An "Economic Family" refers to a group of two or more persons who live in the same dwelling and are related to each other by blood, marriage, common-law or adoption

[9] National Household Survey 2011, Statistics Canada

PIT COUNT RESULTS

This section goes into detail about the results of the PiT Count. The data collected through the survey provides numerous opportunities to look at specific socio-demographic patterns among those experiencing homelessness. However, as can be seen in Table 4, the data was collected through three methods: survey, enumeration and tallies. Each data collection method provides specific data points (see Appendix 2), which means that the analysis of particular socio-demographic patterns will be limited to survey data only. This will be indicated through a footnote that will accompany each table and figure.

Population

Table 4 - Total Count of People Identified as Experiencing Homelessness

	Number of		Sub Total	Sub Total Percentage	Total Percentage
	Non-Dependents	Dependents/Children			
Survey					
Sheltered	56	24	80	67.8%	29.5%
Unsheltered	30	1	31	26.3%	11.4%
Transitional	7	0	7	5.9%	2.6%
Sub Total	93	25	**118**	**100%**	**43.5%**
Enumeration					
Sheltered	74	32	106	82.2%	39.1%
Transitional	6	0	6	4.7%	2.2%
Public System	17	0	17	13.2%	6.3%
Sub Total	97	32	**129**	**100%**	**47.6%**
Tally (Unsheltered)					
Outdoor	11	0	11	45.8%	3.3%
Indoor	10	0	10	41.7%	4.4%
Service	3	0	3	12.5%	1.1%
Sub Total	24	0	**24**	**100%**	**8.9%**
Total	214	57	**271**	---	**100%**

Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation & Ministry of Community and Social Services

In total, 271 unique individuals were identified as experiencing homelessness during the PiT Count, 214 who were non-dependents (i.e. singles, family heads, partners, or other adults) and 57 who were dependents/children. Of the 271 unique individuals, 118 were identified through a voluntary survey. 80 of those surveyed were sheltered on the night of the PiT Count, 31 were unsheltered (i.e. sleeping outdoors), and 7 were staying in a transitional shelter. 129 of the 271 unique individuals were identified through enumeration data provided by emergency, VAW, and transitional shelters, as well as public systems (including Lakeridge Health, Markham-Stouffville Hospital, Durham Regional Police Services, and Pinewood Centre). 106 of those enumerated were sheltered on the night of the PiT Count, 6 were staying in a transitional shelter, and 17 were involved with the public system. The remaining 24 unique individuals were identified through a tally. This involved identifying people as experiencing homelessness based on observable markers. 11 of those tallied were observed outdoors, 10 indoors (i.e. 24-hour coffee shop or fast food restaurant) and 3 at service locations (i.e. library, food bank, etc.).

Families

34 Families were identified through the PiT Count. Families varied between 2 and 7 members and accounted for 98 unique individuals experiencing homelessness, which is 36% of the total number of unique individuals identified. The majority of identified families comprised of two members (i.e. two adults or one adult with a dependent/child) and one-quarter of families were comprised of three members (i.e. two adults and one dependent/child or one adult and two dependents/children) (Figure 4). The average size of a family was 2.88 individuals.

Of the 34 families that were identified, 77% were lone female families. The remaining families, were comprised of two adults (21%) and headed by a lone male (3%).

The age distribution of family heads and partners varied, from 20 years of age to 53 years of age. However, almost 50% of family heads/partners were between the ages of 26-35. The average age was determined to be 34.5 years old (Figure 3).

94% of families resided at an emergency or VAW shelter, 3% in an abandoned/vacant building, and 3% in a vehicle.

The age of dependents/children varied between 3 months old to 18 years old, with 60% being between the ages of 0-8 years old (Figure 2). The average age of dependents/children was 7.8 years old. 47% were females and 58% were males.

Dependents/Children by Age (n=57)
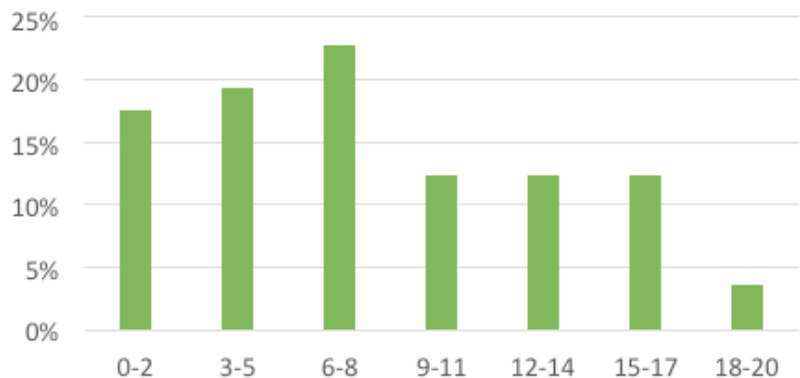
Figure 2 (Data Source: Survey & Enumeration)

Families by Family Size (n=34)

- Family Size = 2
- Family Size = 3
- Family Size = 4
- Family Size = 5
- Family Size = 6
- Family Size = 7

2.9% 2.9%
5.9%
8.8%
52.9%
26.5%
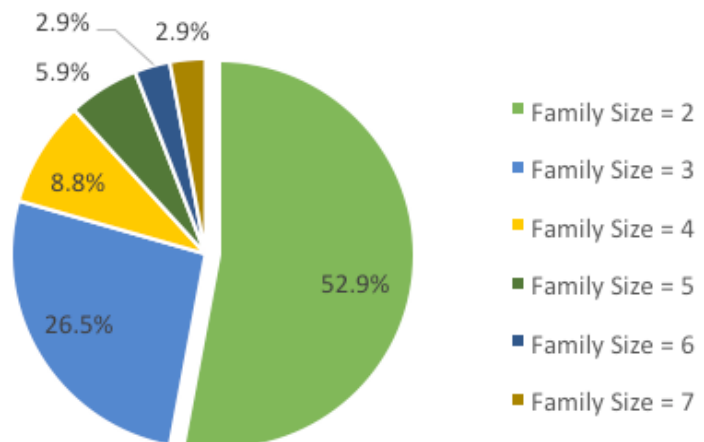
Figure 4 (Data Source: Survey & Enumeration)

Age

Homelessness can affect anyone, regardless of age. Of those identified as experiencing homelessness, 19% were youth (16-25), 41% were adults (26-50), 19% were older adults (51-65), and 2% were seniors (>65). The average age was 32.6 years old.

Figure 5 highlights the gender breakdown among the different age groups. The average age for males was 39.4 years old and for females was 37.9 years old. [10]

Age Distribution by Gender (n=269)

	<16	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	61-65	66-70	71-75
■ Female	8.6%	3.3%	5.2%	6.3%	4.8%	5.2%	3.3%	2.2%	2.6%	3.3%	1.9%	0.7%	0.4%
■ Male	10.8%	5.9%	4.1%	3.0%	5.2%	3.7%	3.3%	4.1%	5.9%	4.1%	1.1%	0.7%	0.0%
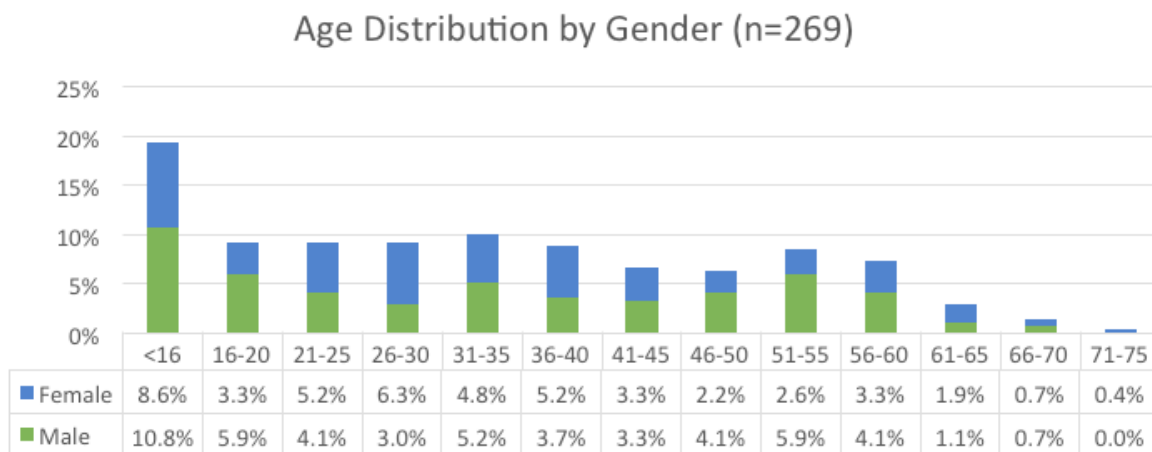
Figure 5 (Data Source: Survey, Enumeration & Tally)

Figure 6 showcases the age distribution among those who identify as Indigenous and Non-Indigenous. It appears from the figure that survey participants who identify as Indigenous tend to be younger than Non-Indigenous. This trend is reinforced by the fact that the mean age of those who identify as Indigenous is 35, while the mean age of those who do not identify as Indigenous is 38. [11]

Age Distribution among (Non)Indigenous (n=240)

	<16	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	61-66	66-70	71-75
■ Non-Indigenous	16.3%	8.3%	7.5%	7.5%	7.9%	7.1%	5.4%	3.8%	7.5%	6.7%	1.7%	0.8%	0.4%
■ Indigenous	5.4%	2.1%	2.5%	1.7%	2.5%	0.0%	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.0%
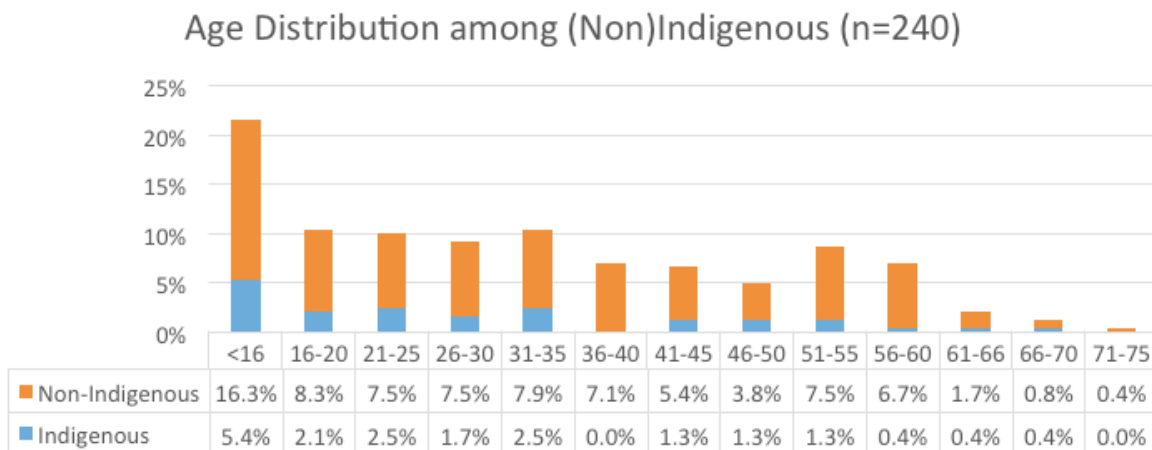
Figure 6 (Data Source: Survey & Enumeration)

[10] Category '<16' was excluded when calculating mean age

[11] Category '<16' was excluded when calculating mean age

Age

Figure 7 demonstrates the age distribution among those who are chronically and non-chronically homeless.[12] Based on the results, it appears that chronic homelessness affects a greater or lesser percentage of people within particular age brackets. For example, 2% of those reporting chronic homelessness were 16-20 years old, which accounts for 17% of those in that age bracket. This is in comparison to the 9% in the 31-35 age bracket who indicated they were experiencing chronic homelessness, which accounts for 62% of those in that age bracket. The mean age of those experiencing chronic homelessness is 37.3 and 38.1 for those not experiencing chronic homelessness.

Age Distribution among (Non)Chronic (n=93)

	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	61-65	66-70	71-75
Non-Chronic	10.8%	7.5%	2.2%	5.4%	4.3%	4.3%	3.2%	3.2%	8.6%	2.2%	1.1%	0.0%
Chronic	2.2%	8.6%	7.5%	8.6%	3.2%	3.2%	2.2%	6.5%	4.3%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%
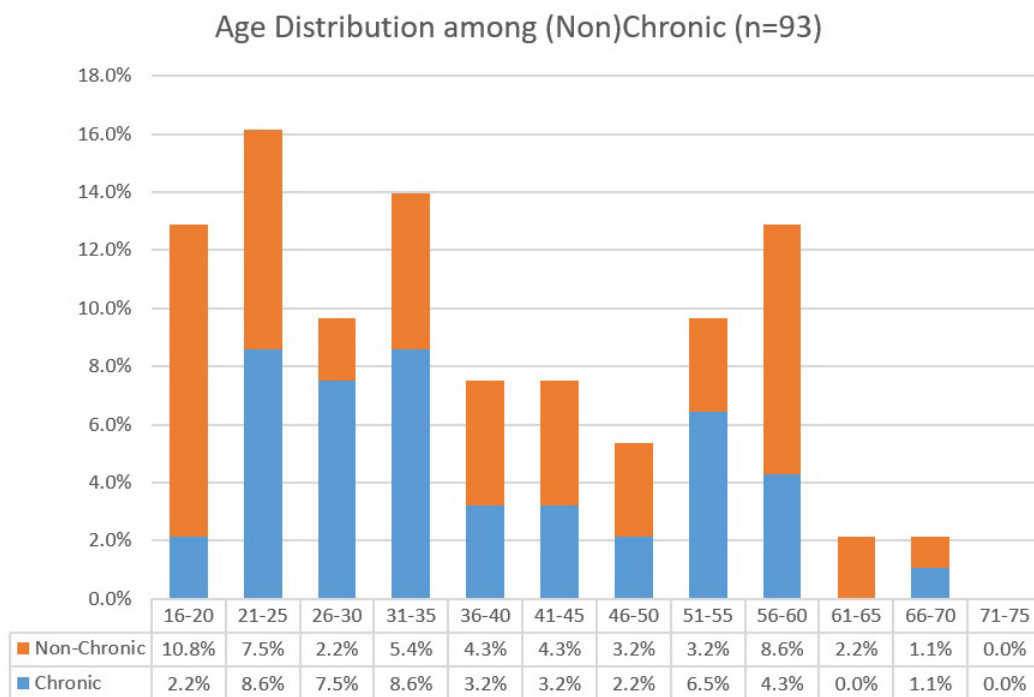
Figure 7 (Data Source: Survey)

---

[12] See Glossary for definition of chronic and non-chronic homelessness

LGBTQ

Members of the LGBTQ community are faced with the additional burden of being stigmatized, which may put them at greater risk of homelessness. Of those surveyed, 6.5% identified as being a part of the LGBTQ community, while 2% stated that they were unsure (Figure 8). However, some caution should be taken when interpreting these results because many LGBTQ individuals may choose to avoid self-identifying due to concerns about homophobia or transphobia.[13]

LGBTQ (n=92)

2.2%   6.5%

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

91.3%

Figure 8 (Data Source: Survey)
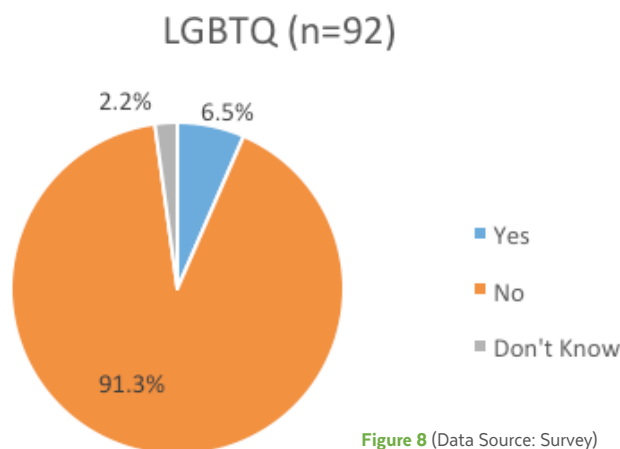
Immigrant/Refugee

As of 2011, 21% of Durham's population were immigrants to Canada. Of those surveyed, 6% were immigrants to Canada, 2% were refugees and 1% did not know their immigration status. While the results seem to suggest that immigrants comprise of a small proportion of the homeless population, research has shown that newcomers face unique challenges with settling in Canada due to family size, accent, skin colour, income source and temporary or refugee status. This can put them at greater risk of falling into hidden homelessness.[14]

[13] Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. N.d. "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual, Queer, Questioning and 2-Spirited (LGBTQ2)." Toronto ON: Homeless Hub. (URL: http://homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/population-specific/lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-transsexual-queer)(accessed May 14, 2017).

[14] Daniel Hiebert, Precarious Housing and Hidden Homelessness among Refugees, Asylum Seekers, and Immigrants in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, 2011, http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/communities/homelessness/research/kdp/immigrants/precarious.shtml (accessed May 10, 2017).

PIT COUNT RESULTS

Indigenous Identity

The overrepresentation of Indigenous individuals in the homeless population across Canada has been well established.[15] In 2016, it was reported that 37% of respondents who were surveyed through the Coordinated National PiT Count identified as Aboriginal or Indigenous. In comparison, only 4% of Canadians identify as Aboriginal or Indigenous. A similar pattern is witnessed in Durham. In 2011, 1.5% of Durham's residents identified as being a part of the Indigenous (Aboriginal) community. This is in contrast to the 26% of survey participants who identified as Indigenous: 15% Non-Status/Have Indigenous Ancestry, 9% First Nations, and 2% Métis (Figure 9). The results appear to reinforce that the Indigenous community is disproportionately affected by homelessness.

Indigenous Status (n=93)

First Nations — 8.6%
Métis — 2.2%
Non-Status / Have Indigenous Ancestry — 15.1%
Not Indigenous — 74.2%
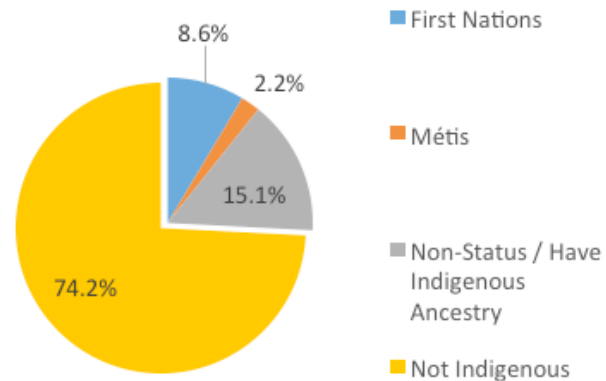
Figure 9 (Data Source: Survey)

Gender Identity

Overall, 52% of participants were male and 47% were female. 1% of survey participants identified as a gender other than male or female (Figure 10). As a comparison, the national rate is approximately 60% for males, 40% for females, and less than 1% as an alternative gender identity.[16]

Gender Identity (n=92)

Female — 46.7%
Male — 52.2%
Other Response — 1.1%
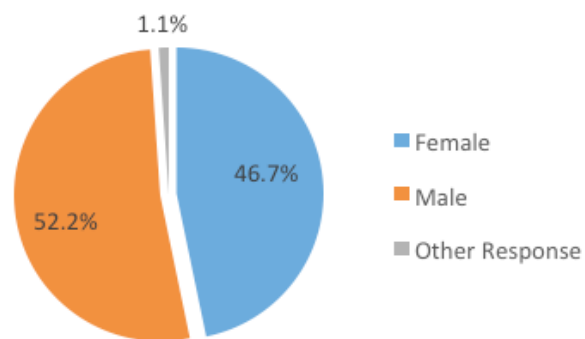
Figure 10 (Data Source: Survey)

[15] Caryl Patrick, Aboriginal Homelessness in Canada: A Literature Review, Toronto: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press, 2014

[16] Homelessness Partnering Strategy. 2016. Highlights: 2016 Coordinated Point-in-Time Count of Homelessness in Canadian Communities. Ottawa, ON: Employment and Social Development Canada.

PIT COUNT RESULTS

Military & Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)

3% of participants indicated that they served in the military at one point. No participant indicated that they had served with the RCMP. This compares to the national rate of approximately 5% for those who served in the military and less than 1% for those who served in the RCMP. [17]

Place of Habitation of those Experiencing Homelessness

Homelessness, unlike food insecurity issues, is a much more visible social issue because we are familiar with images of individuals who are sleeping on the streets and in public spaces. However, individuals who are experiencing homelessness use a variety of other places for habitation. Of those identified, the vast majority (69%) were staying in an emergency shelter or domestic violence shelter. The next four most common places of habitation were: Other Location Unfit for Human Habitation (i.e. 24/7 coffee shop or fast food restaurant) (8%), Public Space (7%), Public System (6%), and Transitional Shelter/Housing (5%) (Figure 11). Taken together, 69% were emergency sheltered, 20% were unsheltered and 11% were provisionally accommodated.

Table 6 (Appendix 4) demonstrates that differences among certain specific populations exist with respect to where people were residing. For example, it appears that males (42%) were more likely to experience unsheltered homelessness than women (10%). The same difference is apparent between youth and non-youth, as non-youth (38%) were more likely to sleep unsheltered compared to youth (15%).

Place of Habitation (n=271)

| Category	Percentage
Vehicle (Car, Van, RV, Truck)	0.7%
Transitional Shelter / Housing	4.8%
Respondent Doesn't Know [Likely Homeless]	1.5%
Public System	6.3%
Public Space (e.g., Sidewalks, Squares, Parks, Forests, Bus	7.4%
Other Location Unfit for Human Habitation	8.1%
Makeshift Shelter, Tent or Shack	1.1%
Emergency Shelter, Violence Against Women Shelter	68.6%
Abandoned / Vacant Building	1.5%

Figure 11 (Data Source: Survey, Enumeration & Tally)

Municipality of Residence for those Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness (n=54)

There was also a difference in where individuals were found experiencing unsheltered homelessness in Durham (Figure 12). The vast majority were identified in the municipality of Oshawa (74%). 11% were identified in Ajax, and 6% in Whitby and Pickering, respectively. There were no individuals in North Durham that were identified as experiencing unsheltered homelessness. [18] [19]

Pie chart values: 1.9%, 1.9%, 5.6%, 11.1%, 5.6%, 74.1%

■ Pickering ■ Ajax ■ Whitby ■ Oshawa ■ Clarington ■ Scugog ■ Uxbridge ■ Brock

Figure 12 (Data Source: Survey & Tally)

---

[17] ibid

[18] Unsheltered = Vehicle + Respondent Doesn't Know + Public Space + Other Location Unfit for Human Habitation + Makeshift Shelter, Tent or Shack + Abandoned/Vacant Building

[19] Provisionally accommodated = Public System + Transitional Shelter/Housing

Age of First Experience with Homelessness

People can experience homelessness at any age. In Durham, survey participants indicated that they first experienced homelessness between 7 and 65 years of age. However, 29% of individuals first experienced homelessness between the ages of 15-19 and exactly 50% experienced homelessness before the age of 25 (Figure 13). The average age was 30. It appears, then, that a significant portion of those who are experiencing homelessness, first experienced homelessness when they were a youth.

Age of First Experience with Homelessness (n=86)
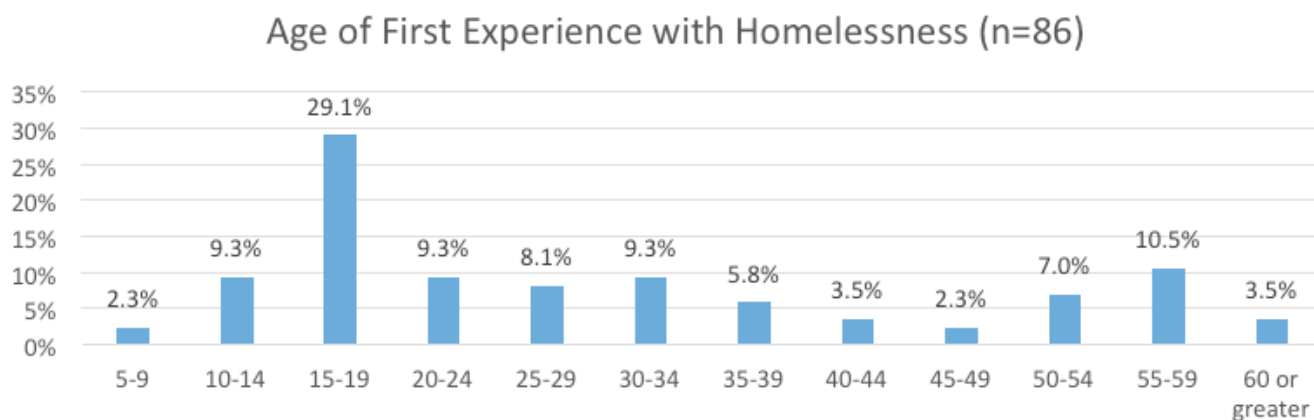
Figure 13 (Data Source: Survey)

A more in-depth look into specific populations appears to reveal differences in the age that people first experienced homelessness (Appendix 4: Table 7). For example, 53% of males first experienced homelessness between 10 and 19 years old, compared to 20% of females. A similar pattern is seen among Indigenous and Non-Indigenous. 55% of Indigenous individuals first experienced homelessness between 10 and 19 years old, in contrast to 24% non-Indigenous.

[8] An "Economic Family" refers to a group of two or more persons who live in the same dwelling and are related to each other by blood, marriage, common-law or adoption

[9] National Household Survey 2011, Statistics Canada

PIT COUNT RESULTS

Length of Homelessness

Individuals can experience homelessness for a short or an extended period of time. 25% of participants indicated that they had experienced homelessness for 30 days or less in the past year. 26% indicated that they had experienced homelessness for between 31-179 days in the past year. 30% of individuals indicated that they had experienced homelessness between 180-365 days. Finally, 19% indicated that they had experienced homelessness for the entire year (12 months). According to the definition of 'chronic homelessness' (i.e. individuals who have spent more than 180 cumulative nights in a shelter or place not fit for human habitation), 48% survey participants can be classified as chronically homeless (Figure 14).

However, the duration of homelessness experienced is not similar among all specific populations. For example, 60% of males were experiencing chronic homelessness, compared to 37% of females. Differences also exist between youth and non-youth. 41% of youth were identified as experiencing chronic homelessness, whereas 51% of non-youth were (Appendix 4: Table 8).

Length of Time Experiencing Homelessness (n=91)

- ■ <1 month (1-30 days)
- ■ 1-5 months (31-179 days)
- ■ 6-12 months (180-365 days)
- ■ 12 months (366 days)
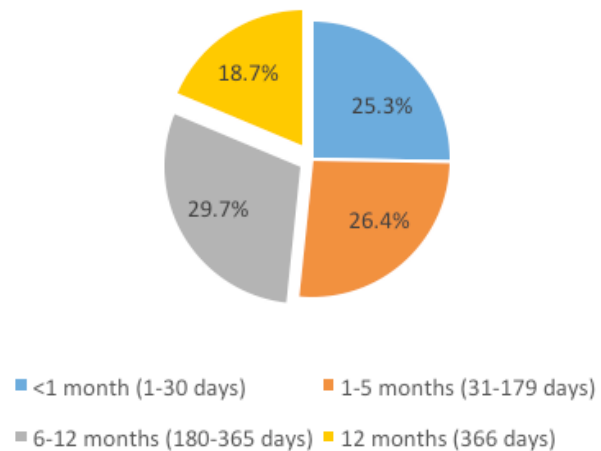
Figure 14 (Data Source: Survey)

Episodes of Homelessness

Certain individuals may experience multiple episodes of homelessness within a relatively short period of time. Of those surveyed, 64% experienced a single episode of homelessness in the past 12 months, while 13% experienced two episodes, and 16.1% experienced three or more episodes. According to the definition of episodic homelessness (i.e. individuals who have experienced three or more episodes of homelessness in the past year adding up to less than 180 days), 7% of individuals can be classified as experiencing episodic homelessness (Figure 15).

It appears that the number of episodes one may experience in a given year is not uniform among all specific populations (Appendix 4: Table 9). For example, 46% of youth experienced one episode of homelessness in the past 12 months, 14% experienced two episodes, and 32% experienced three or more episodes. In contrast, 71% of non-youth experienced one episode of homelessness in the past 12 months, 12% experienced two episodes and 17% experienced three or more episodes. Based on this comparison, it appears that youth were more likely to experience multiple episodes of homelessness in a given year than their non-youth counterparts.

Episodes of Homelessness (n=88)

- ■ 1
- ■ 2
- ■ 3 or greater
- ■ Episodic
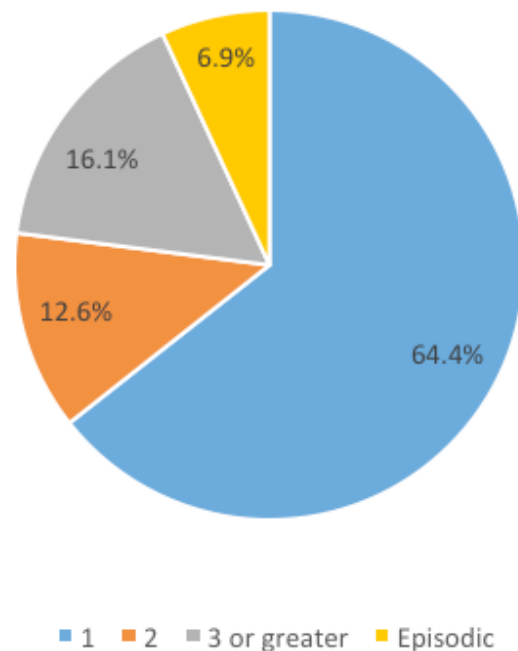
Figure 15 (Data Source: Survey)

PIT COUNT RESULTS

Shelter Use

Emergency shelters (including VAW Shelters) are intended to be used when people find themselves in a crisis where they are unable to access shelter on their own. However, not everyone will access an emergency shelter in times of crisis for any number of reasons. While the majority (87%) of survey participants indicated that they had accessed an emergency shelter in the past 12 months, 13% indicated that they had not. Among the specific populations, it appeared that males (19%) are more likely to not access an emergency shelter compared to females (7%). There also appears to be a difference between youth and non-youth, with 9% of youth and 14% of non-youth not having accessed a shelter in the past 12 months (Appendix 4: Table 10).

Cause of loss of housing

According to the PiT Count data, the cause of homelessness, while multifaceted, can typically be traced backed to one or two major events. Of those who were surveyed, eviction for non-financial reasons (15%) and conflict with a spouse or partner (15%) were the two most cited reasons for becoming homeless, accounting for 30% (Figure 16). However, when specific subpopulations were investigated, different patterns emerged (Appendix 4: Table 11). For example, 19% of males indicated that addiction or substance use was the primary reason they were experiencing homelessness, compared to 7% of females. At 26%, conflict with a spouse or partner was the most cited reason for homelessness among Indigenous participants, whereas 12% of Non-Indigenous participants stated the same.

Cause of Loss of Housing (n=93)

Category	Percentage
Unsafe Housing Conditions	11.8%
Unable to Pay Rent or Mortgage	11.8%
Other (not in list)	16.1%
Job Loss	7.5%
Incarcerated (Jail or Prison)	2.2%
Ilness or Medical Condition	8.6%
Hospitalization or Treatment Program	1.1%
Experienced Abuse: Spouse or Partner	11.8%
Experienced Abuse: Parent or Guardian	2.2%
Evicted: Other Reason (Not Financial)	15.1%
Conflict with: Spouse or Partner	15.1%
Conflict with: Parent or Guardian	12.9%
Addiction or Substance Use	12.9%

Figure 16 (Data Source: Survey) (Note: Participants could give responses)

[15] Caryl Patrick, Aboriginal Homelessness in Canada: A Literature Review, Toronto: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press, 2014

[16] Homelessness Partnering Strategy. 2016. Highlights: 2016 Coordinated Point-in-Time Count of Homelessness in Canadian Communities. Ottawa, ON: Employment and Social Development Canada.

Service Needs

Just as the causes of homelessness can be complex, so too can be the service needs of those experiencing homelessness due to multiple physical or mental health problems. 82% of participants stated that they required access to physical and/or mental health services. Of these participants, the top three service needs were for:

Service Needs for those that stated a need (n=74)

Pregnancy — 8.1%
Brain Injury — 18.9%
Mental Health — 66.2%
Addiction or Substance Use — 47.3%
Learning Disability — 31.1%
Physical Disability — 28.4%
Serious or Ongoing Medical — 45.9%

Figure 17 (Data Source: Survey) (Note: Participants could give responses)

1) mental health issues (66.2%), 2) addiction or substance use (47%), and 3) serious or ongoing medical conditions (46%) (Figure 17). However, after categorizing participants into specific populations, differences in service needs emerged. For example, 87% of males indicated a need for physical and/or mental health services, whereas 76% of females said the same. There are also notable differences in the particular services needed. For example, 65% of Indigenous participants indicated a need for addiction or substance abuse services, in contrast to 41% of Non-Indigenous participants (Appendix 4: Table 12).

Interactions with Public Institutions

It is widely known that those who experience homelessness often are at an increased risk of being criminalized and hospitalized. [20] In Durham, the majority of individuals experiencing homelessness have interacted with the police, been hospitalized, and have used a hospital emergency room in the past year (Figure 18 & Table 5). For example, 43% of those surveyed had been hospitalized between one and four times in the past 12 months and 14% had been hospitalized five or more times during the same timeframe.

Table 5 – Times been to prison, Days Spent in Prison/Jail, and Days Spent Hospitalized

Times been to prison (%)		Days Spent in Prison/Jail (%)		Days Spent Hospitalized (%)	
0	78.4	0	81.2	0	50
1	12.5	1-30	8.2	1	11.6
>1	9.1	>30	10.6	2-7	20.9
				>7	17.4
Total	100	Total	100	Total	100
n	*88*	*n*	*85*	*n*	*86*

As might be expected, interactions with public institutions differed between specific populations (Appendix 4: Tables 13-16). For example, 24% of individuals who were experiencing chronic homelessness reported being hospitalized five or more times in the past 12 months, in comparison to 6% of those who were not experiencing chronic homelessness. 29% of youth had zero interactions with the police in the past year, whereas 41% non-youth indicated zero interactions.

Interactions with Public Institutions

Interaction with Police (n=85): 20.0% / 11.8% / 30.6% / 37.6%
Hospitalized (n=91): 14.3% / 13.2% / 29.7% / 42.9%
Hospital Emergency Room (n=87): 17.2% / 21.8% / 34.5% / 26.4%

Legend: 5 or greater / 3-4 / 1-2 / 0
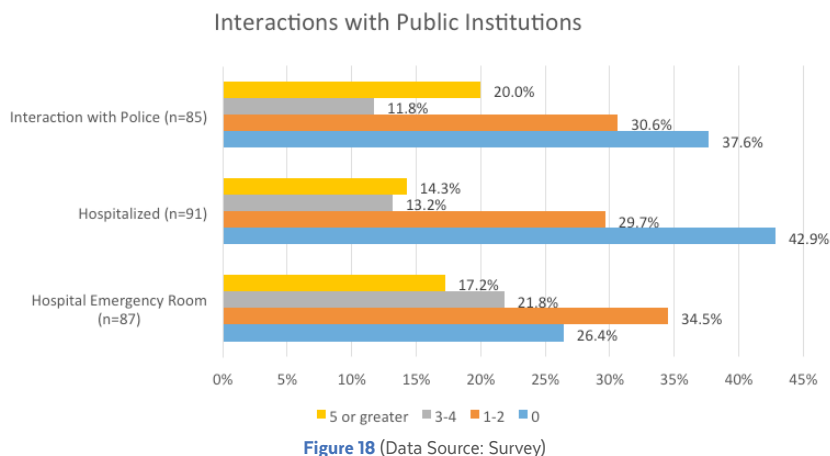
Figure 18 (Data Source: Survey)

[20] Kellen, Amber et al. 2010. Homeless and Jail: Jailed and Homeless. Toronto, ON: John Howard Society. (URL: http://johnhoward.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Amber-Kellen-Homeless-and-Jailed-Jailed-and-Homeless.pdf)

Income Source

There are a number of income sources that people experiencing homelessness rely on for a limited level of subsistence. The most common method participants obtained money was through Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). In total, 83% of participants indicated that they relied on one or both of these programs as a source of income, with 51% receiving support from OW and 32% from ODSP. 7% stated they had no source of income, and 11% stated they obtain money through employment (Figure 19).

A more in-depth look into specific populations appears to reveal differences in income source (Appendix 4: Table 17). For example, 17% of youth indicated that they had no income source, as compared with 3% for non-youth. Another notable difference was that 61% of Indigenous participants stated they relied on Ontario Works for a source of income, which was higher than the 48% among non-Indigenous participants.

Source of Income (n=92)

Source	Percentage
No Income Source	6.5%
Senior Benefits	4.3%
Informal/Self-Employment	4.3%
Employment Insurance	1.1%
Child and Family Tax Benefits	9.8%
Money from Family / Friends	2.2%
Other (not in list)	2.2%
Employment	10.9%
Ontario Works	51.1%
Ontario Disability Support Program	31.5%
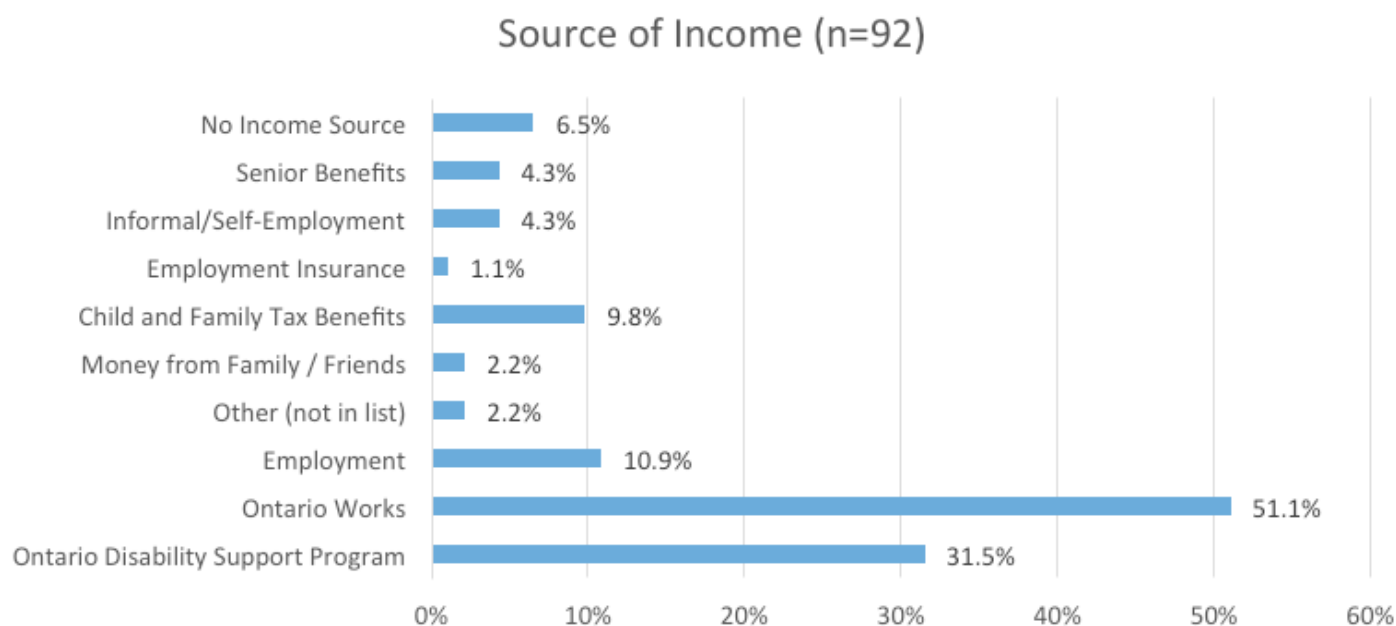
Figure 19 (Data Source: Survey) (Note: Participants could give responses)

Length of Time in Durham

People who are experiencing homelessness move from city to city, similar to homeowners or renters. Survey participants were asked how long they have been in Durham Region for. 27% indicated that they have always been in Durham and 73% indicated that they had moved to Durham from elsewhere. Of the 73%, 17% moved to Durham in the past 180 days, 7% in the past 181-365 days, 11% in the past 1-4 years, and 38% in the past 4 or more years (Figure 20).

The majority of those who moved to Durham indicated they had moved from a city within Ontario, with 32% originating from the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and 32% from a city outside the GTA (Figure 21). In total, 10% of participants indicated that they moved to Durham from a province other than Ontario.

Table 18 (Appendix 4) suggests that there are notable differences between each specific population. For example, 38% of youth indicated they have always resided in Durham, compared to 23% for non-youth. 13% of those who were chronically homeless indicated they had moved to Durham within the past 1-180 days. This is in comparison to 33% of those who were not experiencing chronic homelessness.

Length of Time in Durham (n=84)

27.4% 72.6%
10.7%
7.1%
16.7%
38.1%

Legend: Always been here, 1-180 days, 181-365 days, 1-4 years, > 4 years
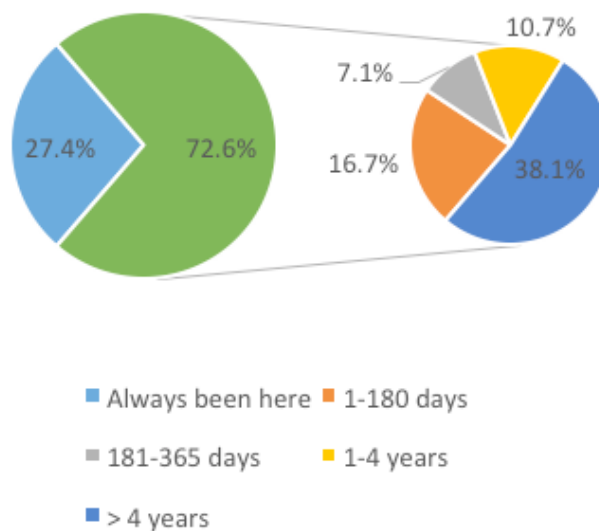
Figure 20 (Data Source: Survey)

Location of residence before migrating to Durham (n=60)

1.7%
3.3%
1.7%
1.7%
26.7%
31.7%
1.7%
31.7%

Legend: Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, GTA, Non-GTA, Quebec, Unknown
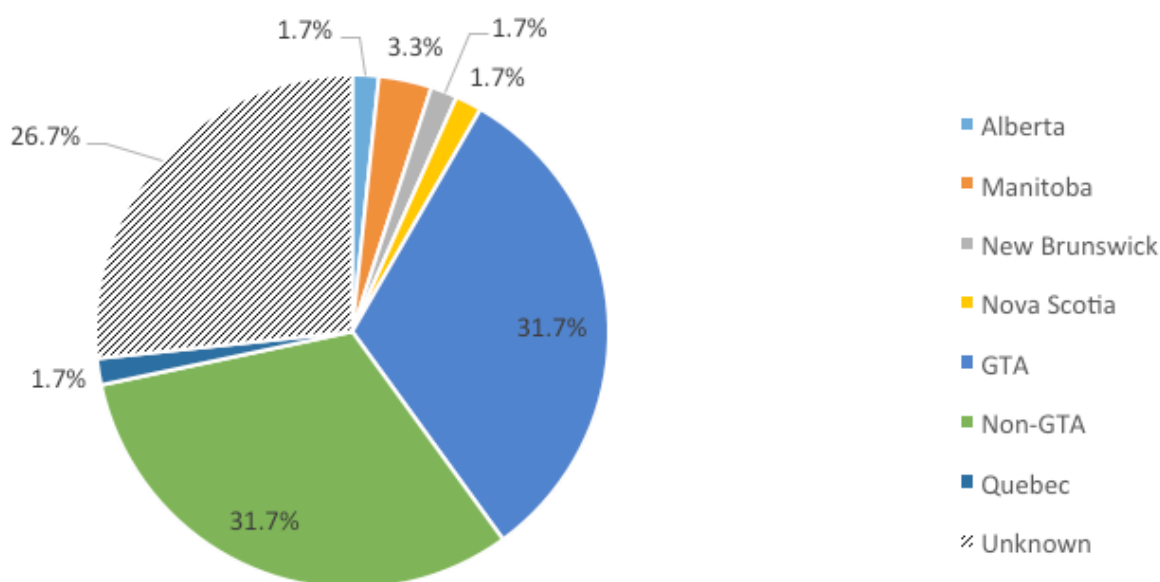
Figure 21 (Data Source: Survey)

Education

31% of participants over the age of 24 indicated that they had completed a post secondary program, in comparison to 36% who had completed high school or the equivalent, but did not attend post-secondary (Figure 22). Further, 19% had not completed high school. This is more than double the high school non completion rate in Durham among those over the age of 24, which was 9% in 2011.

Highest Level of Education Completed for those 25 and Older (n=67)

- Primary School
- Some High School
- High School Grad
- Some Post Secondary
- Post Secondary Grad
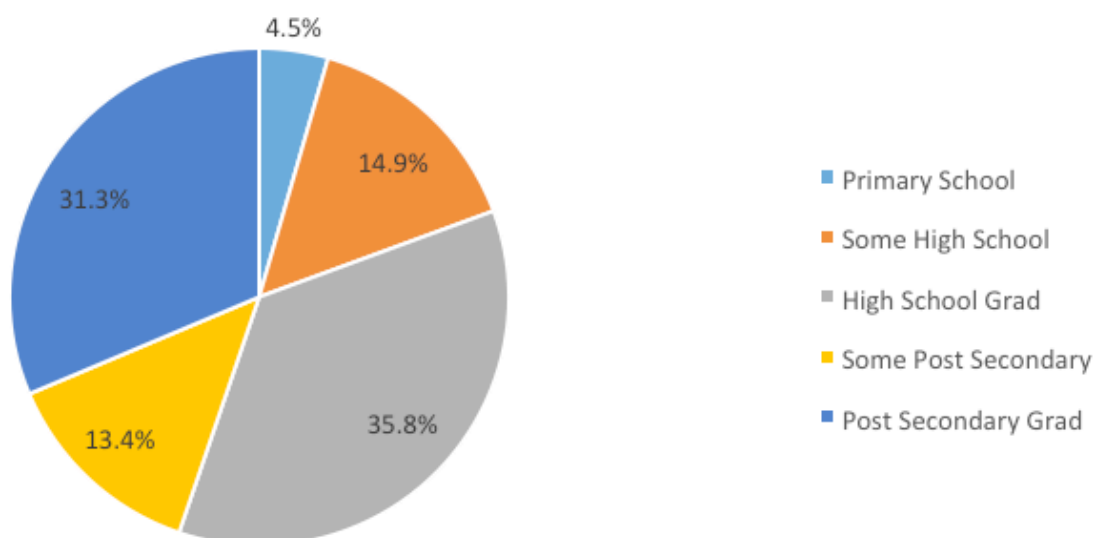
Figure 22 (Data Source: Survey)

Among specific populations, there are clear distinctions in educational attainment. For example, 27% of males who were experiencing homelessness have not completed high school, in comparison to 6% of females. A similar distinction is seen between those who are chronically homeless, where 12% have completed some post secondary education, compared to 52% of those who were not chronically homeless (Appendix 4: Table 19).

Discharge from Provincially-Funded Institution

Studies have cited issues where clients of public institutions, such as hospitals and prisons, are discharged into homelessness due to insufficient planning.[21] 26% of participants indicated that they were experiencing homelessness as a result of being discharged from a provincially funded institution. The top three institutions that participants cited as being discharged from were: Prison/Jail (44%), Crisis Services (22%), and VAW Shelter (13%) and Hospitals (13%) (Figure 23).

Discharge from Provincially-Funded Institution (n=23)

Institution	Percentage
Youth Justice Service	8.7%
VAW Shelter	13.0%
Rehab and Detox Service	8.7%
Prison/Jail	43.5%
Hospital	13.0%
Crisis Services	21.7%
Child Welfare System	8.7%

Figure 23 (Data Source: Survey) (Note: Participants could give responses)

[21] Forchuk, C. et al. 2008. "Developing and testing an intervention to prevent homelessness among individuals discharged from psychiatric wards to shelters and 'No Fixed Address'." Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing 15(7):569-575.

NEXT STEPS

The PiT Count was a considerable undertaking that brought together people from all corners of Durham. It was found that on February 15th, 2017, there were a minimum of 271 people experiencing homelessness in Durham Region. This report is merely one part of a system working to address homelessness, both locally and nationally.

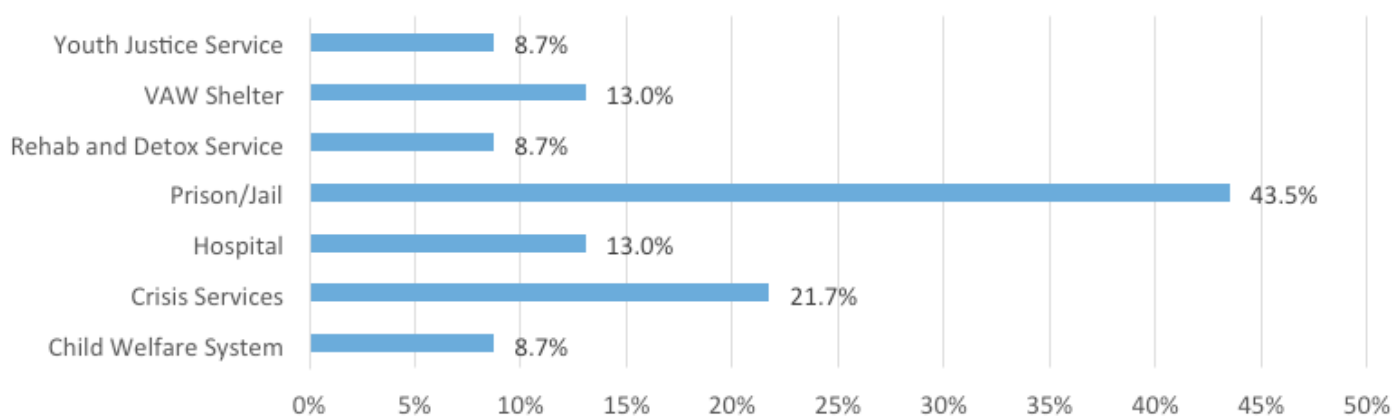In addition to existing data and At Home In Durham, the Durham Housing Plan 2014-2024, the results of this Point-in-Time Count will help to inform decision makers and service providers on the state of homelessness in Durham Region. With this information, funding and policy decisions can be more responsive to the scope and nature of homelessness in our community. However, the information contained in this report is not for the exclusive use of decision makers. Grassroots organizations, non-profits, and other local stakeholders can use this report to advocate for changes that they believe can benefit those experiencing homelessness. Further, the report can begin a larger dialogue about how the new data can specifically be used to address homelessness.

While there are many opportunities for quick-wins, the longer-term impact and value of the PiT Count will take several years to realize. Only after conducting several PiT Counts over as many years will our community be able to determine whether the efforts to address homelessness are working and how we fare compared to other communities across the country. Specifically, we will be able to answer these three questions:

1 Are we seeing reductions in sheltered and unsheltered homelessness year over year?

2 Can these reductions be attributed to specific interventions or policy changes?

3 Is our progress getting our community closer to ending homelessness?

Our community has already accomplished so much, but there is still considerable work to be done. Together, over the course of the next few years, we have the potential to make significant inroads in addressing homelessness across our community.

Appendix 1: List of Agencies that Participated in the Service Count

Agencies
Pickering
Pickering Central Library
Ajax
Ajax Library – Main Branch
Whitby
Whitby Central Library
Salvation Army – Food Bank
Oshawa
Oshawa Library – McLaughlin Branch
Oshawa Library – Jess Hann Branch
The Refuge Youth Outreach Centre
Gate 3:16
Back Door Mission – Lunch Program
Simcoe Settlement Hall – Food Bank
Brian Injury Association of Durham Region
Clarington
Clarington Library – Bowmanville Branch
Salvation Army – Food Bank
Scugog
Scugog Library – Port Perry Branch
Uxbridge
Uxbridge Library – Uxbridge Branch
Loaves and Fishes Food Bank
Brock
Brock Library – Beaverton Branch
Brock Library – Cannington Branch
Brock Community Food Bank – Sunderland
Brock Community Food Bank – Beaverton
Nourish and Develop Foundation – Wednesday Lunch Program (Cannington)
Nourish and Develop Foundation – Bountiful Basket Program (Cannington)

Appendix 2: Data Collection Methods and Variables

Variables	S	E	T
1. Location			
2. Age			
3. Gender			1
4. Family status			
5. Aboriginal status		2	
6. LGBTQ status			
7. Length of time in Durham			
8. Military/RCMP Service			
9. Age of first experience with homelessness			
10. Length of time experiencing homelessness in past year			
11. Number of episodes of homelessness experienced in past year			
12. Stay in shelter in the past year			
13. Cause of loss of housing			
14. Income (money) source			
15. Interaction with the public system			
16. Experience of homelessness as a result of leaving provincially-funded institution			
17. Services need			
18. Highest level of education attained			

S = Survey, **E** = Enumeration, and **T** = Tally

1.   Gender identity is available in Tally data, however it is based on observation. Alternative gender identities were not captured (i.e. 'transgender')
2.   Aboriginal identity is available in Enumeration data, however aboriginal status was identified through this data collection method as those with 'status'. Therefore it is possible that those who are non-status or otherwise identifies as having aboriginal ancestry, but does not have status, would have been missed.

Average Monthly Rent for Apartment Units in Durham, 2006-2016

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Bachelor	$619	$614	$642	$619	$670	$671	$685	$714	$726	$793	$786
1 Bedroom	$758	$770	$793	$789	$806	$822	$843	$872	$885	$904	$978
2 Bedroom	$873	$883	$903	$909	$918	$953	$954	$997	$1,021	$1,042	$1,116
3+ Bedroom	$1,067	$1,045	$1,058	$1,079	$1,088	$1,129	$1,127	$1,189	$1,203	$1,223	$1,265
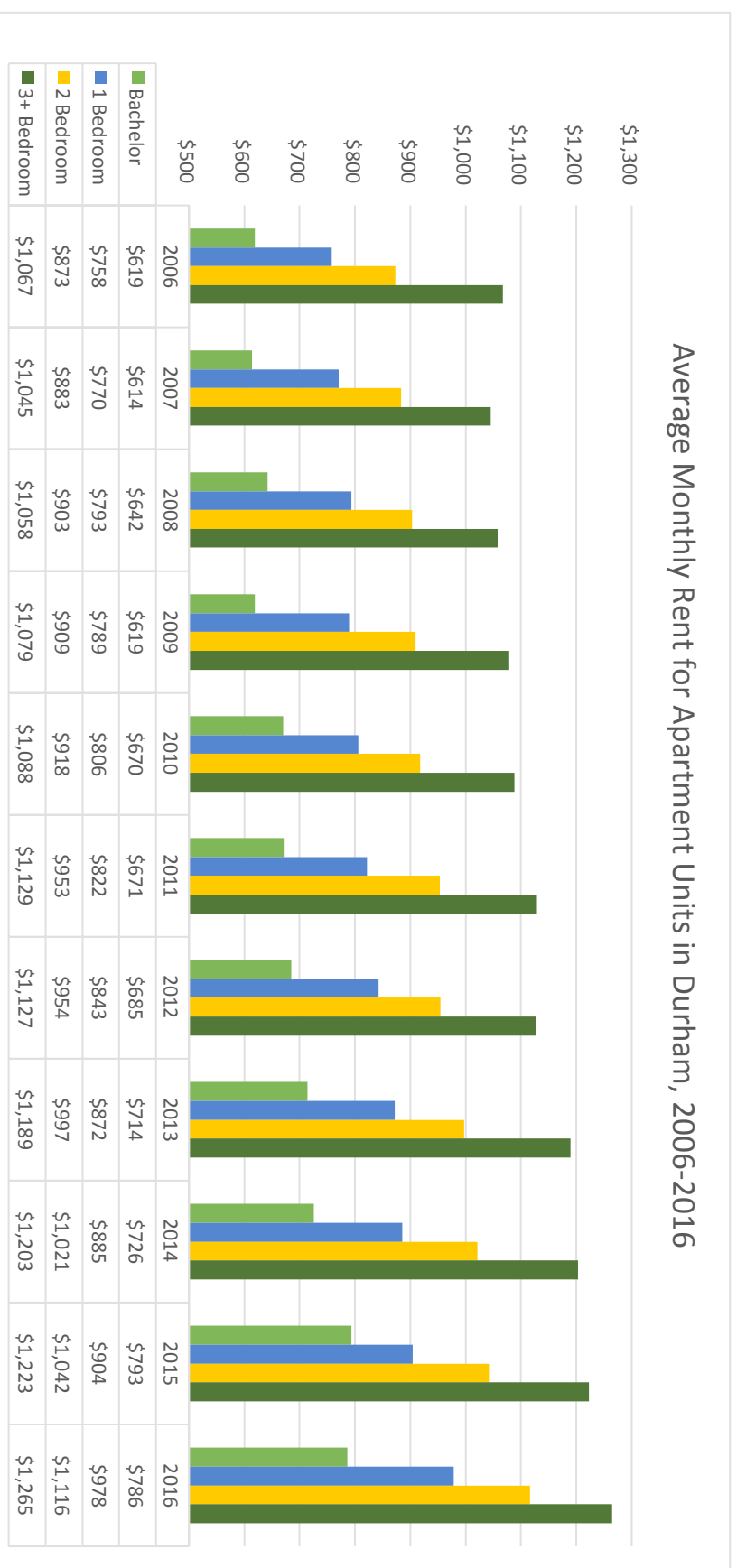
Figure 24 (Source: Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation)

Table 6:Location/Place of Residence: (Non)Youth, (Non)Indigenous, Male/Female, and (Non)Chronic

	Youth (%)	Non-Youth (%)	Indigenous (%)	Non-Indigenous (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Chronic (%)	Non-Chronic (%)
Vehicle (Car, Van, RV, Truck)	0	1.2	2.2	0.5	1.4	0.0	4.5	0.0
Transitional Shelter/Housing	12.8	4.6	6.7	5.1	2.8	6.3	9.1	6.1
Respondent Doesn't Know	0	2.3	4.4	1.0	2.1	0.8	6.8	2.0
Public System	5.1	8.7	0.0	5.6	9.2	3.1	0.0	0.0
Public Space	5.1	10.4	6.7	4.1	13.5	0.8	13.6	10.2
Other Location Unfit for Human Habitation	2.6	12.1	6.7	2.0	11.3	4.7	11.4	4.1
Makeshift Shelter, Tent or Shack	2.6	1.2	2.2	1.0	2.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Emergency Shelter, Domestic Violence Shelter	71.8	57.8	71.1	78.6	55.3	83.6	43.2	75.5
Abandoned/Vacant Building	0	1.7	0.0	2.0	2.1	0.8	4.5	2.0
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
n	39	173	45	196	141	128	44	49

Note: Total may not equal exactly 100% due to rounding

Table 7 – Age of First Experience with Homelessness: (Non)Youth, (Non)Indigenous, Male/Female, and (Non)Chronic

	Youth (%)	Non-Youth (%)	Indigenous (%)	Non-Indigenous (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Chronic (%)	Non-Chronic (%)
0-9	4.3	1.6	0.0	3.1	0.0	5.0	2.4	2.3
10-19	78.3	23.8	54.5	32.8	53.3	20.0	42.9	32.6
20-29	17.4	17.5	13.6	18.8	8.9	27.5	19.0	16.3
30-39	0.0	20.6	13.6	15.6	6.7	25.0	16.7	14.0
40-49	0.0	7.9	9.1	4.7	6.7	5.0	4.8	7.0
50-59	0.0	23.8	4.5	21.9	22.2	12.5	14.3	20.9
60 or greater	0.0	4.8	4.5	3.1	2.2	5.0	0.0	7.0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Mean Age	16.5	25.8	25.8	31.5	29.1	31.4	26.8	33.6
n	23	63	35	64	45	40	42	43

Note: The Youth group is for those between the ages of 16-24 and *not* attached to a parent or guardian. As a result, it is not possible for a youth to have experienced their first episode of homelessness beyond the age of 25. Hence the 30-39, 40-49, etc. categories are all 0%. The Non-Youth group is for those over the ages of 24 or are over the age of 16 and attached with a parent or guardian. As a result, non-youth, as a group, have experienced their first episode of homelessness at any age.

Note: Total may not equal exactly 100% due to rounding

Table 8 - Length of Time Experiencing Homelessness: (Non)Youth, (Non)Indigenous, and Male/Female

	Youth (%)	Non-Youth (%)	Indigenous (%)	Non-Indigenous (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
(1) 1-30 days	27.3	24.6	29.2	23.9	19.1	30.2
(2) 31-179 days	31.8	24.6	25.0	26.9	21.3	32.6
(3) 180-365 days	31.8	29.0	29.2	29.9	38.3	20.9
(4) 366 days	9.1	21.7	16.7	19.4	21.3	16.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Chronic Homelessness (3+4)	40.9	50.7	45.9	49.3	59.6	37.2
n	22	69	24	67	47	43

Note: Total may not equal exactly 100% due to rounding

Table 9 – Episodes of Homelessness: (Non)Youth, (Non)Indigenous, Male/Female, and (Non)Chronic

	Youth (%)	Non-Youth (%)	Indigenous (%)	Non-Indigenous (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Chronic (%)	Non-Chronic (%)
1 Episode	45.5	70.8	60.9	65.6	57.8	70.7	55.8	72.7
2 Episodes	13.6	12.3	8.7	14.1	13.3	12.2	11.6	13.6
3 or more Episodes	31.8	10.8	21.7	14.1	17.8	14.7	32.6	0.0
Episodic Homelessness	9.1	6.2	8.7	6.3	11.1	2.4	0.0	13.6
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
n	22	65	23	64	45	41	43	44

Note: Total may not equal exactly 100% due to rounding

Table 10 – Shelter Use: (Non)Youth, (Non)Indigenous, Male/Female, and (Non)Chronic

	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total	*n*
Youth	91.3	8.7	100	23
Non-Youth	85.7	14.3	100	70
Indigenous	87.5	12.5	100	24
Non-Indigenous	87.0	13.0	100	69
Male	81.3	18.8	100	48
Female	93.0	7.0	100	43
Chronic	86.4	13.6	100	44
Non-Chronic	87.2	12.8	100	49

Note: Total may not equal exactly 100% due to rounding

Table 11 – Cause of loss of housing: (Non)Youth, (Non)Indigenous, Male/Female, (Non)Chronic, and Families/Individuals

	Youth (%)	Non-Youth (%)	Indigenous (%)	Non-Indigenous (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Chronic (%)	Non-Chronic (%)	Families (%)	Individuals (%)
Illness or Medical Condition	4.5	10.0	4.3	10.1	8.3	9.3	11.4	6.3	0.0	9.3
Hospitalization or Treatment Program	0.0	1.4	0.0	1.4	2.1	0.0	2.3	0.0	0.0	1.2
Addiction or Substance Use	9.1	14.3	21.	10.1	18.8	18.2	18.2	8.3	5.9	11.6
Conflict with: Spouse or Partner	13.6	15.7	26.1	11.6	8.3	23.3	9.1	20.8	17.6	9.3
Conflict with: Parent or Guardian	40.9	4.3	4.3	15.9	4.2	20.9	6.8	18.8	5.9	11.6
Experienced Abuse: Spouse or Partner	4.5	14.3	13.0	11.6	0.0	25.6	18.2	6.3	20.6	4.6
Experienced Abuse: Parent or Guardian	0.0	2.9	0.0	2.9	0.0	4.7	0.0	4.2	5.9	0.0
Unsafe Housing Conditions	9.1	12.9	0.0	15.9	14.6	9.3	9.1	14.6	8.8	9.3
Unable to Pay Rent or Mortgage	0.0	15.7	17.4	10.1	10.4	14.0	11.4	12.5	17.6	5.8
Evicted: Other Reason (Not Financial)	9.1	17.1	13.0	15.9	18.8	11.6	20.5	10.4	11.8	11.6
Job Loss	9.1	7.1	0.0	10.1	8.3	7.0	13.6	2.1	2.9	7.0
Incarcerated (Jail or Prison)	0.0	2.9	0.0	2.9	2.1	2.3	4.5	0.0	0.0	2.3
Other (not in list)	18.2	15.7	21.7	14.5	20.8	9.3	15.9	16.7	2.9	16.3
n	22	70	23	69	48	43	44	48	23	69

Note: For this question participants could give multiple response. As a result, the percentages may add up to more than 100%.

Table 12 – Service Needs: (Non)Youth, Non(Indigenous), Male/Female, and (Non)Chronic

	Youth (%)	Non-Youth (%)	Indigenous (%)	Non-Indigenous (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Chronic (%)	Non-Chronic (%)
Yes	**90.9**	**79.4**	**83.3**	**81.8**	**87.0**	**76.2**	**86.0**	**78.7**
Serious or Ongoing Medical Condition	30.0	51.9	65.0	38.9	45.0	46.9	43.2	48.6
Physical Disability	15.0	33.3	35.0	25.9	17.5	40.6	18.9	37.8
Learning Disability	45.0	25.9	55.0	22.2	27.5	31.3	29.7	32.4
Addiction or Substance Use	35.0	51.9	65.0	40.7	60.0	34.4	64.9	29.7
Mental Health	65.0	66.7	65.0	66.7	62.5	71.9	81.1	51.4
Brain Injury	10.0	22.2	20	18.5	20.0	12.5	21.6	16.2
Pregnancy	10.0	7.4	5	9.3	0.0	18.8	8.1	8.1
No	**9.1**	**20.6**	**16.7**	**18.2**	**13.0**	**23.8**	**14.0**	**21.3**
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
n	*22*	*68*	*24*	*66*	*46*	*42*	*43*	*47*

Note: Total may not equal exactly 100% due to rounding. For this question participants could give multiple response for specific service needs. As a result, the percentages may add up to more than 100%.

Table 13 – Interactions with Public Systems: Times been Hospitalized, Times been to Emergency Room, and Times Interacted with the Police

Times been Hospitalized (%)

Times	Y	NY	I	NI	M	F	C	NC
0	36.4	44.9	45.8	41.8	38.3	48.8	40.5	44.9
1-2	31.8	29.0	12.5	35.8	25.5	34.9	23.8	34.7
3-4	18.2	11.6	20.8	10.4	14.9	9.3	11.9	14.3
5 or >	13.6	14.5	20.8	11.9	21.3	7.0	23.8	6.1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
n	22	69	24	67	47	43	42	49

Times been to Emergency Room (%)

Times	Y	NY	I	NI	M	F	C	NC
0	27.3	26.2	27.3	26.2	29.5	23.8	22.5	29.8
1-2	36.4	33.8	22.7	38.5	34.1	35.7	30.0	38.3
3-4	27.3	20.0	31.8	18.5	20.5	21.4	25.0	19.1
5 or >	9.1	20.0	18.2	16.9	15.9	19.0	22.5	12.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
n	22	65	22	65	44	42	40	47

Times Interacted with the Police (%)

Times	Y	NY	I	NI	M	F	C	NC
0	23.8	40.6	35.0	38.5	44.2	31.7	28.2	45.7
1-2	33.3	29.7	35.0	29.2	30.2	31.7	35.9	26.1
3-4	14.3	10.9	15.0	10.8	7.0	14.6	17.9	6.5
5 or >	23.8	18.8	15.0	21.5	18.6	22.0	17.9	21.7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
n	21	64	20	65	43	41	39	46

Legend: Y = Youth; NY = Non-Youth; I = Indigenous; NI = Non-Indigenous; M = Male; F = Female; C = Chronic Homeless; NC = Non-Chronic Homeless
Note: Total may not equal exactly 100% due to rounding

Table 14 - Interactions with Public Systems: Times been to Prison/Jail

Times been to Prison/Jail (%)	Youth	Non-Youth	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Male	Female	Chronic	Non-Chronic
0	73.9	80.0	81.0	77.6	67.4	90.2	70.7	85.1
1	13.0	12.3	9.5	13.4	19.6	4.9	12.2	12.8
>1	13.0	7.7	9.5	9.0	13.0	4.9	17.1	2.1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
n	23	65	21	67	46	41	41	47

Note: Total may not equal exactly 100% due to rounding

Table 15 – Interactions with Public Systems: Days Spent in Prison/Jail

Days Spent in Prison/Jail (%)	Youth	Non-Youth	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Male	Female	Chronic	Non-Chronic
0	77.3	82.5	81.0	80.0	72.1	90.2	76.3	85.1
1-30	9.1	7.9	4.8	9.2	9.3	7.3	5.3	10.6
>30	13.6	9.5	14.3	10.8	18.6	2.4	18.4	4.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
n	22	63	21	65	43	41	38	47

Note: Total may not equal exactly 100% due to rounding

Table 16 - Interaction with Public Systems: Days spent Hospitalized

Days Spent Hospitalized (%)	Youth	Non-Youth	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Male	Female	Chronic	Non-Chronic
0	40.9	53.1	43.5	52.4	48.8	52.4	48.7	51.1
1	13.6	10.9	13.0	11.1	9.3	14.3	5.1	17.0
2-7	27.3	18.8	17.4	22.2	18.6	21.4	23.1	19.1
>7	18.2	17.2	26.1	14.3	23.3	11.9	23.1	12.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
n	22	64	23	63	43	42	39	47

Note: Total may not equal exactly 100% due to rounding

Table 17 - Source of Income: (Non)Youth, (Non)Indigenous, Male/Female, and (Non)Chronic

	Youth (%)	Non-Youth (%)	Indigenous (%)	Non-Indigenous (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Chronic (%)	Non-Chronic (%)
Ontario Disability Support Program	17.4	36.2	30.4	31.9	31.3	30.2	34.9	28.6
Ontario Works	43.5	53.6	60.9	47.8	50.0	53.5	46.5	55.1
Employment	8.7	11.6	8.7	11.6	12.5	9.3	11.6	10.2
Money from Family/Friends	4.3	1.4	4.3	2.9	2.1	2.3	2.3	2.0
Child and Family Tax Benefits	4.3	11.6	17.4	7.2	4.2	16.3	4.7	14.3
Employment Insurance	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0	2.3	2.3	0.0
Informal/Self-Employment	0.0	5.8	4.3	4.3	8.3	0.0	9.3	0.0
Senior Benefits	0.0	5.8	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.7	7.0	2.0
Other (not in list)	8.7	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0	4.7	2.3	2.0
No Income Source	17.4	2.9	4.3	7.2	4.2	7.0	4.7	8.2
n	23	69	23	48	43	43	43	49

Note: For this question participants could give multiple response. As a result, the percentages add up to more than 100%.

Table 18 - Length of time in Durham: (Non)Youth, (Non)Indigenous, Male/Female, and (Non)Chronic

	Youth (%)	Non-Youth (%)	Indigenous (%)	Non-Indigenous (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Chronic (%)	Non-Chronic (%)
Always been here	37.5	23.3	31.8	25.8	23.3	30.8	24.4	30.2
Length of Time	67.5	76.7	68.2	74.2	76.7	69.2	75.6	69.8
1-180 days (0-6 months)	26.7	21.7	20.0	23.9	18.2	29.6	12.9	33.3
181-365 days (6-12 months)	0.0	13.0	0.0	13.0	6.1	14.8	12.9	6.7
366-1460 days (1-4 years)	13.3	19.6	13.3	19.6	21.2	14.8	16.1	20.0
>1460 days (>4 years)	60.0	45.7	66.7	43.5	54.5	40.7	58.1	40.0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
n	24	60	22	62	43	39	41	43

Note: Total may not equal exactly 100% due to rounding

Table 19 – Highest Level of Education Completed for those 25 and older: (Non)Indigenous, Male/Female, and (Non)Chronic

	Indigenous (%)	Non-Indigenous (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Chronic (%)	Non-Chronic (%)
Primary School	0.0	6.3	9.1	0.0	9.1	0.0
Some High School	27.8	8.3	18.2	6.3	21.2	6.1
High School Grad	33.3	37.5	45.5	28.1	36.4	36.4
Some Post Secondary	5.6	16.7	9.1	18.8	21.1	6.1
Post Secondary Grad	33.3	31.3	18.2	46.9	12.1	51.5
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
n	*18*	*48*	*33*	*32*	*33*	*33*

Note: Total may not equal exactly 100% due to rounding

NIGHT UNSHELTERED SURVEY

Hello, my name is _____ and I'm a volunteer for the **Durham housing needs survey**. We are conducting a survey to provide better programs and services to people experiencing homelessness. The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete.

- **Participation is voluntary** and **your name will not be recorded**.

- You can choose to **skip any question** or to **stop the interview at any time**.

- Results will contribute to the understanding of homelessness across Canada, and will help with research to improve services.

A. **Have you answered this survey with a person with this lanyard and ID?**
    [YES: Thank and tally]   **[NO: Go to B]**

B. **Are you willing to participate in the survey?**
    [YES: Go to C]   **[NO: Thank and tally]**

C. **Do you have a permanent residence that you can return to tonight?**

YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	DECLINE TO ANSWER

D. **Where are you staying tonight? [DO NOT READ CATEGORIES]**

a. DECLINE TO ANSWER b. OWN APARTMENT/HOUSE c. SOMEONE ELSE'S PLACE (FRIEND OR FAMILY) d. MOTEL/HOTEL e. HOSPITAL, JAIL, PRISON, REMAND CENTRE f. EMERGENCY SHELTER, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SHELTER g. TRANSITIONAL SHELTER/HOUSING	h. PUBLIC SPACE (E.G., SIDEWALKS, SQUARES, PARKS, FORESTS, BUS SHELTER) i. VEHICLE (CAR, VAN, RV, TRUCK) j. MAKESHIFT SHELTER, TENT OR SHACK k. ABANDONED/VACANT BUILDING l. OTHER UNSHELTERED LOCATION UNFIT FOR HUMAN HABITATION (SPECIFY) [NOTE ON SURVEY] m. RESPONDENT DOESN'T KNOW [LIKELY HOMELESS]
THANK AND TALLY – NOTE RESONSES TO C & D	**BEGIN SURVEY – NOTE RESPONSES TO C & D**

- Thank you for agreeing to take part in the survey. Please note that you will receive **$10 Gift Card** as a thank you for your participation.

NIGHT UNSHELTERED TALLY SHEET

Area: _____ **Time:** _____ **to** _____

Interviewer: _____ **Contact phone #:** _____

Instructions: For those who are *not* **surveyed**, please fill in the sheet below indicating the reason. For those who DECLINE or are OBSERVED only, but who are clearly homeless, please also indicate their gender, approximate age, and the reason you believe they are homeless using the objective criterion (e.g., '2, 3 and 5'). See next page for objective criterion.

#	Location (e.g., building, park, nearest intersection)	Declined*	Already Responded	Screened Out C	Screened Out D	Observed*	Approx. Age	Observed Gender	Indicators of Homelessness
		Reason not Surveyed					***Observed Homelessness**		
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									
11									
12									
13									
14									
15									
16									
17									
18									
19									
20									

Tally Sheet Observed Homelessness - Objective Criterion

#	Points	Observable Markers	Physical Attributes
1	1	**Personal Belongings**	*1 out of 2 (minimum)* 1. Multiple Bags (I.e. Worn out and plain in style) 2. Bedding (I.e. Pillow, Sleeping Bag, or Blanket)
2	1	**Hygiene**	*1 out of 3 (minimum)* 1. Looking unkempt (I.e. unwashed hair, facial hair—unshaven) 2. Hands unclean, nails untrimmed, and cracked 3. Malodorous (strong smell)
3	1	**General Appearance**	*1 out of 2 (minimum)* 1. Weathered appearance (ruddy complexion) 2. Clothing: o Worn out in appearance o Unkempt/makeshift o Too large/small (esp. shoes) o Multiple jackets
4	2	**Asleep Indoors** (I.e. Coffee Shop, Fast Food Restaurant, or Library) **OR** **Asleep Outside** (I.e. Doorway, Car, Makeshift Tent, or Bench)	N/A
5	1	**Uncharacteristic Behaviours for the Location** (I.e. Cooking, Extended Loitering, and Panhandling)	N/A
Minimum of 3 Points OR Minimum of 2 Points + Strong Justification			

Disclaimer: The list of 'Observable Markers' is not exhaustive and it is highly likely that not all persons experiencing homelessness will be identified because the experience of homelessness affects everyone differently. It is important to acknowledge that this list of 'Observable Markers' is simply a list of the common *physical manifestations* of systemic inequities, such as poverty and homelessness. For example, persons who are homeless often cannot afford to purchase new shoes that fit them appropriately and often have to rely on what is available and free. The result being that a person's shoes can provide an indication that they may be experiencing homelessness because the systemic social problem of poverty prevents them from affording anything else. Similarly, those without a home often have little access to showers and cannot afford standard hygiene products that many of us take for granted. This can lead to an appearance of poor hygiene.

Instructions:

❖ Each 'Observable Marker' is weighted by a certain number of 'Points'. For example, 'Personal Belongings' is weighted at 1 'Point' and 'Asleep Indoors/Outdoors' is weighted at 2 'Points'.

❖ For someone to be determined as experiencing unsheltered homelessness based on visual inspection, they would need to meet the threshold of **3 'Points'** OR **2 'Points' with a strong justification**.

❖ To use this criterion first start by assessing the 'Observable Markers' of someone you may suspect is experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

❖ Next, take notice of the 'Physical Attributes' of the 'Observable Markers'. For example, if you notice that someone has personal belongings with them, try to determine whether they have multiple bags or any kind of bedding with them. **(NOTE: BE DISCREET)**

❖ If the person you are observing meets the minimum requirements for the 'Physical Attribute' (i.e. 1 out of 2) for a particular 'Observable Marker' that person receives the assigned point(s). For example, if an individual has personal belongings with them and those personal belongings include bedding, that person receives 1 point. Another example where an individual would receive 1 point is if that person, based on their 'general appearance', is wearing clothing that appears worn out, unkempt or too large/small.

❖ Remember to write the 'Observable Marker' #s on the Tally Sheet for those who are deemed to be experiencing 'observed homelessness'.

NIGHT UNSHELTERED SURVEY   **Survey Number:**

Location: _____   **Time:** _____
_____AM/PM

Interviewer: _____   **Contact #:** _____
_____

NOTE ANSWER FROM SCREENING QUESTION

C. Where are you staying tonight?

h. PUBLIC SPACE (E.G., SIDEWALKS, SQUARES, PARKS, FORESTS, BUS SHELTER)	k. ABANDONED/VACANT BUILDING
i. VEHICLE (CAR, VAN, RV, TRUCK)	l. OTHER UNSHELTERED LOCATION UNFIT FOR HUMAN HABITATION (SPECIFY) _____
j. MAKESHIFT SHELTER, TENT OR SHACK	m. RESPONDENT DOESN'T KNOW [LIKELY HOMELESS]

BEGIN SURVEY

1. What family members are staying with you tonight? [Indicate survey numbers for adults]

☐ NONE   ☐ OTHER ADULT - Survey #: ___ ___ ___ ___
☐ PARTNER - Survey #: ___ ___ ___ ___   ☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER

☐ CHILD(REN)/DEPENDENT(S) [indicate age for child/dependent]

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GENDER										
AGE										

2. How old are you? [OR] What year were you born? [If unsure, ask for best estimate]

○ AGE _____**OR** YEAR BORN _____   ○ DON'T KNOW   ○ DECLINE TO ANSWER

3. Did you come to Canada as an immigrant or refugee?

	If YES: How long have you been in Canada?
○ YES, IMMIGRANT ------------------>	
○ YES, REFUGEE---------------------->	○ LENGTH: _____ DAYS / WEEKS / MONTHS / YEARS OR DATE: _____ DAY / MONTH / YEAR
○ NO	○ DON'T KNOW
○ DON'T KNOW	○ DECLINE TO ANSWER
○ DECLINE TO ANSWER	

4. **Do you identify as Indigenous or do you have Indigenous ancestry? This includes First Nations, Métis, Inuit, with or without status.** (*Note: You may consider including "Aboriginal" or locally-used terminology here, in consultation with your community.*) [If yes, please follow-up to specify.]

o YES -- >	**If YES:**	o FIRST NATIONS
o NO		o INUIT
o DON'T KNOW		o MÉTIS
o DECLINE TO ANSWER		o NON-STATUS / HAVE INDIGENOUS ANCESTRY

5. **Do you identify as part of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Two-Spirited or Queer community?**

o YES	o NO	o DON'T KNOW	o DECLINE TO ANSWER

6. **What gender do you identify with?** [Show list to respondent. Do not read categories unless asked.]

o MALE	o TRANSGENDER	o INTERSEX
o FEMALE	o GENDERQUEER	o OTHER RESPONSE_____
o TRANS WOMAN	o GENDERFLUID	o DON'T KNOW
o TRANS MAN	o ANDROGYNOUS	o DECLINE TO ANSWER
o TWO-SPIRIT	o NON-BINARY	

7. **How long have you been in Durham?**

o LENGTH _____ DAYS / WEEKS / MONTHS / YEARS - >	**Where did you live before you came here?**
o ALWAYS BEEN HERE	o COMMUNITY _____ PROVINCE_____
o DON'T KNOW	OR COUNTRY_____
o DECLINE TO ANSWER	o DECLINE TO ANSWER

8. **Have you ever had any service in the Canadian Military or RCMP?**
[Military includes Canadian Navy, Army, or Air Force]

o YES, MILITARY o YES, RCMP	o NO	o DON'T KNOW	o DECLINE TO ANSWER

For the next questions, "homelessness" means any time when you have been without a secure place to live, including sleeping in shelters, on the streets, or living temporarily with friends or relatives.

9. **How old were you the first time you became homeless?**

o AGE_____	o DON'T KNOW	o DECLINE TO ANSWER

10. **In total, *how much time* have you been homeless over the PAST YEAR?** [Best estimate.]

o LENGTH _____ DAYS / WEEKS / MONTHS	o DON'T KNOW	o DECLINE TO ANSWER

11. In total, *how many different times* have you experienced homelessness over the PAST YEAR? [Best estimate.]

o NUMBER OF TIMES _____ [Includes this time]	o DON'T KNOW	o DECLINE TO ANSWER

12. Have you stayed in a shelter in the past year (12 months)? [Give local examples of homeless shelters (i.e. Cornerstone, Muslim Welfare Centre, Joanne's House, Bethesda House, Herizon House, Y-Wish, or Denise House)]

o YES	o NO	o DON'T KNOW	o DECLINE TO ANSWER

13. What happened that caused you to lose your housing most recently? [Do not read the options. Select all that apply. "Housing" does not include temporary arrangements (e.g., couch surfing) or shelter stays.]

☐ ILLNESS OR MEDICAL CONDITION	☐ CONFLICT WITH: PARENT / GUARDIAN
☐ ADDICTION OR SUBSTANCE USE	☐ CONFLICT WITH: SPOUSE / PARTNER
☐ JOB LOSS	☐ INCARCERATED (JAIL OR PRISON)
☐ UNABLE TO PAY RENT OR MORTGAGE	☐ HOSPITALIZATION OR TREATMENT PROGRAM
☐ EVICTED: OTHER REASON (NOT FINANCIAL)	☐ UNSAFE HOUSING CONDITIONS
☐ EXPERIENCED ABUSE BY: PARENT / GUARDIAN	☐ OTHER REASON _____
☐ EXPERIENCED ABUSE BY: SPOUSE / PARTNER	☐ DON'T KNOW
	☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER

14. Where do you get your money from? [May provide examples. Select all that apply]

☐ EMPLOYMENT	☐ SENIORS BENEFITS (E.G., CPP RETIREMENT
☐ INFORMAL/SELF-EMPLOYMENT (E.G., BOTTLE	BENEFITS, OAS, GIS, OTHER PRIVATE PENSION)
RETURNS, PANHANDLING)	☐ CHILD AND FAMILY TAX BENEFITS
☐ EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE	☐ MONEY FROM FAMILY/FRIENDS
☐ ONTARIO WORKS (WELFARE/SOCIAL ASSISTANCE)	☐ OTHER SOURCE _____
☐ DISABILITY BENEFIT (E.G., ODSP, WSIB, CPP	☐ NO INCOME
DISABILITY, OTHER PRIVATE DISABILITY BENEFITS)	☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER

15. In the past year (12 months), how many: [Ask respondents to give their best estimate]

TIMES YOU HAVE BEEN HOSPITALIZED	# _____
➔ DAYS IN TOTAL YOU HAVE SPENT HOSPITALIZED	_____ *Days*
TIMES HAVE YOU USED EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE	# _____
TIMES HAVE YOU BEEN TO A HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM	# _____
TIMES HAVE YOU HAD INTERACTIONS WITH THE POLICE	# _____
TIMES YOU HAVE BEEN TO PRISON/JAIL	# _____
➔ DAYS IN TOTAL YOU HAVE SPENT IN PRISON/JAIL	_____ *Days*

16. **Are you currently experiencing homelessness as a result of leaving a provincially-funded institution or service such as a hospital, prison/jail, youth justice service, VAW shelter, child welfare system, developmental service (i.e. community living group home), crisis service (i.e. DMHS crisis beds), or rehab and detox service (i.e. Pinewood)?**

o YES ------------------> o NO o DON'T KNOW o DECLINE TO ANSWER	**If YES:** Which institution or service? o HOSPITAL o PRISON/JAIL o YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE o VAW SHELTER o CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM o DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICE o CRISIS SERVICE o REHAB AND DETOX SERVICE

17. **I'm going to read a list of services that you may or may not need. Let me know which of these apply to you. Do you have a need for services related to:** [Read categories. Select all that apply]

☐ SERIOUS OR ONGOING MEDICAL CONDITION	☐ BRAIN INJURY
☐ PHYSICAL DISABILITY	☐ FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER (FASD)
☐ LEARNING DISABILITY	☐ PREGNANCY
☐ ADDITION OR SUBSTANCE USE	☐ NONE OF THE ABOVE
☐ MENTAL ILLNESS	☐ DECLINE TO ANSWER

18. **What is the highest level of education you completed?**

o PRIMARY SCHOOL	o HIGH SCHOOL GRAD	o POST SECONDARY GRAD	o DECLINE TO
o SOME HIGH SCHOOL	o SOME POST SECONDARY	o DON'T KNOW	ANSWER

With the assistance of 150 volunteers, those who were experiencing sheltered or unsheltered homelessness, or were provisionally accommodated in a public institution or transitional shelter, were surveyed, enumerated or tallied. The results of the PiT Count provide a snapshot of the minimum number of people experiencing homelessness in Durham Region. As with all other PiT Counts, the individuals identified should be considered as a minimum count as those who are precariously housed, living in motels, or 'couch-surfing' were not captured.

271 INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

214
NON-DEPENDENTS

57
DEPENDENTS/
CHILDREN

34
FAMILIES
(98 PEOPLE)

HOMELESSNESS BY GENDER

52% Male
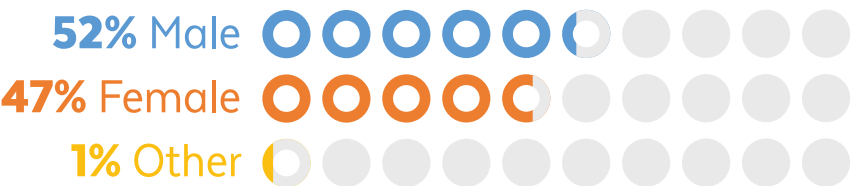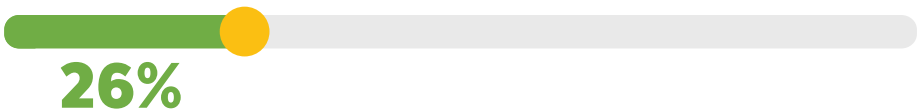
47% Female

1% Other

THIS IS COMPARED TO NATIONAL TRENDS OF 60% MALE, 40% FEMALE, 1% OTHER

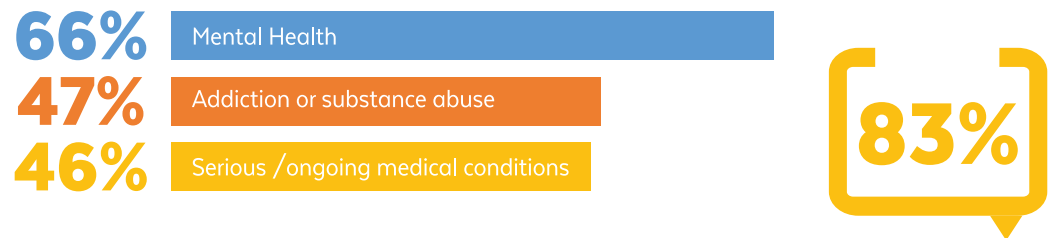**50%** EXPERIENCED HOMELESSNESS BEFORE THE AGE OF 25

INDIGENOUS POPULATION

26%

ONLY 1.5% OF DURHAM REGION RESIDENTS IDENTIFY AS BEING PART OF THE INDIGENOUS POPULATION
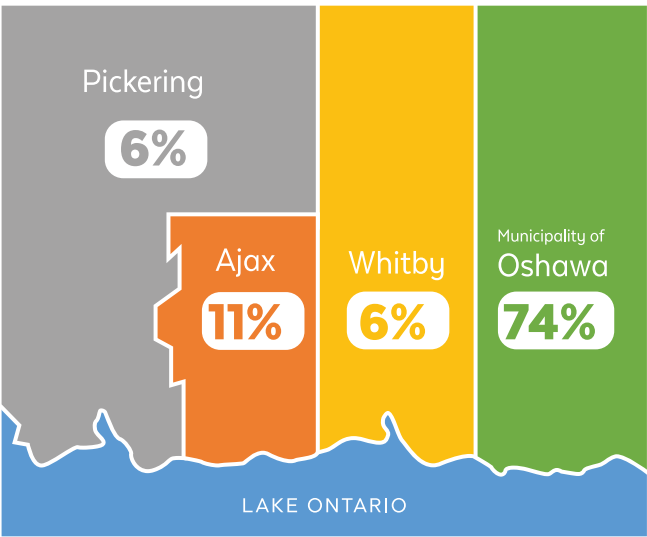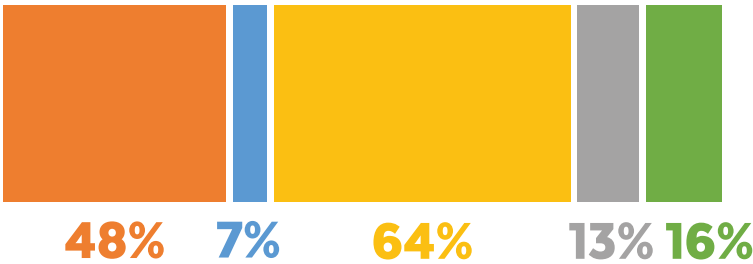
HAVE A SERVICE NEED: 82%

Top 3 services required:

66% Mental Health

47% Addiction or substance abuse

46% Serious /ongoing medical conditions

83%

RECEIVE SOCIAL ASSISTANCE (ONTARIO WORKS [OW], OR ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM [ODSP])

SHELTER BY TYPE

70%
Emergency or Violence Against Women (VAW) shelters

20%
Unsheltered

11%
Provisionally Sheltered

HOMELESSNESS BY LOCATION

Pickering **6%**

Ajax **11%**

Whitby **6%**

Municipality of Oshawa **74%**

LAKE ONTARIO

FREQUENCY OF HOMELESSNESS

48% **7%** **64%** **13%** **16%**

- **Chronically Homeless**
  (>180 DAYS IN THE LAST YEAR)
- **Episodically Homeless**
  (<180 DAYS IN THE LAST YEAR)
- **One episode**
  (IN THE LAST YEAR)
- **Two episodes**
  (IN THE LAST YEAR)
- **Three or more episodes**
  (IN THE LAST YEAR)