



STRATÉGIE DES PARTENARIATS DE LUTTE CONTRE L'ITINÉRANCE

HOMELESSNESS PARTNERING STRATEGY

For the purpose of the CPI Pilot Project, these reports will remain draft and will be adapted in subsequent years.

Community Progress Indicators Report – St. John's

Community Progress Indicator (CPI) Reports were developed to allow communities to better assess the progress of their collective efforts to reduce and prevent homelessness. Using a set of standard indicators, CPI reports will document the overall impact of these efforts over time. The approach was developed in 2011 in consultation with many communities, and provinces and territories, and is being piloted in six communities across the country. The Designated Community of St. John's was selected as one of the pilot communities.

This first CPI Report is a work in progress and is intended to establish a baseline of data for future reports. The CPI Report can be refined as more data becomes available. Given that multiple year data is limited it is difficult to see trends. The current report focuses on 4 key areas identified as representative of a community's progress in addressing homelessness: community **affordability**; community **responsiveness**; community **demonstration of results**; and community **progress**. Following the Pilot stage, subsequent reports will be modified and improved as more data becomes available.

Community Affordability

Indicators in this section provide contextual data on the economic and housing situation in the community. Data for these indicators were drawn from Statistics Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), and internal databases. When viewed as a whole, this data helps to assess the overall risk of homelessness for families and individuals living in that community.

Data Sources

Statistics Canada

Canada Mortgage and
Housing Corporation
(CMHC)

Homeless Individuals and
Families Information
System (HIFIS)

Homelessness Electronic
Reporting Information
Network (HERIN)

Participating St. John's
Shelters

AIDS Committee of
Newfoundland and
Labrador

Choices for Youth

Naomi Centre

Salvation Army Wiseman
Centre

SJNFC Shanawdithit
Shelter

- ↑ increasing
- ↓ decreasing
- ↔ no change

- positive
- negative
- neutral

Indicators	Current	Change (prev. 5 yrs.)	
Median household income (2006)	\$47,588	+13.7%	↑
Population growth ¹ (2006-2011)	5.5%	N/A	
Population mobility (within past year, 2006)	16.0%	+0.2%	↔
Lone parent families (% of households, 2006)	22.0%	+0.1%	↔
Individuals with less than high school (15 and older, 2006)	21.2%	N/A	
Core housing need ² (% of households, 2006)	13.5%	+0.1%	↔
		Change (prev. year)	
Households below the affordability standard ³ (2011)	20.4%	+1.0%	↑
Rental vacancy rates (2011) (minimum 3% is considered healthy)	2.0%	+1.0%	↑
Unemployment rate (2011)	6.6%	-1.1%	↓
Severe housing need ⁴ (% of households, 2010)	5.4%	N/A	

¹ Population in 2006: 100,646. Population in 2011: 106,172

² Core housing need is defined as households whose shelter costs 30% or more of their income, requires major repair, or lacks sufficient rooms (by National Occupancy Standards), and where alternative housing is below the affordability standard.

³ Below affordability standard is defined as households that spend 30% or more of their income on shelter.

⁴ Severe housing need is defined as households in core housing need that spend 50% or more of their income on shelter.

Community Affordability continued...

Many indicators showed positive trends for the City of St. John's. From 2006 to 2011, the population grew by 5.5%, a substantially higher growth rate than for Newfoundland and Labrador as a whole (1.8%). The unemployment rate decreased in St. John's in 2011, dropping to 6.6%, lower than the provincial average of 12.7% and the Canadian average (7.4%). In St. John's, 21.2% of individuals 15 years and older had less than a high school education, which is much lower than the provincial average. Median household income increased by 13.7% since the previous census. During the same period, the percentage of households below the affordability standard, which is defined as households that spend 30% or more of their income on shelter, remained stable at 20.4%. The percentage of households in core housing need also remained stable at 13.5%, while 5.4% of households were in severe housing need (households that spend 50% or more of their income on shelter). In 2011, the rental vacancy rate in St. John's was 2%, which is below the 3% vacancy rate CMHC considers the minimum for a healthy market. Extremely low rental vacancy rates create additional stresses on populations at risk of homelessness.

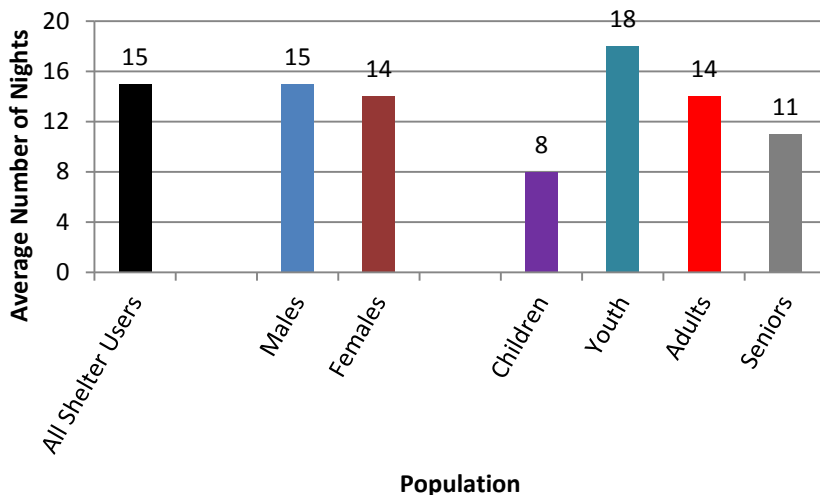
Portrait of Emergency Shelter Use in St. John's

In addition to contextual economic, employment and housing data, the extent to which a community is affordable and thriving may also be measured, in part, by emergency shelter use.

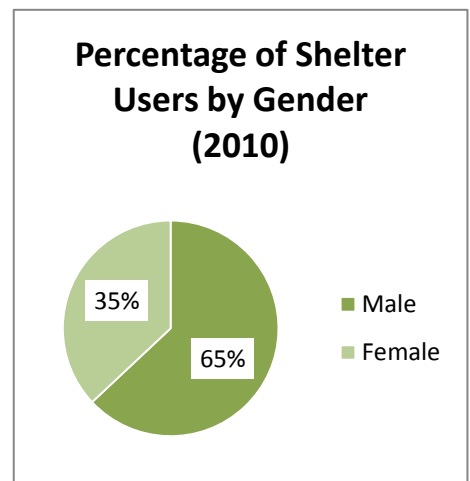
Indicators

Number of unique individuals who accessed emergency shelters in 2010 ⁵	2010 822
Percentage of those unique individuals who accessed family shelters in 2010 ⁶	40.4%
Average length of single stay (number of nights)	15
Percentage of shelter users with more than one shelter stay	23%

Average Length of a Single Shelter Stay (2010)

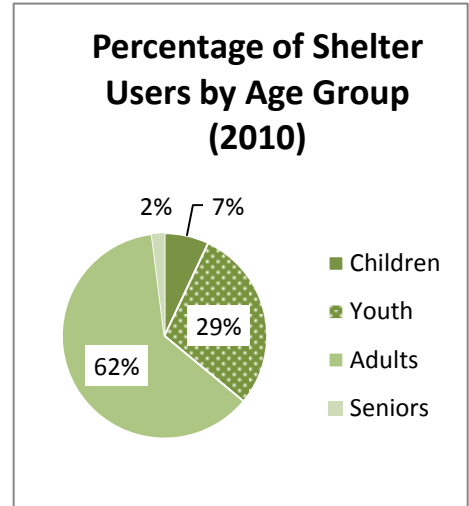
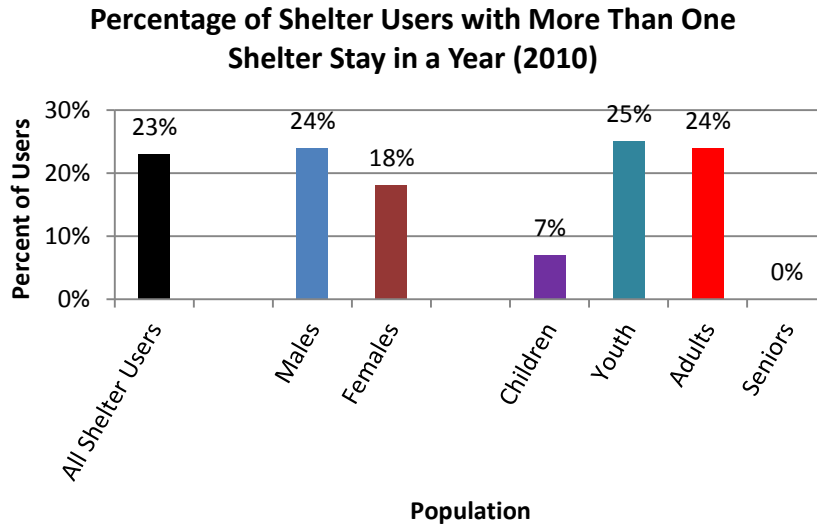


Percentage of Shelter Users by Gender (2010)



⁵ Emergency Shelters are defined as facilities providing temporary and short-term accommodation for homeless individuals and families, which may include essential services such as food, clothing and counseling.

⁶ Family shelters are defined as facilities providing shelter services to families and adults with dependents; however, some may also accept single adult women.



Community Responsiveness

Indicators in this section provide data on the community’s ability to address and respond to homelessness in two ways: through the availability of housing and through examples of community governance or decision-making processes. Data sources include Statistics Canada, CMHC, and internal databases. Governance indicators were assessed through a survey.

Indicators⁷

Number of emergency shelter beds in community ⁸	64	2010
Occupancy Rate in Emergency Shelters ⁹	62%	2010
Number of transitional housing beds in community	10	2010
Number of households on social housing waiting lists	521	2011
Number of HPS community plan priorities addressed by HPS funded projects	4 of 4	2010

Community Governance

All six CPI pilot sites (St. John’s, Halifax, Ottawa, Peterborough, Brandon, and Regina) completed a survey on Community Advisory Board (CAB) governance focusing on representation, accountability, process, and exchange with other CABs. The CAB sets direction in addressing homelessness in the community, encourages partnership building, and aligns efforts to prevent and reduce homelessness throughout the community. It identifies priorities through a planning process, determines which projects should be implemented to address those priorities, and reports back to the larger community on the efforts made and results achieved. The survey was intended as a self-assessment tool for CABs to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

⁷ The HP Secretariat is expanding the number of fields exported by HIFIS software with the launch of HIFIS 3.8. This will include the Reason for Service and Reason for Discharge fields. It is expected that future CPI reports could include these pieces of information.

⁸ Shelter bed counts and shelter occupancy rates are calculated using permanent emergency shelter beds only.

⁹ Occupancy Rate is defined as the average percentage of emergency beds used on any given day during the year.

Community Governance continued...

The St. John's CAB has indicated that it has a number of promising governance practices already in place. For example, guiding principles are in place for funding decision-making, and a separate funding sub-committee with clear roles and structures is in place; proactive engagement and processes for orientation of new members are in place.

The CAB's Chair and Community Development Worker play an important role in serving the CAB, connecting it with the broader community, and leveraging new partnerships and resources towards community priorities, while addressing project sustainability. The CAB has successfully engaged home builders and the municipal and provincial governments, and has been a catalyst in creating a new provincial housing and homelessness network (which has developed CABs across NL), a homelessness data community of practice utilizing HIFIS (Homeless Individuals & Families Information System), and a groundbreaking labour market strategy to provide Newfoundland's supportive housing and homelessness sector with the training and professional development needed to address community priorities.

The CAB's 2011 survey of its 25 members gauged their opinions on the CAB's level of community development across nine key themes. Between 80-100% of members feel the community has integrated goals and objectives, that there is now a broader representation of people, services, and sectors in the CAB's work than a few years ago, and that community leaders addressing homelessness come from a range of sectors that are representative of the population. Furthermore, members believe that the community has improved its coordination of resources to address homelessness, has the capacity to develop strategic solutions, and has successfully ensured local and provincial government policies support efforts to address homelessness.

Policies and procedures are somewhat more informal in comparison to others surveyed; St. John's plans to exchange written policies developed by other CABs for potential adaptation locally. The CAB is developing a new process to meaningfully engage people with lived experience of homelessness, and is introducing annual public meetings beginning in 2012. The CAB is working closely with its new Community Entity, the City of St. John's, to ensure that this new structure strengthens and enhances the CAB's capacity to address homelessness priorities into the future.

Community Demonstration of Results

Indicators in this section provide data on the results demonstrated by the community in preventing and reducing homelessness. Data is specific to HPS-funded projects only, based on outcomes reported by project sponsors through the HRSDC Homelessness Electronic Reporting Information Network (HERIN).

Indicators¹⁰

	2009 - 2011
Number of people placed in longer-term housing	94
Number of people that secured part-time or full-time employment	N/A
Number of people that started an education or job training program	N/A

¹⁰ The Homelessness Electronic Reporting Information Network (HERIN) data covers the fiscal years 2009/2010 to 2010/2011. In some cases, communities may have few or no current HPS-funded projects, yet may be conducting other projects not reflected in this report/section.

The Community Corner

This section highlights each community's response to the Community Report. The goal is to facilitate conversation on the progress indicators for each community by providing qualitative feedback that contextualizes the quantitative data presented. In addition, this space allows the story to be told on the progress of homelessness in each community and elaborate on any other data of importance.

The indicators provided in the section above ('Community is Demonstrating Results') largely reflect the fact that 2009-2010 – a period which saw the extension of the 2007-2008 Community Plan – was primarily a project planning and development phase for local HPS initiatives funded under the 2009-2010 cycle, and saw the completion of projects started during the previous 2007-2008 cycle. It also reflects under-reporting or delayed reporting of results which suggests the need to improve this process. Results of projects initiated under the earlier phase of the Community Plan in 2007-2008, which were completed in 2009-2010 (some of which received additional HPS funding during the 2009-2010 cycle), include the following: the completion of 41 new units of supportive housing for youth and adults with complex needs (Stella Burry Community Services' Brian Martin Housing Resource Centre, and Choices for Youth's Lilly Building); the commencement of construction of 8 new units of supportive housing for women over 30 (Marguerite's Place, opened in 2011 by the St. John's Status of Women Council); the transfer of \$2 million/2 acres in surplus federal lands (SFRPHI) in Pleasantville to the City of St. John's to provide 45 units of new affordable housing (in partnership with NL Housing, Easter Seals NL, and Cabot Habitat for Humanity) and a 5,000 square-foot provincial headquarters and training centre for the supportive housing & homelessness sector (in partnership with the City of St. John's, NL Housing, the NL Housing & Homelessness Network, and the Transition House Association of NL) – this housing and social enterprise initiative is currently under construction and signals the City's re-entry into social housing investment and development, and the growing capacity of the community's supportive housing and homelessness sector.

Through HPS, the CAB invested in planning and supporting a vast array of initiatives such as: the City's new affordable housing action plan (unanimously adopted by Council in 2011); the creation of the City's Affordable Housing Action Coordinator; Choices for Youth's emerging young parents supportive housing initiative (to be developed during 2012-2014); the Community Youth Network's Street Reach outreach service and Streets to Homes consultations; the evolution of the St. John's Housing & Homelessness Network into a provincial network (NLHHN); the completion of phase 2 of a provincial homelessness data coordination project to expand the HIFIS variables collected to 21 from 10, and to forge a sustainable community of practice for homelessness data; the completion of Canada's first provincial labour market strategy for the supportive housing & homelessness services sector; the transformation of Choices for Youth's successful HPS Horizontal Pilot Project (HPP) 'Train for Trades' into a permanent and growing social enterprise which trains and employs homeless youth in construction trades; and the provision of needed renovations and appliances for the Salvation Army's Wiseman Centre and New Hope Community Centre, and the St. John's Native Friendship Centre's Shanawdithit Shelter. Together, these initiatives engaged hundreds of people and dozens of partners in planning meetings and public forums to shape successful project models and proposals, and generate support which leveraged resources towards their implementation.

Community Corner continued...

CAB members providing direct services to homeless individuals and families also engaged new corporate partners and members of the public in supporting and funding initiatives under the Community Plan, such as a now-annual community pancake breakfast to raise funds and awareness for homelessness, in partnership with CBC Radio St. John's. By successfully engaging the Government of NL, the CAB and NLHHN helped secure significant new funding programs in 2009, including the Provincial Homelessness Fund (\$1 million annually through NL Housing for capital investments in services), the Supportive Living Program (\$1.2 million annually – now \$4.8 million annually in 2012 through NL Housing – for direct services and capacity building to support individuals with complex needs), and the NL Green Fund (which provided \$940,000 to maximize energy efficiency and reduce environmental impacts and operating costs for 3 new HPS supportive housing developments). The provincial government has also been a strong supporter in the CAB model across NL by guiding its development and investing in its capacity to meet shared goals.

Over the past year, the most significant changes in homelessness in our community have been the continued growth in rental housing and utility costs, coupled with a low vacancy rate, and the ongoing conversion of modestly-priced private rental housing to condominiums and other uses. These factors, combined with complex social issues in an increasingly affluent St. John's – including poverty, mental illness, addictions, and changing demographics – pose continued challenges for the CAB in its efforts to address the growing scale of homelessness and related risk factors. This is reflected in the City's growing emergency shelter use between 2008 and 2010 (no new shelter capacity has been added since 2006, given the CAB's focus on housing first). The community's biggest assets in overcoming these challenges are its committed, collaborative and knowledgeable leadership across sectors (governments, community, and private sector); its resilient and dynamic community-based sector which has developed innovative responses to homelessness tailored to local needs; and the region's new-found prosperity which – although an economic factor in deepening homelessness – helps drive new resources and public commitment towards addressing the problem.

Community Progress

<i>Indicators</i>	Current (2010)	Change (from 2009)
Change in the number of individuals who accessed emergency shelters annually	822	-14 ↓
Change in the percentage of those individuals who accessed family shelters annually	40.4%	1.4% ↔
Change in the average length of stay in shelters (number of nights)	15	-2 ↓
Change in the percentage of shelter users with more than one shelter stay	23%	-1% ↔
Change in the percentage of shelter users by age group and by gender		
• Male/female	65%/35%	+2%/-2% ↔
• Children	7%	-1% ↔
• Youth	29%	+3% ↑
• Adult	62%	-2% ↔
• Seniors	2%	0% ↔
Change in shelter occupancy rate ¹²	62%	-13% ↓

¹² Shelter bed counts and shelter occupancy rates are calculated using permanent emergency shelter beds only.

Community Progress continued...

In 2010, 822 unique individuals used an emergency shelter in St. John's. This is slightly fewer than in 2009 when 836 individuals used a shelter. The age and gender composition of shelter users changed only slightly from 2009 to 2010. There was a slight increase (about 3 percentage points) in youths aged 16 to 24, who accounted for 29% of shelter users in 2010. The majority of shelter users were adults (62%), while about 7% were children under 16 and 2% were over 65. The percentage of female shelter users decreased very slightly from 37% in 2009 to 35% in 2010. Average stay lengths decreased from 17 nights in 2009 to 15 in 2010. Despite the overall decrease, stay lengths for children and seniors nearly doubled. In 2010, stays by children averaged eight nights, up from four nights in 2009 while stays by seniors averaged 11 nights in 2010, up from six nights from 2009. About 23% of shelter users had more than one stay in 2010, with males more likely to have multiple shelter stays than females. Shorter stay lengths and fewer individuals using shelters led shelter occupancy rates to decrease from 75% in 2009 to 62% in 2010. The number of individuals accessing family shelters remained almost unchanged (326 in 2009 and 332 in 2010).

Conclusion

Over the past decade, the St. John's CAB has developed effective solutions and partnerships to address homelessness through the Homelessness Partnering Strategy. In order to chronicle the CAB's first decade of work, a report titled "Community Impacts of the St. John's Community Advisory Committee on Homelessness: 2000-2012" was completed in 2012. Anyone who is interested in receiving the Impacts Report or learning more about the CAB's work described in this Community Progress Indicators Report, may contact: Bruce Pearce, Community Development, St. John's Community Advisory Committee on Homelessness, (709) 689-9615 or bpearce@nl.rogers.com.