



Waterloo Region 20,000 Homes Campaign Progress Report

About 20K Homes

Organized by the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH), the 20,000 Homes Campaign (20K Homes at www.20khomes.ca) is "a national movement of communities working together to permanently house 20,000 of Canada's most vulnerable people experiencing homelessness by July 1, 2018."

In 2014, Waterloo Region was the first community in Canada to join the campaign and pilot a Registry Week. Through this local event, more than 80 volunteers canvassed the community to identify every person experiencing homelessness by name and their housing needs. The local Registry Week event had an initial goal to use this information to support 40 individuals with the greatest depth of need to find housing as quickly as possible.

For more information about the first Registry Week in Waterloo Region, see the Region's website. Here you will find a video, data snapshot, and full report www.regionofwaterloo.ca/homelessness-to-housing-stability.



Key Achievements: Registry Week 2014 to March 2017

1 By-Name List (BNL)

In June 2015, a process was created to turn the Registry Week list into a By-Name List (BNL). A BNL provides communities with a real-time ("live") list of people experiencing homelessness and information about their housing needs. The list helps to connect the right resources to people who need and want them, as quickly as possible. A BNL also helps to measure progress toward ending homelessness in the community because it counts the number of people who are newly homeless or returning to homelessness ("inflow") and the number who have been housed from the list ("outflow"). The Waterloo Region BNL currently has one of the highest scores across Canada (seven out of 11) as measured by the Community Solutions BNL Scorecard.

2 Coordinated Access (PATHS)

Also in June 2015, coordinated access began. Coordinated access is a shared and consistent way to connect people to the services that best meet their needs. Prioritized Access to Housing Support (PATHS) is the Region's coordinated access process that matches people experiencing homelessness with the right housing support program. PATHS uses the BNL and prioritizes access to support based on a number of things, including depth of need and length of time homeless (chronic homelessness). PATHS is used to fill vacancies in the following housing support programs: Housing Help Plus (mobile, shorter-term housing support), STEP Home (mobile, longer-term housing support), and CHPI Supportive Housing (on-site, longer-term housing support). See the Supportive Housing brochure for more information about these programs and the prioritization process www.regionofwaterloo.ca/supportivehousingbrochure.

3 Housing Results

The first Registry Week had an initial goal to house 40 people over the winter of 2014/15 from the BNL. This goal was exceeded with 50 people housed. Over 2015/16, a further 96 people were housed, and over 2016/17 another 115 people were housed. Since starting the new STEP Home team-based pilot in Cambridge in April 2016, the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness in Cambridge has been reduced by 30 per cent.



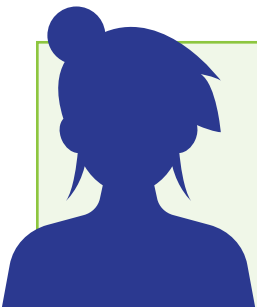
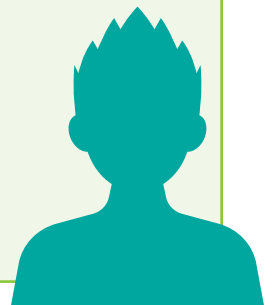
Stories

The following are two stories from the Cambridge STEP Home Team. STEP Home is designed to support people experiencing persistent and chronic homelessness to find and keep housing. For more information on STEP Home, refer to the Supportive Housing Brochure. Please note that real names have not been used.



Sam

Sam is a 20-year-old male. He entered service in Cambridge in the summer of 2016 at age 19 and had been homeless for more than two years prior, while using youth shelter services in Waterloo Region. His substance use had led to family breakdown, and as a result, he was no longer able to reside in his family home which led to his homelessness. Once connected with the service, the Cambridge STEP Home team was able to ensure he had access to income supports as well as necessary documentation needed to secure housing. Staff supported him to create a detailed housing plan, link him with a landlord who had a unit available, and provide him with a rent supplement to make this unit affordable. As a result, Sam was able to move into the unit. Since becoming housed, he has been receiving housing support coordination services to help him stabilize in housing. Additionally, he has been supported to work on improving areas such as life skills and financial literacy, both of which are crucial for Sam in maintaining his housing. He has now successfully been housed for three months without any tenancy issues and has begun his recovery from homelessness. He continues to engage with supports through a harm reduction approach and, as a result, his substance use has declined and he has reconnected with family.



Lindsay

Lindsay is a 32-year-old female. She had been homeless for 10+ years while living on the streets, staying with friends or using emergency shelter services. During this time, she had periods of incarceration and struggled with mental health and addiction issues. She signed up for the STEP Home pilot in the spring of 2016 with the goal of obtaining housing. The STEP Home team worked with her to do a thorough housing search plan and helped her to link with financial resources and necessary documentation to apply for rental units. The team supported her to find an available rental unit, provided a rent supplement, and facilitated the move-in. She has received housing support coordination services and has maintained her housing since August 2016. Since becoming housed, she has been attending substance use treatment services and has been drug free for six weeks, while also maintaining her tenancy. She has also been able to reconnect with informal supports and build a new support network to help along her path of recovery. She looks forward to giving back to the community through volunteer work.



PATHS By-Name List Snapshot

Despite these successes, more work needs to be done. **As of March of 2017**, there was still a total of **243** people on PATHS.



	Total	High Acuity	Chronic	Youth	Aboriginal
	Number of individuals experiencing homelessness on PATHS	Per cent of individuals on PATHS with the highest acuity (13+ on the VI-SPDAT common assessment)	Per cent of individuals on PATHS that have been homeless for six or more months in the past year	Per cent of individuals on PATHS aged 16-24	Per cent of individuals on PATHS who identify as Aboriginal
Mar 2016	125	20%	*no data	19%	6%
Sep 2016	180	47%	94%	13%	8%
Mar 2017	243	52%	93%	22%	7%

Why the big increase from March 2016 to March 2017?

Over the fall of 2016, it became clear that a number of individuals staying in shelter were not captured on the PATHS list. Over the winter of 2016/17, the Region funded an Intensive Shelter Worker in four Emergency Shelters to support a more focused effort with connecting shelter participants to PATHS as part of their housing plan.

Number homeless (2014)

295 Individuals (not including families) were found to be **experiencing homelessness** in Waterloo Region through the first Registry Week.



Why are we not closer to ending chronic homelessness?

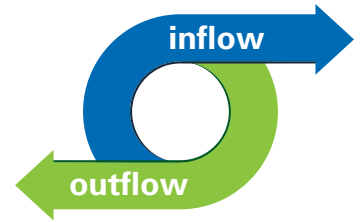
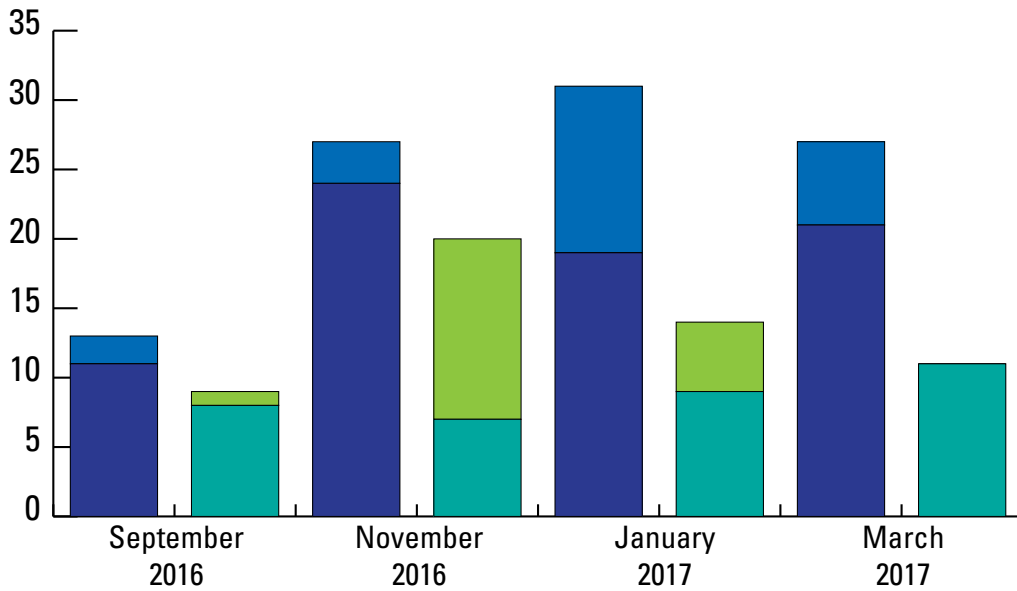
While 261 people were housed from the initial Registry Week list of 295 people, new people have become homeless during this time. A BNL helps the community to understand inflow into homelessness and outflow from homelessness. This information helps focus homelessness prevention and housing efforts in a new way. See the graph on the next page for BNL inflow and outflow snapshot data.

Number housed (2014-2017)

261 People moved to permanent housing.



PATHS Dynamics - Monthly Inflow and Outflow Snapshot

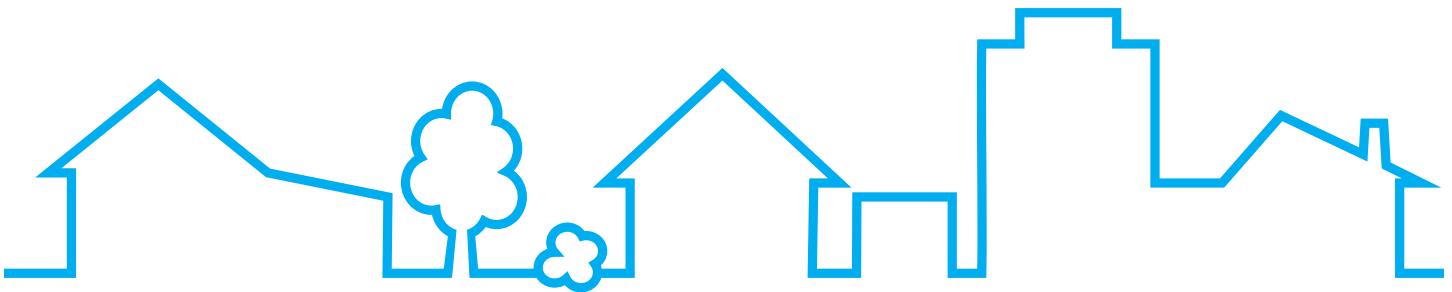


- Newly identified
- Returning
- Permanently housed
- Moved to inactive



Next Steps...

- The Region recently added 60 new Housing Assistance with Supports (HAWs) rent supplements available through PATHS, bringing the total to 100 HAWs. Additionally, HAWs amounts were increased to align with average market rent increases between 2012 and 2016. Recent research has demonstrated how important rent supplements are for housing stability, improving perception of housing quality, and promoting quality of life (Pankratz & Nelson, 2017). This Rent Assitant Report is available at <http://homelesshub.ca/resource/evaluation-rent-assistance-individuals-experiencing-persistent-homelessness-waterloo-region>.
- The Region has applied for further resources from Federal and Provincial Governments through a number of funding opportunities.
- Planning is underway to conduct a joint Point-in-Time (PIT) count and Registry Week in April 2018.



Region of Waterloo
COMMUNITY SERVICES

Contacts

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