



# Results of the 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver Region

A Report of the Greater Vancouver Regional Steering  
Committee on Homelessness

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# Executive Summary

## Background

The Homeless Count is an initiative of the Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (RSCH). This year, at the request of the RSCH, the Homelessness Partnering Strategy Community Entity for the Metro Vancouver region, formerly known as the Metro Vancouver Homelessness Secretariat, provided overall project management to implement the count.

The RSCH has conducted a region-wide count of homeless individuals every three years since 2002. The 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver region took place on the evening of March 11 and the day of March 12, 2014.

## Purpose

The purpose of the Homeless Count is to estimate the number of people who are homeless in the Metro Vancouver region, obtain a demographic profile of this population, and identify trends compared to previous counts.

## Definitions

A person was considered homeless for the purpose of this count if they did not have a place of their own where they could expect to stay for more than 30 days and if they did not pay rent. This included people who:

- Had no physical shelter – who were staying ‘outside’, in alleys, doorways, parkades, parks and vehicles;
- Were staying temporarily in emergency shelters for the homeless, transition houses for women and children fleeing violence, and safe houses for youth;
- Had no fixed address and were staying temporarily in a hospital, jail or detox facility; and
- Were staying temporarily at someone else’s place (couch surfing).

The **sheltered homeless** includes all homeless individuals in the count who were identified as homeless and who stayed overnight in an emergency shelter for the homeless, transition house for women and children fleeing violence, or safe house for youth during the count. It also includes individuals with no fixed address who were staying temporarily in a hospital, jail or detox facility during the count.

The **unsheltered homeless** includes all homeless individuals in the count who completed a street survey and who had no physical shelter (i.e. were staying ‘outside’, in alleys, doorways, parkades, parks and vehicles). It also includes people who were staying temporarily at someone else’s place (couch surfing) and who were found on the street or at a homeless service on the day of the count.<sup>1</sup>

## Methodology

The 2014 Homeless Count followed the same basic methodology and protocols used in previous counts and took place over a 24-hour period to provide a ‘snapshot’ of homelessness in the region during that time. As with previous Homeless Counts, it included both a shelter and street count.

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<sup>1</sup> Only a small percentage of the hidden homeless population is likely to be identified in a homeless count.

## Key Findings

- On the evening of March 11 and the day of March 12, 2014, a total of **2,777** homeless people were counted in the Metro Vancouver region. This included 2,689 adults and unaccompanied youth (under the age of 25) as well as 88 children (under the age of 19) who were accompanied by a parent during the count.<sup>2</sup>
- The number of homeless people identified in Homeless Counts in the region has remained fairly stable since 2008 – increasing by 4% between 2008 and 2014. This is less than the rate of increase for the population of the Metro Vancouver region as a whole, which increased by 9% in the same period.
- A higher proportion of the homeless population was sheltered in 2014 and 2011 compared to 2005 and 2008.
- Men represented about three quarters of the homeless population in 2014 (73%) and women represented about one quarter (27%). However, women tend to be more represented in the hidden homeless population, often doubling up with families and friends or staying in unsafe situations rather than staying on the street or accessing services for the homeless, and are likely undercounted. Nine people identified as transgendered in 2014 and it has been suggested that this is also likely an undercount.
- Adults aged 45 to 54 comprised the largest group among the homeless (25%), followed by adults aged 35 to 44 (20%), and children and youth under the age of 25 (20%). 410 homeless children and youth were counted in the Metro Vancouver region. This included 88 children who were accompanied by a parent.
- 582 homeless people identified as an Aboriginal person during the count, representing about one third of the total homeless population in the Metro Vancouver region. Aboriginal Peoples are over-represented in the region’s homeless population given they represent 2% of Metro Vancouver’s population. The proportion of the homeless population that identifies as an Aboriginal person has remained virtually unchanged at about one third since 2005. The proportion decreased to 27% in 2011 but increased again to 31% in 2014.
- Survey participants were asked, “What do you think is keeping you from finding a place of your own”. Low income (47%) and high rents (42%) were reported as the main barriers. Respondents also identified having no income (21%) as one of the barriers to finding a place.<sup>3</sup> Addiction (27%) was reported as the third main barrier to finding a place, for both the sheltered and unsheltered homeless.
- Respondents were asked to identify their sources of income. The sources of income respondents identified most were income assistance (43%), disability benefit (21%), part-time employment (16%), and binning/bottle collecting (14%). About one in ten homeless individuals reported receiving no income.

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<sup>2</sup>Youth is anyone under the age of 25 who was not accompanied by a parent during the count. Some youth were under the age of 16. ‘Children’ includes anyone under the age of 19 who was accompanied by a parent.

<sup>3</sup> Respondents could select more than one response, so numbers for one response cannot be added to another.

- 35% of respondents reported having one health condition, 45% reported two or more health conditions, and 20% reported no health conditions. Nearly half the respondents reported having an addiction (49%). The next most common health issue was a medical condition (41%), while about one third (34%) of respondents reported a mental illness. A total of 21% of respondents reported a concurrent disorder (i.e. both mental illness and addiction).
- About one fifth of respondents (19%) had been homeless for less than one month and are considered 'newly homeless'. A higher proportion of the sheltered homeless had been homeless for less than a month (23%) compared to the unsheltered homeless (14%).
- 41% of respondents reported being homeless for one year or more and are considered 'long-term homeless'. The unsheltered homeless were more likely to have been homeless for one year or more (45%) compared to the sheltered homeless (37%).
- The homeless population may not be as transient as is commonly believed. Among respondents, 79% reported living in the city where they were interviewed for at least one year, including half of respondents (51%) who reported living there 10 years or more. More than 200 individuals reported that they had lived in the city where they were interviewed their whole lives and many others had moved to the community at a young age. Very few individuals (2%) reported having just moved to the municipality where they were interviewed within a week before the homeless count.
- Homeless Count participants were asked what services they had used in the past 12 months. The top three services used by homeless individuals were meal programs (46%), hospital emergency rooms (42%), and drop-in centres (40%).
- The sheltered homeless were asked how many nights in a row they had stayed at the shelter where they were being surveyed. The majority of respondents had spent less than one month at the shelter. A higher proportion of respondents reported staying in a shelter for up to one month in 2014 (68%) compared to 2011 (55%).
- As part of the unsheltered survey, respondents were asked where they had stayed the previous night. More than half of respondents (56%) had spent the previous night outside or in a vehicle, while 40% stayed at someone else's place.<sup>4</sup> Other locations included 24-hour restaurants, abandoned buildings, or at a location in an exploitive situation (i.e. with a pimp or client).
- Just over half the unsheltered homeless (54%) reported having stayed in a shelter at some point in the last 12 months. This indicates that gathering information on the homeless population using only shelter data would miss a significant proportion of the homeless population who do not use shelters.
- 80% of the homeless population was found in Vancouver and Surrey, with Vancouver having the largest concentration (65%), followed by Surrey (15%). The rest of the homeless people were found across the other municipal sub-regions.
- In most municipal sub-regions: Burnaby, Delta/White Rock, Langley, Ridge Meadows, Richmond and Surrey, at least 50% of the homeless people who moved there within the year were from

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<sup>4</sup> This includes data on nine children who were accompanied by a parent.

another community within the Metro Vancouver region. Most of the homeless people who moved to the Tri-Cities within the year were from a part of BC outside the Metro Vancouver region. In Vancouver and the North Shore, most of the homeless people who moved there were from another part of Canada. In Vancouver, 117 out of 208 respondents (56%) who had lived in the City for less than one year were from another part of Canada.

It is understood that homeless counts underestimate the number of people who are homeless on a given day and the 2014 Homeless Count was no exception. Despite best efforts to include everyone who was homeless during the count, service providers reported that the numbers underestimate the true extent of homelessness in the Metro Vancouver region.

## 1. Introduction

This report presents the results of the 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver region that took place on the evening of March 11 and the day of March 12, 2014. It provides information about people who were identified as homeless during this 24 hour period and compares the results with previous Homeless Counts where possible.<sup>5</sup> Homeless Counts have been conducted in the region every three years since 2002.

Both the *2001 Regional Homelessness Plan for Greater Vancouver* and the 2003 updated plan, *Three Ways to Home*, recommended that a regular Homeless Count be undertaken to obtain current information about the homeless population in the Metro Vancouver region, identify trends, and help monitor implementation of the RSCH Regional Homelessness Plan.

Similar to all the previous Homeless Counts conducted in the Metro Vancouver region, the 2014 Homeless Count measured homelessness at a point-in-time. This approach provides a ‘snapshot’ of homelessness on a given day and tells us about the homeless people who were counted in one 24-hour period. It does not include homeless people who were not identified or interviewed during the count.

It is understood that Homeless Counts underestimate the number of people who are homeless on a given day. Not all homeless people are found during the day and some people who are homeless do not wish to participate. Nevertheless, the 24-hour point-in time count is a widely accepted methodology to learn more about the homeless population and monitor trends.

### 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Homeless Count is to estimate the number of people who are homeless in the Metro Vancouver region, obtain a demographic profile of this population, and identify trends compared to previous counts.

Since 2002, service providers, planners, community groups, health authorities, municipalities and funders have relied on the regional Homeless Counts to assist in policy development, planning, and prioritizing programs and services to address the needs of people who are homeless.

### 1.2 Definitions

A person was considered homeless for the purpose of this count if they did not have a place of their own where they could expect to stay for more than 30 days and if they did not pay rent. This included people who:

- Had no physical shelter – who were staying ‘outside’, in alleys, doorways, parkades, parks and vehicles;
- Were staying temporarily in emergency shelters for the homeless, transition houses for women and children fleeing violence, and safe houses for youth;
- Had no fixed address and were staying temporarily in a hospital, jail or detox facility; and
- Were staying temporarily at someone else’s place (couch surfing).

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<sup>5</sup> Changes have been made to the homeless count survey over the years – some questions have been modified and some have been added. Therefore, some responses to the 2014 survey cannot be compared with previous Homeless Counts.

The **sheltered homeless** includes all homeless individuals in the count who were identified as homeless and who stayed overnight in an emergency shelter for the homeless, transition house for women and children fleeing violence, or safe house for youth during the count. It also includes individuals with no fixed address who were staying temporarily in a hospital, jail or detox facility during the count.

The **unsheltered homeless** includes all homeless individuals in the count who completed a street survey and who had no physical shelter (i.e. were staying 'outside', in alleys, doorways, parkades, parks and vehicles). It also includes people who were staying temporarily at someone else's place (couch surfing) and who were found on the street or at a homeless service on the day of the count.<sup>6</sup>

### 1.3 Geographic Scope

The Homeless Count was conducted in the following communities in the Metro Vancouver region:

- Burnaby
- Delta
- Langley (City and Township)
- New Westminster
- North Shore (City and District of North Vancouver and West Vancouver)
- Richmond
- Ridge Meadows (Maple Ridge and Pit Meadows)
- Surrey
- Tri-Cities (Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam and Port Moody)
- Vancouver (City and Pacific Spirit Regional Park)
- White Rock

The Homeless Count was not conducted on First Nations reserves.

### 1.4 Annual Estimate of Homelessness and the Homelessness Continuum

Point-in-time homeless counts estimate the number of sheltered and unsheltered people who are homeless during a 24-hour period. This is not the same as estimating the number of people who move in and out of homelessness throughout the course of a **year**. Many more people experience homelessness in a year than can be counted on any given day. Over the course of a year, some people will become homeless for the first time, some will exit homelessness, and others will cycle in and out of homelessness.

In the U.S., the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) developed a formula to estimate the number of people who are likely to experience homelessness over the course of a year based on the point-in-time homeless count.<sup>7</sup> This approach has been used by several communities in the U.S. and has been approved by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as a method for calculating the annual estimate of homeless individuals based on a point-in-time count. In Vancouver, the Streethome Foundation used a modified version of the CSH approach in 2009 to develop targets for its 10-Year Community Homelessness Plan. Based on the formula used by Streethome, while the 2014 Homeless Count identified 2,777 homeless individuals in the Metro Vancouver region on the evening of

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<sup>6</sup> Only a small percentage of the hidden homeless population is likely to be identified in a homeless count.

<sup>7</sup> Burt, Martha and Carol Wilkins. 2005. *Estimating the Need: Projecting from Point-in-Time to Annual Estimates of the Number of Homeless People in a Community and Using this Information to Plan for Permanent Supportive Housing*. Washington, DC: Corporation for Supportive Housing.

March 11 and the day of March 12, 2014, it is estimated that about 5,900 individuals in the region are likely to experience homelessness over the course of a year. The calculation is shown in Appendix A.

It should also be noted that the Homeless Count includes only one segment of the homeless population that is sometimes referred to as the ‘visible’ homeless. This population is shown above the waterline in Figure 1, using the example of an iceberg.<sup>8</sup> As can be seen, the visible homeless are just the tip of the iceberg – only a small part of the population in the homeless continuum that includes the hidden homeless and population at risk of homelessness.

The hidden homeless includes people who do not have a regular address of their own where they have security of tenure and who are staying temporarily in another household – often called “couch surfing”. The Homeless Count includes people who are couch surfing only if they are found during the count and complete a survey – which is only a very small proportion of the total hidden homeless population in the Metro Vancouver region. For example, a total of 381 individuals in the 2014 count were identified as couch surfing. However, a 2009 pilot study in the Metro Vancouver region estimated that about 9,000 individuals were hidden homeless at the time of the survey and about 23,500 persons had been hidden homeless in the previous year.<sup>9</sup>

Based on 2006 census data, about 56,000 Metro Vancouver households are in core housing need<sup>10</sup> and spending at least 50% of their income on shelter and are considered to be at risk of homelessness.<sup>11</sup>

**Figure 1: Precarious Housing Iceberg Paradigm**



<sup>8</sup> Adapted from the Wellesley Institute’s Precarious Housing Iceberg. Wellesley Institute. 2010. *Precarious Housing in Canada*.

<sup>9</sup> Margaret Eberle et al. 2009. *Results of the pilot study to estimate the size of the hidden homeless population in Metro Vancouver*. Note: the margin of error is 7,650 at the 95% confidence level, which means that 95 times out of 100, the interval from 1,545 persons to 16,846 persons includes the actual number of hidden homeless individuals in Metro Vancouver.

<sup>10</sup> A household is said to be in core housing need if its housing falls below at least one of the adequacy, affordability or suitability, standards and it would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable (meets all three [housing standards](http://cmhc.beyond2020.com/HiCOCDefinitions_EN.html)).

<sup>11</sup> Metro Vancouver. 2014. *Regional Affordable Housing Strategy Update – Discussion Paper March 2014*. Note: Core housing need figures for 2011 are not yet available.

## 1.5 Report Organization

This report is organized as follows:

- Section 2 describes the methodology to implement the Homeless Count, including community feedback, and limitations of the count.
- Section 3 provides an overview of the total number of people enumerated in the 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver region.
- Section 4 provides a profile of the homeless population in the Metro Vancouver region.
- Section 5 provides an overview of services used by the sheltered and unsheltered homeless population.
- Section 6 describes homelessness among sub-populations, including women, Aboriginal Peoples, youth, seniors, and the long-term homeless.
- Section 7 presents the Homeless Count results by municipal sub-regions within the Metro Vancouver region.
- Section 8 provides conclusions and recommendations for consideration in planning the next Homeless Count in 2017. It also suggests questions for further research.



## 2. Methodology and Implementation

This section describes the methodology for the Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver region. It also provides an overview of the project management approach and implementation team, community feedback, the response rate, and limitations of the Homeless Count.

### 2.1 Point-In-Time Approach

The 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver region followed the same basic methodology and protocols used in previous counts in the region. It took place over a 24-hour period to provide a 'snapshot' of homelessness in the region during that time and included both a shelter and street count as described below. To be consistent with previous years, the count was conducted mid-March.

#### *Shelter Count*

The shelter count took place on the evening of Tuesday, March 11, 2014. This part of the count involved obtaining information about individuals staying overnight in emergency shelters for people who are homeless, transition houses for women and children fleeing abuse, youth safe houses, detox facilities, hospitals and jails.

Volunteer interviewers were assigned to emergency shelters unless a shelter wanted their own staff to conduct the interviews. Transition houses, youth safe houses, and detox facilities preferred to have staff conduct the interviews themselves.

To ensure that the count was as accurate as possible, each emergency shelter, transition house for women and children fleeing abuse, youth safe house and detox facility was asked to complete a Shelter Statistics form to record the total number of people who stayed overnight (March 11) and the number of people turned away. Not all clients in the shelters agreed to, or were available to be surveyed, however, because of the Shelter Statistics form, information about the total number of people staying in a shelter facility was available. Hospitals and jails in the Metro Vancouver region were asked to provide information about the age and gender of each individual with No Fixed Address (NFA) who stayed in their facility on the night of March 11. Some facilities were able to provide data about Aboriginal identity.

A complete list of shelter and NFA locations is included in Appendix B and C.

Section 2.6 includes a discussion of the shelter response rate.

#### *Street Count*

The street count began early in the morning on Wednesday, March 12, 2014 and was implemented throughout the day and evening. It included a count and brief surveys with homeless people who were found that day and who were homeless according to the definition used by the count, based on a set of screening questions.

The street count focused on finding people in public areas or locations where people who are homeless were likely to be found, including certain streets, alleys, parks, bottle depots, and places where services and programs were available, such as meal programs and drop-in centres. These locations had been identified by community agencies, outreach workers and municipal staff prior to the count. Volunteer interviewers, working in teams of two, were assigned to specific locations and given maps and/or

instructions to look for people who were homeless and to conduct a survey. Most volunteer shifts ranged from about 2 to 3 hours.

As part of the street survey, respondents were asked where they had stayed the previous night. The purpose was to determine if the individual 'screened in' (i.e. met the definition of homeless being used for the count) and qualified for the rest of the survey. Individuals who reported staying in a shelter, safe house, transition house, detox, or hospital were screened out because they would have been included as part of the shelter count. People who stayed at someone else's place were considered homeless and 'screened in'.<sup>12</sup>

If a volunteer approached someone on the street who they thought might be homeless and the person declined to be interviewed, volunteers recorded this information on a survey form, including the perceived age, gender, reason not interviewed and location. These individuals were *not* included in the total count number because they could have been in a shelter the night before, may have been interviewed by another volunteer, or may not have been homeless. A total of 311 individuals were observed but not interviewed in the 2014 Homeless Count.

### *Survey Design and Administration*

Two survey instruments were used for the Homeless Count: a street survey and shelter survey. They are similar and can be reviewed in Appendix D and E.

A few new questions were asked for the first time in a Metro Vancouver Homeless Count and these are discussed in the report. Where questions were changed from previous counts, this is also noted in the report.

All volunteers were required to attend a 2-hour training session to learn how to conduct the survey, how to approach people who are homeless, and how to stay safe during the Homeless Count. Volunteers were instructed to pick up their count package 15 minutes before their shift from the Local Area Station. Packages included one button for each volunteer, a clipboard, plastic cover, at least 10 surveys, detailed instructions for completing the survey (which were reviewed during a training session), a blank copy of the waiver volunteers signed at the training session, general information about the count, a pen, instructions about their route and/or a map, as well as some candies and cigarettes – to be used as ice-breakers and thank yous.<sup>13</sup> People approached by volunteers were offered cigarettes prior to being asked to participate in a survey, rather than after completing a survey, to ensure nobody had an incentive to complete an interview more than once. Volunteers with the youth strategy were provided with bus tickets to offer to youth instead of cigarettes.

Volunteers were instructed to wear their buttons at all times during their shift – so they could be identified with the count. Similar to Homeless Counts in previous years, other than 2011, volunteers were advised to try and wake up a homeless person who was sleeping so the person would have the opportunity to be included in the count. Volunteers were also instructed to stop an interview immediately if they were approached by the media and to protect the privacy of the person they were interviewing.

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<sup>12</sup> Youth under the age of 25 who were living at home with a parent were not considered homeless, whereas an adult 'couch surfing' at their parent's home was considered homeless. This was based on the assumption that youth were more likely to be able to live at home with their parents than adults.

<sup>13</sup> At most shelters outside Vancouver and for the full street count, volunteers worked in teams of two.

## 2.2 Volunteer Interviewers

There were 915 volunteers who participated in the Homeless Count. This included 114 volunteers who were part of the youth strategy and some professional outreach staff who were able to participate in the count as part of their employment. Volunteers were able to register online, using Volunteer Squared software, where data is retained on a Canadian server. Appendix F shows the number of volunteers for each municipal sub-region for the 2008, 2011 and 2014 Homeless Counts.<sup>14</sup>

## 2.3 Project Management and Implementation Team

The Homeless Count is an initiative of the Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (RSCH). This year, at the request of the RSCH, the Homelessness Partnering Strategy Community Entity for the Metro Vancouver region, formerly known as the Metro Vancouver Homelessness Secretariat, provided overall project management to implement the count instead of engaging an external consulting agency as had been done in previous counts.

As in previous years, Infocus Consulting served as the Aboriginal Coordinator and coordinated the count of Aboriginal people who were homeless in partnership with the Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee (AHSC) and Aboriginal service agencies.

The Homeless Count is a complex undertaking that requires several key players. The project team is described below.

- a. Homelessness Partnering Strategy Community Entity (HPS CE). The HPS CE was responsible for project management, ensuring the count was carried out as planned and according to budget, analyzing the survey results and preparing the preliminary and final reports (April 2013 to July 2014). It was also responsible for obtaining data from the hospitals and police on homeless persons with no fixed address who stayed in these facilities during the count. In addition, the HPS CE retained part-time support for the period September 1, 2013 – March 31, 2014 to assist with administrative aspects of the Homeless Count.
- b. Count Advisor. A Count Advisor provided advice on the count methodology, survey, implementation issues, communications, data entry, data cleaning, analysis, and the preliminary and final reports.
- c. CHTs/communities. The nine Community Homelessness Tables (CHTs) played an important role in assisting the HPS CE and project team to recruit volunteers and identify locations for the count. They also provided feedback on the survey and final report. The City of Vancouver assumed these functions for the Homeless Count in Vancouver. Homeless-serving agencies and outreach teams throughout the region also contributed their expertise and knowledge to support the Homeless Count.
- d. Area Coordinators. The HPS CE engaged ten Area Coordinators for the nine communities to help recruit volunteer interviewers, identify locations for the street surveys, assign volunteers to the locations and specific shifts for Count Day, participate in the volunteer training sessions, set up Area Stations on Count Day, and return all surveys to the HPS CE after the count. Each community had one Area Coordinator except Surrey, which had two coordinators. Two CHT volunteers, one in Surrey and another in Burnaby were actively involved in supporting their Area

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<sup>14</sup> 954 people completed an on-line registration form for the count. Some of them, however, were unable to participate because they could not attend a training session.

Coordinators. In Vancouver, one staff person was assigned to oversee the count in the City with support from four Area Coordinators.

- e. Shelter Coordinators. Two Shelter Coordinators were responsible for coordinating the Homeless Count in the emergency shelters, transition houses for women and children fleeing violence, youth safe houses, and detox facilities. One Shelter Coordinator was responsible for Vancouver and the other was responsible for the other communities in the Metro Vancouver region. They worked to ensure that all shelter facilities participated in the count, provided the facilities with all the information, surveys and supplies needed for the count, assigned volunteer interviewers to their locations (if appropriate), participated in the training sessions, facilitated the participation of shelter staff in training, and ensured that all surveys and required forms were returned to the HPS CE after the count.<sup>15</sup>
- f. Youth Coordinator. The 2014 Homeless Count built on the youth strategy pioneered in 2011 to address undercount issues for youth who are homeless. A Youth Coordinator was engaged to implement this strategy and a Youth Steering Committee was created to identify ways to encourage youth to 'count themselves in'. Close to 40 agencies that work with youth participated in this year's count. They took an 'outreach' approach to identify youth on the street and hosted events within their organizations to encourage youth to participate in the count.
- g. Aboriginal Coordinator. As recommended by the AHSC, Infocus Consulting was engaged to work with Aboriginal service providers in Vancouver and Surrey to identify locations where Aboriginal people who are homeless were likely to be found and to recruit Aboriginal volunteers to administer the survey with Aboriginal people. They also worked with an Aboriginal service provider to provide a training session for Aboriginal volunteers in Vancouver.
- h. RSCH. The RSCH Constituency Table was responsible for approving the draft Terms of Reference, the methodology and preliminary and final reports on the results of the Homeless Count.

## 2.4 Training

The HPS CE worked with the Area and Shelter Coordinators to organize 16 training sessions for the volunteers registered for the count. This included a designated training session for volunteers with the Aboriginal Strategy in Vancouver. In addition, the Youth Coordinator provided on-site training to many groups around the region, the Surrey coordinators organized a special session for City staff, and the Tri-Cities coordinator held an additional session for volunteers who signed up after the initial training session in that community. These additional sessions worked well and made it possible for more agencies and volunteers to participate in the count. A number of suggestions were made by coordinators to improve the training process in future counts:

- Consider training alternatives for professional staff who work with people who are homeless, e.g. online training and more local/small group sessions.
- Finalize the training schedule before registration starts so volunteers can registration for a training session when they sign up.
- Hold training sessions as close to the count as possible.

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<sup>15</sup> Some facilities wanted volunteers to conduct surveys while others preferred to have their own staff conduct the interviews.

## 2.5 Community Feedback

Community feedback on the Homeless Count was obtained from the volunteer interviewers, the count coordinators, the Youth Steering Committee and AHSC. This feedback is summarized below. A separate report with more detailed comments and recommendations will be available for consideration in planning the next Homeless Count.

### *Volunteers*

After the count, volunteers were asked to complete a brief survey to provide feedback on their experience. Of those who responded, 89% of volunteers reported that they “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the training session they attended prepared them for the count, 97% “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that they understood their role in the count, 86% “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that they were able to adequately cover their assigned routes during the count, and 92% “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that they felt safe during their shifts. What they liked most was meeting and talking to people who were homeless and hearing their stories. What they liked least was not finding people to interview during their shifts.

### *Area, Shelter and Youth Coordinators*

Area, Shelter and Youth Strategy Coordinators met on April 11, 2014 to discuss their experience with the count. The coordinators expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the process to implement the 2014 Homeless Count. However, most of the coordinators expressed great dissatisfaction with the results of the count – that the numbers do not reflect the true extent of homelessness in the region. A number of concerns were identified and are included as limitations in Section 2.7. The coordinators recommended more research and consultation to find alternatives to the count and to improve the methodology to achieve a more accurate estimate of the number of people who are homeless in the region.

Count coordinators were asked to complete a brief survey to provide feedback on their experience with the count. All the respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that they received enough information from the HPS CE to understand what they were expected to do to implement the count and all the respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that they received prompt answers to their questions from the HPS CE to implement the count. As well, 92% of respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that they received adequate support from the HPS CE for the training sessions. Three quarters of the respondents (76%) “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the amount of time available to prepare for the count was adequate, while one quarter (24%) disagreed. An important issue to be addressed in planning for future counts is that more than two-thirds of respondents (69%) “disagreed” or “strongly disagreed” that the number of hours estimated for their position was adequate to implement the count.

### *Youth Strategy*

The Youth Steering Committee (YSC) met on April 11, 2014 to provide feedback on the Youth Strategy. Participants agreed that the YSC had contributed to the success of the count by developing the overall strategy, getting the message out for youth to ‘count themselves in’ and suggesting bus tickets as an ice-breaker for survey participants. There was consensus that the posters and cards developed through the Youth Strategy were very well received by everyone involved in the count. YSC members also reported that information-sharing with youth agencies was much better compared to previous counts, which gave agencies more time to prepare for the count and enabled more staff to participate.

YSC members also agreed that having both an outreach focus - where youth outreach workers went out on count day to conduct interviews with youth – as well as a ‘hub’ focus that involved activities and on-site volunteers to conduct interviews with the youth had worked well. It also worked well for agencies to build on regular activities that were already taking place during the count – rather than creating new events to attract youth who wouldn’t otherwise be planning to come to the agency during the count. Providing food to young people that they enjoyed was also seen to be an effective way to encourage participation. Concerns were expressed, however, that the count did not reflect the actual number of youth who are homeless and that new approaches should be considered for reaching youth, including on-line surveys, conducting interviews over the phone, and providing for youth to fill out their own survey. It was also suggested that more time is needed to plan and implement the youth strategy.<sup>16</sup>

### *Aboriginal Strategy*

The results of the Homeless Count were discussed with members of the AHSC at their meeting on June 19, 2014. Concern was expressed that the Homeless Count was an undercount of the Aboriginal homeless population. Agencies reported that many Aboriginal people will not identify as an Aboriginal person for fear of discrimination, and that elders, in particular, are least likely to identify. It was also noted that Aboriginal agencies were not able to know if their clients had been counted and a suggestion was made that count participants be offered a card or some other way for agencies to be able to identify if a person had been interviewed. It was also suggested that count organizers work more closely with Aboriginal organizations for input on locations where Aboriginal people who are homeless are most likely to be found and the times when they are most likely to be at these locations.

## **2.6 Survey Response Rate**

### *Sheltered Homeless*

The shelter response rate for the 2014 Homeless Count was 59%. A total of 1,741 adults and unaccompanied youth were counted in a shelter facility, including an emergency shelter, transition house for women and children fleeing abuse, youth safe house and NFA facility (hospital, jail, or detox facility). A total of 1,022 individuals were surveyed. This included 922 adults and unaccompanied youth who were interviewed in an emergency shelter, transition house for women and children fleeing abuse, youth safe house and detox facility and 100 individuals with NFA who were in a hospital or jail.<sup>17</sup>

This response rate of 59% was an improvement compared to the 2011 Homeless Count when 51% of the sheltered homeless (934 out of 1,824) were surveyed. However, it is less than the response rate in 2008 when 84% of the sheltered homeless (849 out of 1,006) were surveyed.

It has been suggested that finding ways to improve the response rate for the sheltered homeless should be a priority in planning for the next Homeless Count.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>The Youth Coordinator was engaged the first week in January and the first meeting of the YSC was January 17, 2014.

<sup>17</sup> Children who were accompanied by a parent were not interviewed. Data for the 100 individuals with NFA were provided by the hospitals and jails.

<sup>18</sup> Offering to place volunteers in each of the emergency shelters was an attempt to improve the response rate. However, more work is needed to address this issue.

## *Unsheltered Homeless*

It is not possible to provide a response rate for the unsheltered homeless because the total population is not known.

Volunteers initiated a survey with 1,581 individuals who were 'screened out' (see Section 2.1). A respondent was screened out if they reported that they had already answered a survey, currently had a place to stay that they paid rent for, or had stayed in a shelter, safe house, transition house, detox or hospital (in which case they would have been included in the shelter count). These individuals are not included in the count.

Volunteers approached 311 individuals who refused to be interviewed and these individuals are not included in the count (see Section 2.1).

## **2.7 Limitations**

As noted previously in this report, homeless counts are inherently undercounts and the 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver region was no exception. Despite best efforts to include everyone who was homeless during the count, it is understood that some people who are homeless will be missed and some do not wish to participate. A number of service providers have expressed concern that the numbers underestimate the true extent of homelessness and are not consistent with community perceptions based on the number of people seeking services.

A number of factors, discussed below, have been identified that may have affected the results of the 2014 Homeless Count. Some of them apply to homeless counts in general while others are specific to the 2014 Homeless Count.

- Many people who are homeless do not want to be counted and prefer to remain hidden.
- People who are homeless may be tired of being surveyed and may not be willing to be surveyed since they have participated in several counts and have not benefitted.
- Agencies in suburban communities have said it is particularly difficult to find people who are homeless in low density neighbourhoods, large parks, and forest areas. It was suggested that these communities may need more volunteers or that volunteers/outreach staff should be able to work a longer shift. It was suggested that finding a person who is homeless can be like finding a needle in a haystack, and that interviewers could miss a person who is only a block away.
- Service providers have expressed concern that the Homeless Count numbers underestimate the number of youth who are homeless - or who need services to end and prevent homelessness. Members of the Youth Steering Committee pointed out that homeless youth are not the same as homeless adults - they are much less visible. In addition, homelessness for youth can take many forms: living in unsafe situations, couch surfing – staying temporarily with friends, as well as being out on the streets. It was also observed that many young people don't consider themselves homeless or don't want to admit they are homeless.

A concern was also expressed that the Homeless Count does not include people in mental health or addiction treatment programs. It was suggested that because the majority of these individuals have no secure housing when they leave the program, they should be counted as homeless.<sup>19</sup>

A number of other factors were identified that could have affected the results of the 2014 Homeless Count – although it is difficult to determine the exact impact. These are discussed below.

### **The Weather**

The weather during the 2014 Homeless Count was particularly sunny and warm – during the evening on March 11 and all day on March 12. Service providers suggested that the great weather may have affected the survey response rate for the shelters because many people stayed out as late as possible, and many of the volunteers had left by the time the guests arrived. Shelter staff completed surveys with many guests after the volunteers had left, but they were unable to complete surveys with everyone. However, if an individual did stay in a shelter, regardless of the time they arrived, this would have been recorded on the Shelter Statistics form. It was also suggested that the nice weather may have resulted in more people sleeping outside, where they may not have been found during the count, instead of using a shelter. However, most of the shelters were fully occupied.

Agency members on the Youth Steering Committee reported that many of the young people normally served by youth agencies did not seek services on the day of the count. They suggested that this may have been due to the great weather during the count.

### **Neighbourhood Issues**

Agencies reported that movies were being filmed in Fort Langley and at a park in Maple Ridge, which could have displaced some people who were homeless. As well, a community in Surrey had a greater police presence than usual (due to a previous crime in the neighbourhood), which could have displaced some people who were homeless and resulted in finding fewer homeless people than expected.

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<sup>19</sup> People in the treatment programs are not included in the count because they may remain in the program for more than 30 days – which does not meet the definition of homeless used for the count. The count does, however, include people with no fixed address who are in a detox facility.



### 3. Number of Homeless Persons in the Metro Vancouver Region

This section provides an overview of the total number of people enumerated in the 2014 Homeless Count in the Metro Vancouver region. It also includes data from previous years, where available, to identify trends.<sup>20</sup>

#### 3.1 Total Homeless Population Included in the Count

On the evening of March 11 and the day of March 12, 2014, a total of 2,777 homeless people were counted in the Metro Vancouver region. This included 2,689 adults and unaccompanied youth (under the age of 25) as well as 88 children (under the age of 19) who were accompanied by a parent during the count.<sup>21</sup>

Two thirds of the homeless population (66%) was sheltered (1,820 individuals). This included 1,504 people staying in an emergency shelter or youth safe house, 116 people in transition houses for women and children fleeing violence, and 200 people with no fixed address who were staying temporarily in a hospital, jail or detox facility on the night of March 11, 2014.<sup>22</sup>

One third of the homeless population (34%) was unsheltered (957 individuals). This included people living outside<sup>23</sup> or staying temporarily with others (couch surfing) and using homelessness services on March 12, 2014.

**Table 1: Total Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless Population, 2014**

Homeless Category	Adults and Unaccompanied Youth		Accompanied Children		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Sheltered Homeless	1,741	65%	79	90%	1,820	66%
Shelters/Safe Houses	1,465	54%	39	44%	1,504	54%
Transition Houses	76	3%	40	45%	116	4%
No Fixed Address	200	7%	0	0%	200	7%
Unsheltered Homeless	948	35%	9	10%	957	34%
<b>Total Homeless</b>	<b>2,689</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,777</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Survey data and Shelter Statistics forms provided by shelter facilities to the Homeless Count team.

#### Trends

The number of homeless people identified in Homeless Counts in the region has remained fairly stable since 2008 – increasing by 4% between 2008 and 2014. This is less than the rate of increase for the population of the Metro Vancouver region as a whole, which increased by 9% from 2008 to 2014.<sup>24</sup> Another trend is that a higher proportion of the homeless population was sheltered in 2014 and 2011

<sup>20</sup> Some data from the 2011 is inconsistent with previous trends and may be less reliable than 2008 data for the purpose of identifying trends and making comparisons.

<sup>21</sup> Youth is anyone under the age of 25 who was not accompanied by a parent during the count. Some youth were under the age of 16. 'Children' includes anyone under the age of 19 who was accompanied by a parent.

<sup>22</sup> Among those with no fixed address, 100 were in a detox facility, 93 were in a hospital, and 7 were in jail.

<sup>23</sup> People living outside reported staying on the street, in a park, skytrain, garage or shed.

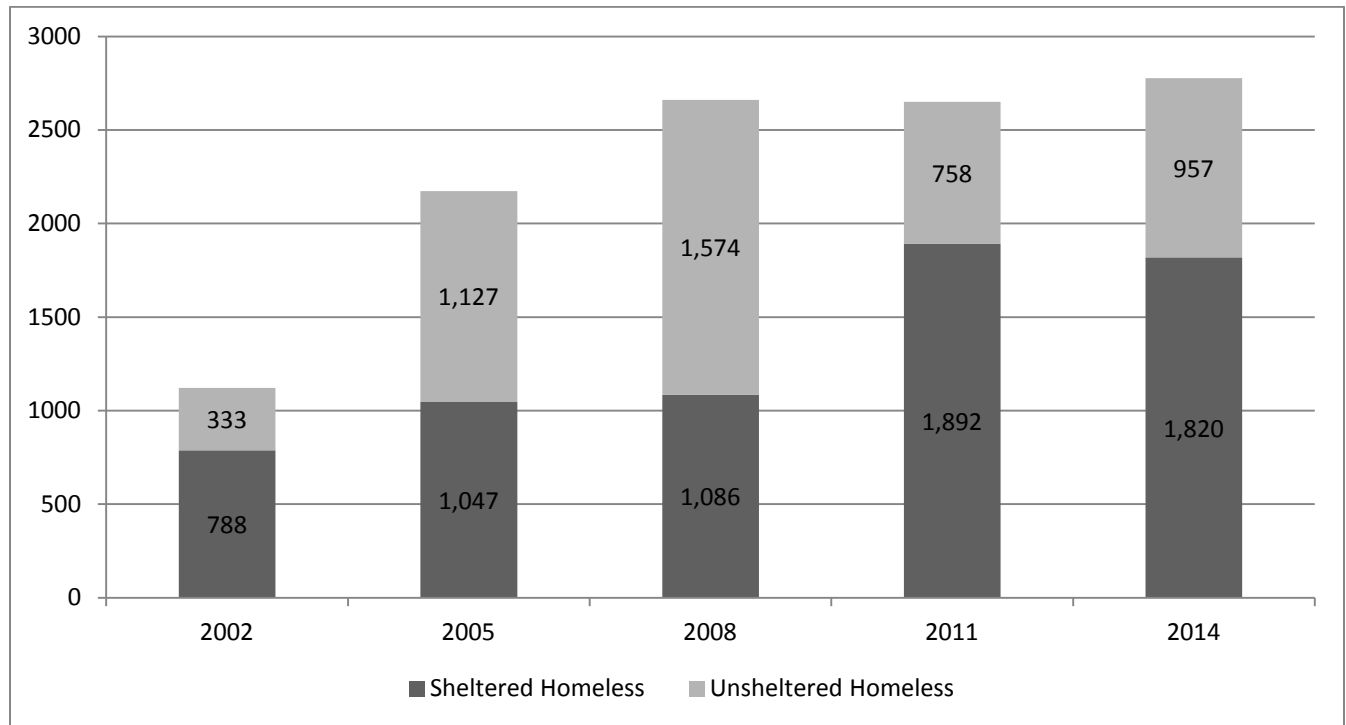
<sup>24</sup> Metro Vancouver Regional Planning Division. 2014. Metro Vancouver's population was 2,259,000 in 2008 and is estimated to be 2,468,000 in 2014.

compared to 2005 and 2008, as illustrated in Figure 2.<sup>25</sup> However, the proportion of the sheltered homeless declined from 71% in 2011 to 66% in 2014.

**Table 2: Total Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless (2002 to 2014) - Trends**

Number of Homeless	2002	2005	2008	2011	2014	Change 2011 to 2014	
	#	#	#	#	#	#	% Change
Sheltered Homeless	788	1,047	1,086	1,892	1,820	-72	-4%
Unsheltered Homeless	333	1,127	1,574	758	957	199	26%
<b>Total Homeless</b>	<b>1,121</b>	<b>2,174</b>	<b>2,660</b>	<b>2,650</b>	<b>2,777</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>5%</b>

**Figure 2: Proportion of Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless (2002 to 2014)**



<sup>25</sup>The increase in numbers from 2002 and 2005 could, to some extent, be a function of an improved count methodology, including more volunteers.

### 3.2 People Turned away from Emergency Shelters

Emergency shelters, safe houses and transition houses were asked to report on how many people were turned away on the evening of March 11, 2014. They reported 317 turnaways, including adults, youth and children.<sup>26</sup> Most of the turnaways were from shelters and safe houses (88%). The main reason for turnaways was because the facility was full. In some cases, however, an individual seeking assistance was not appropriate for the facility.<sup>27</sup> Some of the turnaways may have been counted on the street on March 12 and included in the street count as part of the unsheltered homeless or they may have found accommodation in another shelter. In addition, the same individual may have been turned away from more than one shelter. Therefore, the number of turnaways is not added to the total of 2,777 homeless people who were counted.

**Table 3: Turnaways from Emergency Shelters, Safe Houses, and Transition Houses, 2014**

Shelter Category	Total Adults, Youth and Children	
	#	%
Shelters/Safe Houses	278	88%
Transition Houses	39	12%
<b>Total Turnaways</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Shelter Statistics forms provided by shelter facilities to the Homeless Count team.

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<sup>26</sup> The number of turnaways refers to the number of *instances* when a person was turned away and is not the same as the number of unique individuals turned away. For example, two shelters may have reported the same person being turned away on the same night.

<sup>27</sup> Either they were not eligible for the facility or their needs could not be accommodated.

## 4. Profile of the Homeless Population in the Metro Vancouver Region

This section provides a profile of the homeless people who were surveyed in the Homeless Count, including people with no fixed address, and identifies trends based on data from previous counts.<sup>28</sup>

### 4.1 Gender

Men represented about three quarters of the homeless population identified in the 2014 Homeless Count and women represented about one quarter. Previous Homeless Count reports and community agencies have stated that women tend to be more represented in the hidden homeless population and often double up with families and friends or stay in unsafe situations rather than stay on the street or access services for the homeless. As a result, they are likely to be undercounted. It has also been suggested that women with children will often stay in unsafe situations so their children have a bed to sleep in. Among the unsheltered homeless respondents, 57% of women reported staying at someone else's place compared to 33% of men. Nine people identified as transgendered in 2014 and it has been suggested that this is also likely an undercount.

**Table 4: Gender - Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Gender	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Men	733	72%	686	73%	1,419	73%
Women	279	27%	248	26%	527	27%
Transgendered	6	1%	3	0%	9	0%
Total Respondents	1,018	100%	937	100%	1,955	100%
No Answer	802		20		822	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

### Trends

Over the years, the proportion of men and women identified in Homeless Counts has remained about the same, with women making up between one quarter and one third of the region's homeless population.<sup>29</sup>

**Table 5: Gender - Total Homeless (2002 to 2014) - Trends**

Gender	2002 Total Homeless		2005 Total Homeless		2008 Total Homeless		2011 Total Homeless		2014 Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Men	700	68%	1,483	73%	1,679	72%	1,452	69%	1,419	73%
Women	333	32%	534	26%	619	27%	652	31%	527	27%
Transgendered	N/A		9	0%	22	1%	8	0%	9	0%
Total Respondents	1,033		2,026		2,320		2,112		1,955	
No Answer	88		148		340		538		822	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,121</b>		<b>2,174</b>		<b>2,660</b>		<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

<sup>28</sup> Some data from the 2011 is inconsistent with previous trends and may be less reliable than 2008 data for the purpose of identifying trends and making comparisons.

<sup>29</sup> The large number of people for whom there is no data about gender in 2014, compared to previous years, could mean that the actual proportion of men, women, and transgendered persons is slightly different.

## 4.2 Age

In 2014, adults aged 45 to 54 comprised the largest group among the homeless in the Metro Vancouver region (25%), followed by adults aged 35 to 44 (20%), and children and youth under the age of 25 (20%). A total of 410 homeless children and youth were identified, including 88 children who were accompanied by a parent.<sup>30</sup> A higher proportion of unaccompanied youth 19 to 24 were unsheltered rather than sheltered. Most of these unsheltered youth (56%) were couch surfing.<sup>31</sup> A total of 371 homeless seniors (55 and older) were counted in the Metro Vancouver region. Most were sheltered.

**Table 6: Age - Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Age groups	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Under 19[1]	106	10%	85	9%	<b>191</b>	9%
19-24	86	8%	133	14%	<b>219</b>	11%
25-34	178	16%	154	16%	332	16%
35-44	220	20%	193	20%	413	20%
45-54	279	26%	233	25%	512	25%
55-64	169	16%	112	12%	281	14%
65+	52	5%	38	4%	90	4%
Total Respondents	1,090	100%	948	100%	2,038	100%
No Answer	730		9		739	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

[1] Includes 79 sheltered children and 9 unsheltered children accompanied by a parent.

### Trends

There were 410 homeless youth and children counted in the Metro Vancouver region during the 2014 Homeless Count. This was a 3% increase compared to 2011. Children and youth represented 20% of the homeless population in 2014 compared to 24% in 2011 and 15% in 2008. The number of homeless children and youth who have been identified in Homeless Counts has increased over the years.

**Table 7: Age - Total Homeless (2002 to 2014) - Trends**

Age Groups	2002 Total Homeless		2005 Total Homeless		2008 Total Homeless		2011 Total Homeless		2014 Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Under 25 Years	343	32%	370	18%	364	15%	397	24%	410	20%
25-34 Years	216	20%	435	21%	436	18%	275	17%	332	16%
35-44 Years	299	28%	634	31%	726	30%	328	20%	413	20%
45-54 Years	151	14%	443	22%	661	28%	397	24%	512	25%
55-64 Years	37	3%	139	7%	180	8%	210	13%	281	14%
65+ Years	14	1%	32	2%	32	1%	58	3%	90	4%
Total Respondents	1,060	100%	2,053	100%	2,399	100%	1,665	100%	2,038	100%
No Answer	61		121		261		985		739	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,121</b>		<b>2,174</b>		<b>2,660</b>		<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

Note: Totals for all years include children who were accompanied by a parent.

<sup>30</sup> Youth is anyone under the age of 25 who was not accompanied by a parent during the count. Some youth were under the age of 16. 'Children' includes anyone under the age of 19 who was accompanied by a parent.

<sup>31</sup> 78% of unaccompanied youth under 19 were couch surfing while 44% of youth 19 to 24 years were couch surfing.

The number of children under the age of 19 with their parents who identified as homeless in the Metro Vancouver region has ranged from 71 children in 2002 to a high of 94 children in 2008, while 88 children were counted in 2014.

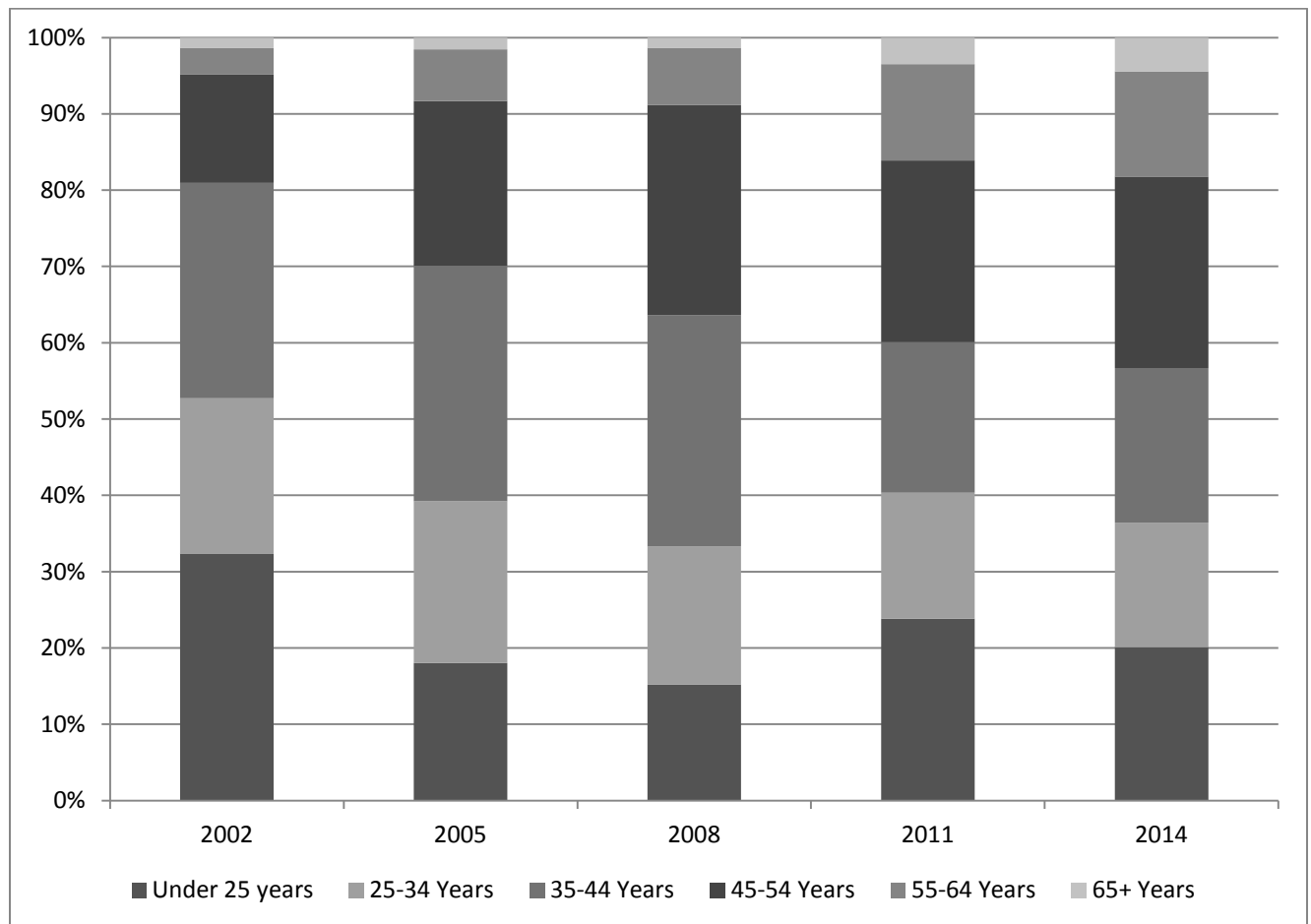
**Table 8: Homeless Children with Parents (2002 to 2014) - Trends**

Children with Parents	2002	2005	2008	2011	2014
	#	#	#	#	#
Sheltered	69	52	80	68	79
Unsheltered	2	22	14	6	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>88</b>

Note: This table shows a sub-set of Table 7 and should not be added to the numbers in Table 7.

Seniors (55 years and older) are an increasing proportion of the total homeless population. There were 371 homeless seniors counted in the Metro Vancouver region on March 12, 2014, representing a 38% increase compared to 2011 when 268 seniors were counted and a 75% increase compared to 2008 when 212 seniors were counted. At the same time, the number of homeless seniors 65+ nearly tripled since 2008. Figure 2 illustrates how the proportion of people in the different age groups has changed since the 2002 Homeless Count.

**Figure 3: Changes in the Age of the Homeless Population (2002 to 2014)**



### 4.3 Aboriginal Identity

A total of 582 homeless respondents identified as an Aboriginal person in the Metro Vancouver region during the 2014 Homeless Count, representing about one third of the total homeless population in the region. Agencies have reported that this is likely an undercount as many Aboriginal people will not identify as an Aboriginal person for fear of discrimination, and this is particularly true for Aboriginal people who are elders.

Aboriginal Peoples are over-represented in the region's homeless population given they represent 2% of Metro Vancouver's population. Table 9 shows that homeless Aboriginal respondents were less likely to access the shelter system: nearly 60% of respondents who identified as an Aboriginal person were unsheltered compared to 40% who were sheltered. Just over half of the respondents who did not identify as an Aboriginal person were sheltered rather than unsheltered.

**Table 9: Aboriginal Identity - Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Aboriginal identity	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Aboriginal	235	25%	347	38%	582	31%
Not Aboriginal	724	75%	558	62%	1,282	69%
Total Respondents	959	100%	905	100%	1,864	100%
No Answer	861		52		913	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

#### Trends

The proportion of respondents who identified as an Aboriginal person has remained virtually unchanged at about one third since 2005. The proportion decreased to 27% in 2011 but increased again to 31% in 2014.

**Table 10: Aboriginal Identity - Total Homeless (2005 to 2014) - Trends**

Aboriginal Identity	2005 Total Homeless		2008 Total Homeless		2011 Total Homeless		2014 Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Aboriginal	515	30%	688	32%	394	27%	582	31%
Not Aboriginal	1,205	70%	1,453	68%	1,074	73%	1,282	69%
Total Respondents	1,720	100%	2,141	100%	1,468	100%	1,864	100%
No Answer	454		519		1,182		913	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,174</b>		<b>2,660</b>		<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

The question about Aboriginal identity was not asked in 2002, so data for that year is not included.

## 4.4 Accompanying the Homeless

Participants in the Homeless Count were asked if there was anyone with them. If they were with someone, they were asked to identify who. Overall, 79% of respondents reported that they were alone.

Homeless people who were alone were more likely to be sheltered than unsheltered, and parents with children were also more likely to be sheltered than unsheltered. Some individuals may have been unsheltered because they could not be accommodated in a shelter, for example individuals who were with a partner/spouse (8%) or pet (3%).<sup>32</sup>

**Table 11: Accompanying the Homeless - Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Accompanying the Homeless (more than 1 response possible)	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Alone	796	87%	655	71%	1,451	79%
With Partner/Spouse	34	4%	71	8%	105	6%
With Children	34	4%	7	1%	41	2%
With Friends	30	3%	152	16%	182	10%
With Relative	8	1%	16	2%	24	1%
With Pet	7	1%	24	3%	31	2%
With Other	13	1%	18	2%	31	2%
Total Respondents <sup>33</sup>	915		924		1,839	
No Answer	905		33		938	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

### Trends

The proportion of homeless respondents who were alone has not changed significantly over the years.

**Table 12: Accompanying the Homeless - Total Homeless (2005 to 2014) - Trends**

Accompanying the Homeless (more than 1 response possible)	2005 Total Homeless		2008 Total Homeless		2011 Total Homeless		2014 Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Alone	1,502	82%	1,670	76%	1,122	75%	1,451	79%
With Partner/Spouse	178	10%	243	11%	113	8%	105	6%
With Children	40	2%	43	2%	55	4%	41	2%
With Pet	34	2%	59	3%	31	2%	31	2%
With Other	76	4%	229	10%	178	12%	237	13%
Total Respondents	1,830		2,200		1,504		1,839	
No Answer	344		460		1,146		938	
<b>Total<sup>34</sup></b>	<b>2,174</b>		<b>2,660</b>		<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

<sup>32</sup> Some shelters are able to accommodate couples and pets while others are not.

<sup>33</sup> Percentages do not add up to 100 because respondents could have selected more than one answer e.g. a partner *and* children.

<sup>34</sup> In Table 12, data on friends and relatives is included in "Other" to allow for a comparison with previous years.



## 4.5 First Language

A new question was asked in 2014 to learn about the first language of respondents – meaning the language learned at birth or “mother tongue”.<sup>35</sup> The vast majority (87%) of respondents reported English as their first language. Four percent of respondents reported that French was their first language, whereas 1.1% of the general population in the Metro Vancouver region has reported French as their mother tongue.<sup>36</sup> The most common first languages reported other than English and French were First Nations languages, Spanish, and Chinese.<sup>37</sup>

**Table 13: First Language – Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

First Language	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
English	771	86%	798	89%	1,569	87%
French	32	4%	32	4%	64	4%
Other	98	11%	68	8%	166	9%
Total Respondents	901	100%	898	100%	1,799	100%
No Answer	919		59		978	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

## 4.6 Newcomers to Canada

This question was also introduced in 2014 to learn to what extent the homeless population included people who were new to Canada within the last 5 years. Table 14 shows that almost all respondents to this question (97%) answered that they have been in Canada at least 5 years. Respondents who said they were new to Canada were mostly from Asia, Africa, Europe, the United States, the Caribbean, and South America.

**Table 14: Newcomers to Canada – Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

New To Canada within last 5 years	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Not New to Canada	794	97%	716	97%	1,510	97%
New to Canada	26	3%	20	3%	46	3%
Total Respondents	820	100%	736	100%	1,556	100%
No Answer	1,000		221		1,221	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

<sup>35</sup> The 2014 survey did not ask respondents to self-identify their ethnic or cultural group because it was reported that this was a difficult question to answer given that many people are of mixed ethnicity or identify as “Canadian”. In previous reports it had been suggested that findings from this question be treated with caution given a high non-response rate, especially from the unsheltered homeless population.

<sup>36</sup> Metro Vancouver Regional Planning Division. 2014. Based on 2011 census data (26,000/2,356,000).

<sup>37</sup> Nearly 2% of respondents identified a First Nations language as their first language, while 1% identified Spanish and 1% identified Chinese. The results should be interpreted with caution as respondents could select only one language and they may have learned more than one language at birth. In addition, the survey was conducted only in English, so the count may undercount people who were not comfortable speaking English.

## 4.7 Military Service in Canadian Forces

Another new question in 2014 asked respondents if they had any military service in the Canadian Forces. This was the same question used in Toronto’s homeless count in 2013. The proportion of the homeless population indicating they had military service in the Canadian Forces was the same for both counts, with 7% of the homeless population saying they had some experience in the Canadian Forces.<sup>38</sup> According to point-in-time homeless counts in the U.S., 12% of homeless adults were identified as veterans in 2013.<sup>39</sup> In Canada, it is estimated that 1.7% of the general population are veterans.<sup>40</sup>

**Table 15: Military Service in the Canadian Forces – Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Military service in Canadian Forces	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Yes	58	6%	60	7%	118	7%
No	842	94%	826	93%	1,668	93%
Total Respondents	900	100%	886	100%	1,786	100%
No Answer	920		71		991	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

## 4.8 Barriers to Housing

Survey participants were asked, “What do you think is keeping you from finding a place of your own”. Table 16 identifies the range of barriers identified by respondents. Low income (47%) and high rents (42%) were reported as the main barriers to housing. Respondents also identified having no income (21%) as one of the barriers to finding a place.<sup>41</sup> Addiction (27%) was reported as the third main barrier to finding a place, for both the sheltered and unsheltered homeless.

In general, the barriers to finding a place were similar for the sheltered and unsheltered homeless except that ‘rent too high’ was reported by a higher proportion of the sheltered homeless compared to the unsheltered homeless, and discrimination was reported by a higher proportion of the unsheltered homeless.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>38</sup> City of Toronto. *2013 Street Needs Assessment Results*.

<sup>39</sup> U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. *The 2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress*.

<sup>40</sup> Estimated veteran population as of March 2013 (594,300/35,158,300). (Veterans Affairs Canada online at <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/news/general-statistics>)

<sup>41</sup> Respondents could select more than one response, so numbers for one response cannot be added to another.

<sup>42</sup> The shelter survey included ‘health or disability issue’ on the list of possible responses, but this was inadvertently omitted from the unsheltered survey. Among the sheltered homeless, 20% of respondents identified health or disability as a barrier to housing. Although it was not listed on the survey, 2% of unsheltered respondents specified this as a barrier as part of the other category. It is likely that this percentage would have been higher if the response had been included on the list of possible responses on the unsheltered survey.

**Table 16: Barriers to Housing – Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Barriers to Housing (more than 1 possible)	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Income too low	441	49%	428	46%	869	47%
No income/no income assistance	179	20%	197	21%	376	21%
Rent too high	410	45%	351	38%	761	42%
Addiction	240	26%	261	28%	501	27%
Family breakdown/abuse/conflict	155	17%	155	17%	310	17%
Poor housing condition	142	16%	171	19%	313	17%
Mental health Issue	138	15%	142	15%	280	15%
Conflict with the law	55	6%	75	8%	130	7%
Evicted	80	9%	117	13%	197	11%
Pets	33	4%	46	5%	79	4%
Discrimination	93	10%	156	17%	249	14%
Other	222	24%	241	26%	463	25%
Total Respondents	909		922		1,831	
No Answer	911		35		946	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

**Trends**

Table 17 compares the responses in 2014 with 2011. The barriers to housing in 2014 are in the same order of priority as in 2011. The top three barriers to having one's own place continued to be low income, high rents, and addiction.

It is not possible to compare the 2014 and 2011 results with previous years because the questions were different. In 2008, respondents were asked: "What are the *main* reasons you do not have your own place." In addition, the surveys in 2011 and 2014 provided a list of possible responses, whereas a list was not provided in 2008 which could affect the comparability of the results.

**Table 17: Barriers to Housing – Total Homeless (2011 to 2014) - Trends**

Barriers to Housing (more than 1 possible)	2011 Total Homeless		2014 Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%
Income too low	857	58%	869	47%
No income/no income assistance	331	22%	376	21%
Rent too high	803	54%	761	42%
Addiction	473	32%	501	27%
Family breakdown/abuse/conflict	375	25%	310	17%
Poor housing condition	350	24%	313	17%
Mental health Issue	277	19%	280	15%
Conflict with the law	228	15%	130	7%
Evicted	201	13%	197	11%
Pets	N/A	N/A	79	4%
Discrimination	N/A	N/A	249	14%
Other	370	25%	463	25%
Total Respondents	1,489		1,831	
No Answer	1,161		946	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

## 4.9 Sources of Income

Respondents were asked to identify their sources of income. They could identify more than one source. The sources of income respondents identified most were income assistance (43%), disability benefit (21%), part-time employment (16%), and binning/bottle collecting (14%).

The sheltered homeless were more likely to report receiving disability benefits, employment, and CPP/pension compared to the unsheltered homeless. The unsheltered homeless were more likely to report receiving income from binning/bottle collecting and panhandling compared to the sheltered homeless.

A higher proportion of the unsheltered homeless reported income assistance (45%) as a source of income compared to the sheltered homeless (40%), while the sheltered homeless were more likely to report disability benefits as a source of income (24%) compared to the unsheltered homeless population (18%).

About one in ten homeless individuals reported receiving no income. Seven respondents reported receiving income through a Youth Agreement.

**Table 18: Sources of Income – Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Sources of income (more than 1 possible)	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>Government transfers</b>						
Income assistance	364	40%	413	45%	777	43%
Disability benefit	216	24%	160	18%	376	21%
OAS/GIS	31	3%	11	1%	42	2%
CPP or Other Pension	86	9%	29	3%	115	6%
Employment Insurance	19	2%	8	1%	27	1%
Youth Agreement	1	0%	6	1%	7	0%
<b>Employment</b>						
Part-time employment	156	17%	131	14%	287	16%
Full-time employment	68	7%	14	2%	82	4%
<b>Other sources</b>						
Binning, bottle collecting	53	6%	199	22%	252	14%
Panhandling	30	3%	173	19%	203	11%
Friends/family	49	5%	80	9%	129	7%
Other	69	8%	135	15%	204	11%
<b>No Income</b>	80	9%	91	10%	171	9%
Total Respondents	910		913		1,823	
No Answer	910		44		954	
<b>Total<sup>43</sup></b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

<sup>43</sup> Subtotals for each category are not provided because a person may have selected more than one source of income. The numbers cannot be added.

## Trends

Table 19 shows that the proportion of respondents receiving income assistance increased from 43% in 2008, to 52% in 2011 but dropped back to 43% again in 2014. There has been a slight increase in the proportion of respondents receiving disability benefits over the three counts. The proportion of respondents receiving OAS/GIS/ CPP benefits increased between 2011 and 2014, consistent with a greater proportion of seniors among the homeless.

**Table 19: Sources of Income – Total Homeless (2008 to 2014) - Trends**

Sources of Income (more than 1 possible)	2008 Total Homeless		2011 Total Homeless		2014 Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>Government transfers</b>						
Income assistance	960	43%	789	52%	777	43%
Disability benefit	403	18%	296	20%	376	21%
OAS/GIS/ CPP	53	2%	53	4%	157	9%
Employment Insurance	26	1%	45	3%	27	1%
Youth Agreement	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	7	0%
<b>Employment<sup>44</sup></b>						
Part-time employment	421	19%	177	12%	287	16%
Full-time employment			63	4%	82	4%
<b>Other sources</b>						
Binning, bottle collecting	478	22%	306	20%	252	14%
Panhandling	277	12%	188	12%	203	11%
Friends/family	60	3%	216	14%	129	7%
Other	372	17%	247	16%	204	11%
<b>No Income</b>	182	8%	97	6%	171	9%
Total Respondents	2,219		1,513		1,823	
No Answer	441		1,137		954	
<b>Total<sup>45</sup></b>	<b>2,660</b>		<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

<sup>44</sup> There was no distinction between part-time and full-time employment in 2008.

<sup>45</sup> It is not possible to compare 2014 responses with responses prior to 2008 because the question was changed in 2008 to allow multiple responses rather than just the main source of income.

## 4.10 Health Conditions

### *Incidence of Health Conditions*

The surveys asked respondents about their health, and specifically whether they had a medical condition, physical disability, addiction, and mental illness. Medical condition refers to chronic problems like asthma and diabetes, while physical disability refers to a condition affecting mobility or movement. As in previous counts, the information about health in 2014 includes health conditions self-reported by respondents as well as health conditions observed by interviewers; however, very few observations were recorded on the surveys in 2014.<sup>46</sup>

Table 20 shows that 80% of respondents reported one or more health conditions while 20% reported no health conditions.

**Table 20: Incidence of Health Conditions – Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Health condition	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
No Health Conditions	194	22%	166	19%	360	20%
One Health Condition	297	33%	317	36%	614	35%
Two or More Health Conditions	403	45%	398	45%	801	45%
Total Respondents	894	100%	881	100%	1,775	100%
No Answer	926		76		1,002	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

### **Trends**

In reviewing data from the previous Homeless Counts, it appears that the health of the homeless population in the Metro Vancouver region has been getting worse. The proportion of respondents with no health conditions has declined since 2005 while the proportion with two or more health conditions has increased.<sup>47</sup>

**Table 21: Incidence of Health Conditions – Total Homeless (2005 to 2014) - Trends**

Health condition	2005 Total Homeless		2008 Total Homeless		2011 Total Homeless		2014 Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
No Health Conditions	445	26%	616	28%	3	0%	360	20%
One Health Condition	666	39%	601	27%	426	38%	614	35%
Two or More Health Conditions	608	35%	1,016	45%	694	62%	801	45%
Total Respondents	1,719	100%	2,233		1,123	100%	1,775	100%
No Answer	455		427		1,527		1,002	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,174</b>		<b>2,660</b>		<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

<sup>46</sup> This is similar to the 2013 Vancouver Homeless Count, where perceived health conditions accounted for a small share of total positive answers, mostly among the unsheltered homeless.

<sup>47</sup> According to the 2011 Homeless Count report and database, only three respondents in 2011 reported no health conditions. The reliability of this data is questionable.

## Types of Health Conditions

Nearly half the respondents in 2014 reported having an addiction (49%). The next most common health issue was a medical condition (41%), while about one third (34%) reported a mental illness. According to the data, 21% of respondents reported a concurrent disorder (i.e. both mental illness and addiction).

While the sheltered homeless were more likely to report a medical condition (44%) compared to the unsheltered homeless (37%), the unsheltered homeless were more likely to report an addiction (55%) compared to the sheltered homeless (44%).

Respondents were asked to specify their medical conditions. The most common medical condition reported by respondents in 2014 were Hepatitis C, followed by diabetes, arthritis, spine and back problems, HIV, and heart problems, as well as brain injury, asthma, respiratory problems and cancer.

**Table 22: Types of Health Conditions – Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Health condition (more than 1 possible)	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Addiction	390	44%	481	55%	871	49%
Medical Condition	395	44%	328	37%	723	41%
Mental Illness	296	33%	314	36%	610	34%
Physical Disability	272	30%	235	27%	507	29%
Total Respondents	894		881		1,775	
No Answer	926		76		1,002	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

## Trends

Table 23 shows that the proportion of respondents reporting an addiction in 2014 is about the same as in 2005. It is interesting to note that the proportion of respondents reporting an addiction spiked to 61% in 2008 before returning to 49% in 2014. The proportion of respondents with a medical condition and physical disability has increased since 2005 but has not changed significantly since 2008. The proportion of respondents reporting a mental illness increased from about one quarter in 2005 to one third in 2008 and has not changed much since then.

**Table 23: Types of Health Conditions – Total Homeless (2002 to 2014) - Trends**

Health condition (more than 1 possible)	Total homeless 2002		Total homeless 2005		Total homeless 2008		Total homeless 2011		Total homeless 2014	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Addiction	337	39%	838	48%	1,365	61%	712	54%	871	49%
Medical Condition	256	30%	601	35%	1,023	46%	608	46%	723	41%
Mental Illness	195	23%	389	22%	725	33%	463	35%	610	34%
Physical Disability	132	15%	364	21%	699	31%	470	36%	507	29%
Total Respondents	864		1,731		2,229		1,314		1,775	
No Answer	257		443		431		1,336		1,002	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,121</b>		<b>2,174</b>		<b>2,660</b>		<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

## 4.11 Length of Time Homeless

About one fifth of respondents (19%) who provided information on the length of time homeless had been homeless for less than one month and are considered 'newly homeless'. A higher proportion of the sheltered homeless had been homeless for less than a month (23%) compared to the unsheltered homeless (14%).

At the same time, 41% of respondents reported being homeless for one year or more and are considered 'long-term homeless'. The unsheltered homeless were more likely to have been homeless for one year or more (45%) compared to the sheltered homeless (37%).

**Table 24: Length of Time Homeless – Sheltered and Unsheltered, 2014**

Length of time homeless	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Less than 1 week	34	4%	31	3%	65	4%
1 week to under 1 month	167	19%	105	11%	272	15%
1 month to under 6 months	302	34%	282	31%	584	32%
6 months to under 1 year	61	7%	84	9%	145	8%
1 year or more	336	37%	415	45%	751	41%
Total Respondents	900	100%	917	100%	1,817	100%
No Answer	920		40		960	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

### Trends

Table 25 indicates that the proportion of respondents who reported being homeless for one year or more declined from 48% in 2008 to 41% in 2014.

The proportion of respondents considered newly homeless (less than one month) has increased since 2008, from 13% in 2008 to 15% in 2011 and 19% in 2014. Table 25 also shows that at every count, an average of 300 people became homeless within the month - and that there continues to be a steady flow of people who are newly homeless in the region. We do not know, however, if these individuals are homeless for the first time or if they are episodically homeless (i.e. have experienced a previous episode of homelessness within the year).<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> This should not be interpreted as a net increase of 300 new homeless individuals each month as some people who are homeless are also likely to exit homelessness each month.



**Table 25: Length of Time Homeless – Total Homeless (2002 to 2014) - Trends**

Length of time homeless	2002 Total Homeless		2005 Total Homeless		2008 Total Homeless		2011 Total Homeless		2014 Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Less than 1 week <sup>49</sup>	98	12%	149	8%	105	5%	233	15%	65	4%
1 week to under 1 month	222	26%	275	16%	167	8%			272	15%
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>19%</b>
1 month to under 6 months	253	30%	460	26%	556	26%	452	30%	584	32%
6 months to under 1 year	100	12%	262	15%	271	13%	222	15%	145	8%
1 year or more	166	20%	628	35%	1,017	48%	610	40%	751	41%
Total Respondents	839	100%	1,774	100%	2,116	100%	1,517	100%	1,817	100%
No Answer	282		400		544		1,133		960	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,121</b>		<b>2,174</b>		<b>2,660</b>		<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

#### 4.12 Length of Time in Municipality Interviewed

Table 26 shows that the homeless population may not be as transient as is commonly believed. Among respondents who reported on the length of time they had lived in the city where they were interviewed, 79% reported living there at least one year, including half of respondents (51%) who reported living there 10 years or more. More than 200 individuals reported that they had lived in the city where they were interviewed their whole lives and many others had moved to the community at a young age. This level of stability is greater among the unsheltered than sheltered homeless population, with 55% of the unsheltered homeless reporting that they had lived in the municipality where interviewed 10 years or more compared to 48% of the sheltered homeless.<sup>50</sup>

Very few individuals (2%) reported having just moved to the municipality where they were interviewed less than a week before the Homeless Count.

**Table 26: Length of Time in Municipality Interviewed – Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Length of time in city interviewed	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Less than 1 week	21	2%	11	1%	32	2%
1 week to less than 1 year	202	23%	139	16%	341	19%
1 year to under 5 years	139	16%	157	18%	296	17%
5 years to under 10 years	94	11%	95	11%	189	11%
10 years or more	424	48%	487	55%	911	51%
Total Respondents	880	100%	889	100%	1,769	100%
No Answer	940		68		1,008	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

<sup>49</sup> In 2011, data was not provided on the number of people who had been homeless for less than 1 week.

<sup>50</sup> One of the reasons may be that people who wanted to stay in a shelter needed to move to another community to access a bed.

## Trends

The degree of stability among the homeless population in 2014 is consistent with previous counts that also showed the majority of the respondents had lived in the municipality where they were interviewed for at least 5 years.

**Table 27: Length of Time in Municipality Interviewed – Total Homeless (2008 – 2014) - Trends**

Length of time homeless	Total homeless 2008		Total homeless 2011		Total homeless 2014	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Less than 1 year	416	20%	379	25%	373	21%
1 year to under 5 years	409	19%	296	19%	296	17%
5 years to under 10 years	312	15%	198	13%	189	11%
10 years or more	972	46%	645	42%	911	51%
Total Respondents	2,109	100%	1,518	100%	1,769	100%
No Answer	551		1,132		1,008	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,660</b>		<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

### 4.13 Episodically Homeless

In 2014 a new question was piloted to determine the number of people in the Metro Vancouver region who are episodically homeless – or who experience more than one episode of homelessness within a year. About two-fifths of respondents (669 individuals) reported that they had been homeless more than once. These results should, however, be treated with great caution because volunteers reported that this question was very confusing and the data may not be accurate.<sup>51</sup> In addition, the response rate was particularly low for the respondents in shelters.

**Table 28: Episodically Homeless – Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Number of times homeless in past 12 months	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
More than once	342	42%	327	44%	669	43%
First time homeless	473	58%	415	56%	888	57%
Total Respondents	815	100%	742	100%	1,557	100%
No Answer	1,005		215		1,220	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

<sup>51</sup>There seemed to be some confusion with the possible response “first time homeless” and how to answer the question if a person had been homeless for a year or more. Many respondents reported on the length of time they had been homeless rather than on the number of times.

## 5. Patterns of Service Use

### 5.1 Services Used by the Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless

Homeless Count participants were asked what services they have used in the past 12 months. Table 29 shows that meal programs (46%), hospital emergency rooms (42%), and drop-in centres (40%) were the top three services used by homeless individuals.

The unsheltered homeless were more likely to use meal programs, drop-in centres, outreach services, food banks, ambulance, and parole services than the sheltered homeless, while the sheltered homeless were more likely to use health clinics, employment, dental, mental health, and transitional housing than the unsheltered homeless.

**Table 29: Services Used – Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless, 2014**

Services used (more than 1 possible)	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Meal Programs/Soup Kitchens	385	43%	440	50%	825	46%
Emergency Room	381	42%	365	42%	746	42%
Drop-Ins	301	33%	414	47%	715	40%
Health Clinic	382	42%	302	34%	684	38%
Outreach	263	29%	346	39%	609	34%
Hospital (non-emergency)	300	33%	273	31%	573	32%
Food Banks	218	24%	317	36%	535	30%
Ambulance	258	29%	272	31%	530	30%
Addiction	218	24%	207	24%	425	24%
Employment/Job Help	242	27%	172	20%	414	23%
Dental	194	22%	141	16%	335	19%
Mental Health	193	21%	142	16%	335	19%
Legal	113	13%	124	14%	237	13%
Housing Help/Eviction Prevention	113	13%	113	13%	226	13%
Transitional Housing	121	13%	56	6%	177	10%
Parole/Services for Ex-Offenders	46	5%	78	9%	124	7%
Budgeting/Trusteeship	22	2%	23	3%	45	3%
Newcomer Services	11	1%	18	2%	29	2%
Other	121	13%	90	10%	211	12%
None	57	6%	55	6%	112	6%
Total Respondents	900		878		1,778	
No Answer	920		79		999	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>		<b>957</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

## Trends

Table 30 shows that Homeless Count respondents used similar services in 2014 compared to 2011. Whereas in 2014, the top three services respondents said they used were meal programs, hospital emergency rooms, and drop-in centres, in 2011, the top three services respondents said they used were meal programs, health clinics, and drop-in centres.

While 49% of respondents reported using health clinics in 2011, only 38% of respondents reported using this service in 2014. As well, a smaller proportion of respondents reported accessing dental services in 2014 compared to 2011. The proportion of respondents who used hospital emergency rooms remained the same for both years (42%).

**Table 30: Services Used – Total Homeless (2011 to 2014) - Trends**

Services Used (more than 1 possible)	2011 Total Homeless		2014 Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%
Meal Programs/Soup Kitchens	783	53%	825	46%
Emergency Room	617	42%	746	42%
Drop-Ins	706	48%	715	40%
Health Clinic	722	49%	684	38%
Outreach	537	36%	609	34%
Hospital (non-emergency)	518	35%	573	32%
Food Banks	612	41%	535	30%
Ambulance	400	27%	530	30%
Addiction	388	26%	425	24%
Employment/Job Help	464	31%	414	23%
Dental	387	26%	335	19%
Mental Health	325	22%	335	19%
Legal	261	18%	237	13%
Housing Help/Eviction Prevention	244	16%	226	13%
Transitional Housing	201	14%	177	10%
Parole/Services for Ex-Offenders	144	10%	124	7%
Budgeting/Trusteeship	45	3%	45	3%
Newcomer Services	39	3%	29	2%
Other	127	9%	211	12%
None	63	4%	112	6%
Total Respondents	1,484		1,778	
No Answer	1,166		999	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,650</b>		<b>2,777</b>	

## 5.2 Services Used by the Sheltered Homeless

The sheltered homeless were asked how many nights in a row they had stayed at the shelter where they were surveyed. A similar question was asked in 2011.<sup>52</sup> Table 31 shows that the majority of respondents spent less than one month at the shelter. A higher proportion of respondents reported staying in a shelter for one month or less in 2014 (68%) compared to 2011 (55%).

**Table 31: Number of Days in Shelter – Sheltered Homeless (2011 to 2014)**

Number of days in the shelter	2011		2014	
	#	%	#	%
1 to 30 days	437	55%	590	68%
31 to 90 days	174	22%	157	18%
91 to 180 days	99	13%	70	8%
181 to 365 days	71	9%	20	2%
More than 365 days	10	1%	25	3%
Total Respondents	791	100%	862	100%
No Answer <sup>53</sup>	1,101		958	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,892</b>		<b>1,820</b>	

## 5.3 Services Used by the Unsheltered Homeless

### *Where the Unsheltered Homeless Stayed*

As part of the unsheltered survey, respondents were asked where they had stayed the previous night. Table 32 shows that among the unsheltered homeless population, more than half (56%) had spent the previous night outside or in a vehicle, while 40% stayed at someone else's place.<sup>54</sup> Other locations included 24-hour restaurants, abandoned buildings, or at a location in an exploitive situation (i.e. with a pimp or client).

Table 32 does not provide data for previous years because of differences in how the question was asked and how responses were categorized. However, the data indicates that the proportion of homeless people who were couch surfing in 2014 (40%) was lower compared to 2011 when nearly half of respondents reported staying at someone else's place, and higher compared to 2008 and 2005 when about one quarter of unsheltered respondents reported staying at someone else's place.

<sup>52</sup> In 2011, the question was: How many nights, including tonight, have you stayed at this shelter in the past 12 months.

<sup>53</sup> Facilities for people with no fixed address (hospitals, detox facilities and jails) were not asked to provide information on length of stay and individuals in these facilities are included in the "No Answer". In 2014, there were 200 individuals in these facilities during the count.

<sup>54</sup> This includes data on nine children accompanied by a parent who were unsheltered during the count.

**Table 32: Where the Unsheltered Homeless Stayed, 2014**

Location	2014 Unsheltered Homeless	
	#	%
Outside or in a vehicle <sup>55</sup>	536	56%
Someone else's place	381	40%
Other	40	4%
Total Respondents	957	100%
No Answer	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>957</b>	

### *Reason Unsheltered Did Not Stay in Shelter*

The unsheltered survey included a question to ask the main reason respondents did not stay in a shelter the previous night. The most frequent reason was that the individual was able to stay with a friend (27%). The second main reason respondents gave for not staying in a shelter was that they dislike them (21%). Many reasons were given for disliking a shelter, including being uncomfortable with the other people, the rules, theft/violence, and finding them dirty/smelly.

Other reasons for not staying in a shelter included not wanting to separate from their spouse/partner or pet, and having an addiction.

**Table 33: Reasons for Not Staying in a Shelter (2008 to 2014)**

Reason (select only one)	2008		2011		2014	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Able to stay with friend	215	15%	274	39%	206	27%
Dislike	450	32%	169	24%	159	21%
Turned away - full <sup>56</sup>	225	16%	28	4%	97	13%
Don't feel safe	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	59	8%
Turned away - other reason	36	3%	15	2%	29	4%
Bedbugs/pests	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	23	3%
Can't get to shelter	99	7%	13	2%	13	2%
Didn't know about shelters	48	3%	11	2%	10	1%
Other	322	23%	192	27%	167	22%
Total Respondents	1,395	100%	702	100%	763	100%
No Answer	179		56		194	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,574</b>		<b>758</b>		<b>957</b>	

<sup>55</sup> This included staying on the street, in a park, skytrain, garage or shed.

<sup>56</sup> The number of people who reported being turned away in Table 32 is not the same as in Table 2. Table 2 reports on the number of times a person was turned away rather than the number of individuals, and an individual may have been turned away more than once. In addition, an individual may have been turned from a shelter but not stated this as the main reason they did not stay in a shelter and so this is not recorded in Table 33.

It is difficult to compare the responses provided in 2014 with previous years because the list of possible responses on the survey has changed over time. Nevertheless, a few observations can be made with caution. It appears that the proportion of respondents who reported disliking shelters decreased from 32% in 2008 to 24% in 2011 and 21% in 2014. The proportion of respondents who reported not being able to get to a shelter and not knowing about shelters has also decreased since 2008.

In 2014, 13% of respondents said they did not stay in a shelter because they were turned away. This was much higher compared to 2011 (4%) although less than in 2008 (16%).

### *Previous Use of Shelters*

In 2014 and 2008, the unsheltered survey included a question to ask respondents if they had stayed in a shelter in the last 12 months. This is an important question to determine if the unsheltered homeless ever use a shelter. In 2014, just over half the unsheltered homeless (54%), reported having stayed in a shelter at some point in the last 12 months.<sup>57</sup> This indicates that gathering information on the homeless population using only shelter data would miss a significant proportion of the homeless population who do not use shelters.

The proportion of the unsheltered homeless population who reported staying in a shelter in the previous year in 2014 was virtually the same as in 2008 when 53% of respondents reported having stayed in a shelter at some point in the preceding year.

**Table 34: Previous Stay in a Shelter (2008, 2014)**

Did Person Stay in a Shelter in Past Year	2008 Unsheltered Homeless		2014 Unsheltered Homeless	
	#	%	#	%
Yes	790	53%	485	54%
No	689	47%	420	46%
Total Respondents	1,479	100%	905	100%
No Answer	95		52	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,574</b>		<b>957</b>	

<sup>57</sup> About half the respondents who stayed at someone else's place (49%) said they had stayed in a shelter in the previous year. It may be interesting to do further analysis to compare the homeless population who stayed at someone else's place with the rest of the unsheltered and sheltered homeless population.

## 6. Homelessness among Sub-Populations

This section includes profiles for five priority sub-populations, including women, Aboriginal Peoples, unaccompanied youth under the age of 25, seniors (55+) and the long-term homeless. The information is from respondents who participated in the Homeless Count survey and is shown in Table 35.<sup>58</sup> Note that these sub-populations are not mutually exclusive – someone could be a member of two or more groups, such as an Aboriginal person who is a senior.

### 6.1 Women

In 2014, 527 of respondents to the Homeless Count survey were women. More than two-thirds of the women (64%) were adults aged 25 to 54, 23% were youth, and 13% were seniors. The proportion of women respondents who were seniors was higher in 2014 compared to 2008 when 6% of the homeless women were seniors. A significant proportion of the women respondents (41%) identified as an Aboriginal person.

Homeless women were less likely to be alone compared to the total homeless population: 67% of respondents reported being alone compared to 79% of the total homeless population. Twelve percent were with friends, 10% were with a partner/spouse and 7% were with their children.

A smaller proportion of women (36%) were long-term homeless (1 year or more) compared to the total homeless population where 41% of respondents reported being homeless for a year or more.

Similar to the total homeless population, the main sources of income reported by women respondents were income assistance and disability benefits. Forty-five percent of women respondents reported receiving income assistance compared to 43% of the total homeless population and 24% reported receiving disability benefits compared to 21% of the total homeless population. Women were more likely to report income from friends/family (12%) compared to the total homeless population (7%), and less likely to report income from part-time employment (11%) compared to the total homeless population (16%). They were also less likely to report income from binning/bottle collecting (9%) compared to the total homeless population (14%).

The percentage of women reporting health issues was similar to the total homeless population.

Women were more likely to be couch surfing than the total homeless population: 57% of the unsheltered women reported staying at someone else's place the night of March 11, 2014 compared to 40% of the total homeless population. Women were the least likely sub-population to have slept outside as 37% reported staying outside compared to the total homeless population (56%).

### 6.2 Persons with Aboriginal Identity

A total of 582 homeless respondents identified as an Aboriginal person in the 2014 count. The Aboriginal homeless population had a higher proportion of women (36%) compared to the total homeless population (27%). Similar to 2008, the Aboriginal homeless population had a smaller proportion of seniors (9%) compared to the total homeless population (19%). However, the proportion

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<sup>58</sup> Total numbers in Table 35 may differ from the numbers provided in other sections of this report. This happens because the information provided in this table is a cross-tabulation and includes only the number of people who are part of the sub-population and who answered the particular question being analyzed. For instance, there were 582 Aboriginal people identified in the count, but the total number of respondents to questions analyzed in this section is less than this (e.g. 576 people who identified as an Aboriginal person reported their age.)



of Aboriginal people who were seniors (9%) was higher compared to 2008 when 4% of respondents who identified as an Aboriginal person were seniors. Most of the people who identified as an Aboriginal person were adults aged 25 to 54 (69%). Twenty-two percent of respondents who identified as an Aboriginal person in 2014 were youth, compared to 15% in 2008.

Nearly three quarters of respondents who identified as an Aboriginal person (71%) said they were alone, compared to 79% of the total homeless population. Fifteen percent were with friends, compared to 10% of the total homeless population. Similar to the total homeless population, 7% were with a partner/spouse and 3% were with their children. Another 3% were with a relative – slightly higher than the total homeless population (1%).

Forty-two percent of respondents who identified as an Aboriginal person were long-term homeless (1 year or more), which was similar to the total homeless population (41%).

Similar to the total homeless population, the main sources of income reported by respondents who identified as an Aboriginal person were income assistance (48%), disability benefits (23%), part-time employment (17%), and binning/bottle collecting (16%).

The percentage of Aboriginal respondents reporting health issues was similar to the total homeless population, except that 58% of respondents reported an addiction compared to 49% of the total homeless population.

More than half the Aboriginal respondents who were unsheltered (55%) reported sleeping outside the night of March 11, 2014 while 41% reported staying at someone else's place. This is similar to the total homeless population as 56% of respondents reported staying outside and 40% reported staying at someone else's place.

### **6.3 Unaccompanied Youth (under the age of 25)**

The 2014 Homeless Count included 322 unaccompanied youth and 88 children under 19 who were with a parent. This section reports only on the unaccompanied youth respondents.

A higher proportion of youth respondents were women (38%) compared to the total homeless population (27%). As well, a significant proportion of homeless youth (40%) identified as Aboriginal, compared to 31% of the total homeless population.

Youth were less likely to be alone compared to the total homeless population as 68% of respondents reported being alone compared to 79% of the total homeless population. Youth were most likely to be with friends, compared to the other sub-populations: 17% reported being with friends compared to 10% of the total homeless population.

Youth were the least likely sub-population to be long-term homeless (1 year or more) compared to the total homeless population as 23% reported being homeless for one year or more compared to 41% of the total homeless population. A higher proportion of youth reported being homeless for less than a month (25%) compared to the total homeless population (19%).

The main source of income reported by youth respondents was income assistance; however, only 28% of youth reported receiving income assistance compared to 43% of the total homeless population. A higher proportion of youth reported receiving income from panhandling (22%) and friends/family (19%) compared to other sub-populations and the total homeless population where 11% reported income

from panhandling and 7% from friends/family. A significant proportion of youth, 21%, reported receiving *no income*. This was much higher compared to the other sub-populations and the total homeless population where 9% reported receiving no income.

The proportion of youth reporting mental illness (32%) and addiction (47%) was similar to the total homeless population (34% and 49% respectively). Fewer homeless youth reported having a medical condition or physical disability. For instance, 17% of youth reported having a medical condition compared to 41% of the total homeless population and 9% reported having a physical disability compared to 29% of the total homeless population.

More than half (56%) of the unsheltered youth respondents reported staying at someone else's place the night of March 11, 2014, which is higher than the total homeless population (40%). Forty percent of youth respondents reported staying outside compared to 56% of the total homeless population.

## 6.4 Seniors (55 and older)

A total of 371 seniors (55 and older) were identified in the Homeless Count. More homeless seniors were men (81%) compared to 73% for the total homeless population. As well, most were alone (88%) and less likely to report Aboriginal identity (16%) compared to the other sub-populations.

Seniors were more likely to have been homeless more than one year (53%) compared to other sub-populations. At the same time, 14% were newly homeless, and had been homeless less than one month.

The main sources of income reported by senior respondents were income assistance (32%), CPP or other pension (25%), and disability benefits (25%). Other sources of income included binning/bottle collecting (16%) and OAS/GIS (12%).

More than half of all senior respondents (59%) reported having a medical condition, and seniors were more likely to report a medical condition than the total homeless population (41%). A higher proportion of senior respondents also reported a physical disability than the total homeless population (44% of seniors compared to 29% of the total homeless population). Seniors were less likely to report an addiction compared to the other sub-populations: 36% of senior respondents reported an addiction compared to 49% of the total homeless population. About one third of seniors (30%) reported a mental illness – similar to the total homeless population (34%).

The unsheltered senior respondents were more likely than the other sub-populations – except the long-term homeless – to have slept outside the night of March 11, 2014. Sixty-one percent of unsheltered senior respondents reported sleeping outside compared to 56% of the total homeless population.

## 6.5 The Long-Term Homeless

The long-term homeless are individuals who have been homeless for one year or longer. A total of 751 long-term homeless were identified in the 2014 Homeless Count, representing 41% of the total homeless population.

One quarter of the long-term homeless respondents were women (24%). Most of this sub-population (67%) were adults aged 25 to 54, however 9% were youth and 24% were seniors. Eighty-two percent of the long-term homeless reported being alone compared to 79% of the total homeless population, while 10% reported being with friends.

About one-third of the long-term homeless (32%) identified as an Aboriginal person, which is similar to the total homeless population (31%).

Similar to the total homeless population, the main sources of income reported by the long-term homeless were income assistance (44%) and disability benefits (23%).

The long-term homeless were more likely to have a medical condition compared to the total homeless population. For example, 35% of the long-term homeless reported a physical disability compared to 29% for the total homeless population. There was a smaller difference between the long-term and total homeless populations for other medical conditions, such as an addiction, medical condition, and mental illness, however, a slightly higher proportion of the long-term homeless reported these issues compared to the total homeless population.

The unsheltered long-term homeless were more likely than all other sub-populations to have slept outside the night of March 11, 2014. Sixty-seven percent of the unsheltered long-term homeless respondents reported sleeping outside compared to 56% of the total homeless population.

**Table 35: Sub-Population Profiles, 2014**

	Women				Aboriginal Identity				Youth (Under 25 years)				Seniors (55+)				Long-Term Homeless (1+ years)				Total Homeless			
	Shel-tered	Unshel-tered	Total	%	Shel-tered	Unshel-tered	Total	%	Shel-tered	Unshel-tered	Total	%	Shel-tered	Unshel-tered	Total	%	Shel-tered	Unshel-tered	Total	%	Shel-tered	Unshel-tered	Total	%
<b>Gender</b>																								
Men					137	231	368	64%	74	123	197	62%	179	119	298	81%	253	313	566	76%	733	686	1419	73%
Women	279	248	527	100%	94	113	207	36%	37	84	121	38%	42	27	69	19%	81	95	176	24%	279	248	527	27%
Transgender					N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6	3	9	<1%
Total Respondents					231	344	575	100%	111	207	318	100%	221	146	367	100%	334	408	742	100%	1,018	937	1,955	100%
<b>Age Groups</b>																								
Youth (up to 24)	37	84	121	23%	34	90	124	22%	113	209	322	100%					14	55	69	9%	113	209	322	17%
Adults (25 to 54)	197	135	332	64%	172	226	398	69%									221	277	498	67%	677	580	1,257	64%
Seniors (55+)	42	27	69	13%	24	30	54	9%					221	150	371	100%	95	82	177	24%	221	150	371	19%
Total Respondents	276	246	522	100%	230	346	576	100%									330	414	744	100%	1,011	939	1,950	100%
<b>Accompanied By</b>																								
Alone	183	146	329	67%	185	218	403	71%	87	121	208	68%	183	120	303	88%	303	304	607	82%	796	655	1,451	79%
With partner/spouse	19	28	47	10%	10	31	41	7%	6	24	30	10%	2	5	7	2%	10	28	38	5%	34	71	105	6%
With children	33	3	36	7%	14	1	15	3%	3	0	3	1%	3	1	4	1%	1	1	2	0%	34	7	41	2%
With friends	8	49	57	12%	8	74	82	15%	3	49	52	17%	8	14	22	6%	13	65	78	10%	30	152	182	10%
With relative	4	8	12	2%	6	10	16	3%	0	7	7	2%	0	0	0	0%	1	3	4	1%	8	16	24	1%
With pet	2	8	10	2%	3	7	10	2%	2	10	12	4%	1	4	5	1%	3	8	11	1%	7	24	31	2%
With other	4	9	13	3%	8	6	14	2%	2	3	5	2%	0	2	2	1%	6	6	12	2%	13	18	31	2%
Total Respondents	250	244	494		228	337	565		100	205	305		197	146	343		335	409	744		915	924	1,839	
<b>Aboriginal Identity</b>																								
Aboriginal	94	113	207	41%	235	347	582	100%	34	90	124	40%	24	30	54	16%	86	151	237	32%	235	347	582	31%
Not Aboriginal	169	123	292	59%					71	115	186	60%	180	110	290	84%	248	249	497	68%	724	558	1,282	69%
Total Respondents	263	236	499	100%					105	205	310	100%	204	140	344	100%	334	400	734	100%	959	905	1,864	100%
<b>Length of Time Homeless</b>																								
Short term (<1 mo)	66	37	103	21%	54	48	102	18%	30	46	76	25%	31	16	47	14%					201	136	337	19%
Medium term (1 mo to < 1yr)	101	111	212	43%	86	140	226	40%	51	106	157	52%	68	45	113	34%					363	366	729	40%
Long term (1 yr +)	81	95	176	36%	86	151	237	42%	14	55	69	23%	95	82	177	53%	336	415	751	100%	336	415	751	41%
Total Respondents	248	243	491	100%	226	339	565	100%	95	207	302	100%	194	143	337	100%					900	917	1,817	100%
<b>Sources of Income</b>																								
Income assistance	115	105	220	45%	102	169	271	48%	23	64	87	28%	62	47	109	32%	142	183	325	44%	364	413	777	43%
Disability benefit	70	47	117	24%	59	71	130	23%	9	9	18	6%	49	34	83	25%	97	72	169	23%	216	160	376	21%
OAS/GIS	8	2	10	2%	3	2	5	1%	0	0	0	0%	29	10	39	12%	19	6	25	3%	31	11	42	2%
CPP or other pension	25	4	29	6%	7	5	12	2%	0	0	0	0%	66	23	89	26%	42	19	61	8%	86	29	115	6%
Employment insurance	4	1	5	1%	1	2	3	1%	1	0	1	0%	4	1	5	1%	3	5	8	1%	19	8	27	1%
Youth agreement	1	4	5	1%	0	5	5	1%	1	5	6	2%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	1	6	7	0%

	Women				Aboriginal Identity				Youth (Under 25 years)				Seniors (55+)				Long-Term Homeless (1+ years)				Total Homeless			
Employment - part time	22	30	52	11%	45	49	94	17%	20	33	53	17%	22	13	35	10%	43	54	97	13%	156	131	287	16%
Employment - full-time	12	1	13	3%	17	5	22	4%	18	0	18	6%	5	1	6	2%	17	5	22	3%	68	14	82	4%
Binning, bottle collecting	8	36	44	9%	17	75	92	16%	3	24	27	9%	14	40	54	16%	27	113	140	19%	53	199	252	14%
Panhandling	7	46	53	11%	10	65	75	13%	2	67	69	22%	4	13	17	5%	18	86	104	14%	30	173	203	11%
Friends/family	19	41	60	12%	16	40	56	10%	18	40	58	19%	4	6	10	3%	13	26	39	5%	49	80	129	7%
Other	27	46	73	15%	19	52	71	13%	10	28	38	12%	11	15	26	8%	24	78	102	14%	69	135	204	11%
No income	19	26	45	9%	18	26	44	8%	22	44	66	21%	10	10	20	6%	22	32	54	7%	80	91	171	9%
Total Respondents	251	233	484		228	338	566		99	208	307		195	141	336		332	405	737		910	913	1,823	
<b>Health Condition</b>																								
Addiction	99	125	224	47%	115	203	318	58%	37	100	137	47%	68	49	117	36%	154	222	376	52%	390	481	871	49%
Medical condition	116	89	205	43%	101	125	226	41%	14	36	50	17%	121	71	192	59%	168	158	326	45%	395	328	723	41%
Mental illness	91	85	176	37%	61	117	178	32%	32	60	92	32%	52	48	100	30%	117	153	270	37%	296	314	610	34%
Physical disability	72	56	128	27%	63	86	149	27%	8	17	25	9%	89	55	144	44%	133	122	255	35%	272	235	507	29%
Total Respondents	248	226	474		224	326	550		95	196	291		196	132	328		325	399	724		894	881	1,775	
<b>Where Stayed Last Night</b>																								
Outside		92		37%		192		55%		84		40%		91		61%		276		67%		536		56%
Someone else's place		142		57%		143		41%		117		56%		54		36%		119		29%		381		40%
Other		14		6%		12		3%		8		4%		5		3%		20		5%		40		4%
Total Respondents		248		100%		347		100%		209		100%		150		100%		415		100%		957		100%

**Notes:**

- Youth includes only unaccompanied youth (i.e. does not include 88 children accompanied by a parent, so numbers do not add up to 410).
- Transgendered data is not included (except for the total homeless) to protect the privacy of the individuals.
- For the Categories: Accompanied By, Sources of Income, and Medical Condition, respondents could select more than one response. Therefore, numbers do not equal total respondents, and percentages do not add up to 100%.
- The total number of respondents is different for different questions because not everyone responded to each question and the data was provided through cross-tabulations.

## 7. Homelessness by Municipal Sub-Region

This section presents the Homeless Count results by municipal sub-regions within the Metro Vancouver region.<sup>59</sup>

### 7.1 Total Homeless Found by Municipal Sub-Region

A total of 2,777 homeless people were counted in the Metro Vancouver region on the night of March 11 and the day of March 12, 2014. Table 36 shows the distribution of this population according to the municipal sub-region where they were found. As can be seen, 80% of the homeless people were found in Vancouver and Surrey, with Vancouver having the largest concentration (65%), followed by Surrey (15%). The rest of the homeless people were found across the other municipal sub-regions.

**Table 36: Total Homeless by Municipal Sub-Region Found, 2014**

Sub-Region	Sheltered Homeless			Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	Adults and Unaccompanied youth	Accompanied children	No Fixed Address	Adults and Unaccompanied youth	Accompanied children	# Homeless	% Homeless
Burnaby	9	4	1	44	0	58	2%
Delta	10	0	0	5	0	15	1%
Langley	34	1	3	54	0	92	3%
Ridge Meadows	43	0	2	39	0	84	3%
New Westminster	58	12	2	31	3	106	4%
North Shore	51	3	5	59	1	119	4%
Richmond	11	0	5	22	0	38	1%
Surrey	195	15	53	140	0	403	15%
Tri-Cities	27	4	1	21	2	55	2%
Vancouver	1,103	40	124	533	3	1,803	65%
White Rock	0	0	4	0	0	4	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,541</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>200<sup>60</sup></b>	<b>948</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2,777</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Trends

The number of homeless people identified in Homeless Counts in the region has remained fairly stable since 2008 – increasing by 4% between 2008 and 2014. This is less than the rate of increase for the population of the Metro Vancouver region as a whole, which increased by 9% from 2008 to 2014.<sup>61</sup> It is not known whether this is due to greater success in helping people to exit homelessness or if fewer individuals are becoming homeless.

As well, the number of people who were found homeless in each municipal sub-region has not changed significantly since 2008. However, a notable 222 more homeless people were identified in Vancouver in 2014 compared to 2011 – further research is needed to determine why.

<sup>59</sup> Some data from the 2011 is inconsistent with previous trends and may be less reliable than 2008 data for the purpose of identifying trends and making comparisons.

<sup>60</sup> Among the individuals with no fixed address, 100 were in a detox facility, 93 were in a hospital, and 7 were in jail.

<sup>61</sup> Metro Vancouver Regional Planning Division. 2014. Metro Vancouver's population was 2,259,000 in 2008 and is estimated to be 2,468,000 in 2014.

**Table 37: Total Homeless by Municipal Sub-Region Found (2002 to 2014) - Trends**

Sub-Region	2002 Total Homeless	2005 Total Homeless	2008 Total Homeless	2011 Total Homeless	2014 Total Homeless	Change 2011 to 2014	
	#	#	#	#	#	#	%
Burnaby	18	42	86	78	58	-20	-26%
Delta/White Rock	11	12	17	14	19	5	36%
Langley	18	57	86	103	92	-11	-11%
Ridge Meadows	66	44	90	110	84	-26	-24%
New Westminster	74	97	124	132	106	-26	-20%
North Shore	47	90	127	122	119	-3	-2%
Richmond	31	35	56	49	38	-11	-22%
Surrey	171	392	402	400	403	3	1%
Tri-Cities	14	40	94	48	55	7	15%
Vancouver	670	1,364	1,576	1,581	1,803	222	14%
Unspecified	1	1	2	13	0	-13	-100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,121</b>	<b>2,174</b>	<b>2,660</b>	<b>2,650</b>	<b>2,777</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>5%</b>

Note: This table includes children who were accompanied by a parent.

## 7.2 Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless Population

As shown in Table 38, the distribution of the sheltered and unsheltered homeless shows that Vancouver was home to 70% of the total sheltered homeless population, where most of the shelter facilities are located. Although the actual percentages have not been calculated, Table 38 also shows that a higher proportion of the homeless population in Vancouver was sheltered rather than unsheltered, as was the case in Surrey, New Westminster, Ridge Meadows, and the Tri-Cities. On the other hand, in Burnaby, Langley, the North Shore and Richmond, a higher proportion of the homeless people found in these communities were unsheltered rather than sheltered. Appendix G provides additional tables on the sheltered and unsheltered homeless population found in municipal sub-regions since 2008.

**Table 38: Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless by Municipal Sub-Region Found, 2014**

Homeless population by municipal sub-region found	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Burnaby	14	1%	44	5%	58	2%
Delta	10	1%	5	1%	15	1%
Langley	38	2%	54	6%	92	3%
Ridge Meadows	45	2%	39	4%	84	3%
New Westminster	72	4%	34	4%	106	4%
North Shore	59	3%	60	6%	119	4%
Richmond	16	1%	22	2%	38	1%
Surrey	263	14%	140	15%	403	15%
Tri-Cities	32	2%	23	2%	55	2%
Vancouver	1,267	70%	536	56%	1,803	65%
White Rock	4	0%	0	0%	4	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>957</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,777</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: This table includes children who were accompanied by a parent.

## 7.3 Mobility of the Homeless Population

### *Length of Time in Municipality Found*

One of the key questions of interest to municipalities is the extent that people who are homeless move around within the region and move from other parts of BC and the country to communities within the Metro Vancouver region.

Table 39 shows that 79% of respondents who reported on the length of time they had lived in the city where they were interviewed had lived there for one year or more, including half (51%) who reported living there 10 years or more. More than 200 individuals reported that they had lived in the city their whole lives. This level of stability is fairly consistent across all the municipal sub-regions although less than half the respondents in Delta/White Rock, Langley, New Westminister, Richmond and the Tri-Cities reported having lived in the city where they were found 10 years or more.

Very few respondents (2%) reported having moved to the city where they were interviewed less than a week before the Homeless Count. Langley showed the highest percentage of homeless people who had just moved to the city where they were interviewed prior to the Homeless Count.

**Table 39: Total Homeless by Length of Time in Municipal Sub-Region Found, 2014**

Length of time in municipal sub-region found	Less than 1 Week		1 Week to under 1 Year		1 Year to under 5 Years		5 Years to under 10 Years		10 Years or More		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Burnaby	1	2%	7	15%	10	22%	3	7%	25	54%	46	100%
Delta/White Rock	0	0%	5	42%	0	0%	3	25%	4	33%	12	100%
Langley	9	12%	23	31%	15	20%	7	9%	21	28%	75	100%
Ridge Meadows	0	0%	11	16%	9	13%	6	9%	42	62%	68	100%
New Westminister	2	3%	23	39%	9	15%	7	12%	18	31%	59	100%
North Shore	2	2%	8	10%	14	17%	4	5%	53	65%	81	100%
Richmond	0	0%	4	14%	8	29%	4	14%	12	43%	28	100%
Surrey	2	1%	45	17%	41	15%	40	15%	144	53%	272	100%
Tri-Cities	0	0%	11	26%	6	14%	5	12%	20	48%	42	100%
Vancouver	16	1%	204	19%	184	17%	110	10%	572	53%	1,086	100%
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>911</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>1,769</b>	<b>100%</b>

### *Where From*

Another key question of interest to municipalities is where people who were homeless came from if they were new to the municipality where they were interviewed (i.e. had lived there for less than one year). Table 40 shows that in most municipal sub-regions: Burnaby, Delta/White Rock, Langley, Ridge Meadows, Richmond and Surrey, at least 50% of respondents who reported moving there within the year were from another community within the Metro Vancouver region.

Most of the homeless people who moved to the Tri-Cities within the year were from another part of BC outside the Metro Vancouver region. In Vancouver and the North Shore, most of the homeless people who moved there were from another part of Canada. In Vancouver, 117 of the respondents who reported having lived in the City for less than one year (56%) were from another part of Canada.



**Table 40: Total Homeless by Where From if New to Community Found < 1 year, 2014**

Where from if new to community found < 1 year	Within Metro Vancouver Region		Rest of BC		Rest of Canada		Outside Canada		Total Responses	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Burnaby	4	57%	1	14%	2	29%	0	0%	7	100%
Delta/White Rock	5	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	5	100%
Langley	18	56%	9	28%	5	16%	0	0%	32	100%
Ridge Meadows	6	60%	3	30%	1	10%	0	0%	10	100%
New Westminster	13	65%	1	5%	6	30%	0	0%	20	100%
North Shore	2	20%	3	30%	5	50%	0	0%	10	100%
Richmond	2	50%	0	0%	1	25%	1	25%	4	100%
Surrey	21	50%	13	31%	8	19%	0	0%	42	100%
Tri-Cities	4	36%	6	55%	1	9%	0	0%	11	100%
Vancouver	30	14%	55	26%	117	56%	6	3%	208	100%
<b>Total Respondents<sup>62</sup></b>	<b>105</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 7.4 Age and Municipal Sub-Region

### Youth and Children

A total of 410 homeless children and youth (under the age of 25) were identified in the 2014 Homeless Count.<sup>63</sup> Most of these children and youth were found in Vancouver (62%) followed by Surrey (13%). Region-wide, a higher proportion of youth were unsheltered rather than sheltered, but most of the children who were accompanied by a parent were sheltered.

**Table 41: Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless Youth and Children by Municipal Sub-Region, 2014**

Sub-Region	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Burnaby	4	2%	5	2%	9	2%
Delta/White Rock	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Langley	2	1%	18	8%	20	5%
Ridge Meadows	7	4%	8	4%	15	4%
New Westminster	16	8%	8	4%	24	6%
North Shore	14	7%	10	5%	24	6%
Richmond	2	1%	0	0%	2	0%
Surrey	25	13%	27	12%	52	13%
Tri-Cities	6	3%	3	1%	9	2%
Vancouver	116	60%	139	64%	255	62%
<b>Total</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: This table includes children accompanied by a parent.

<sup>62</sup> The total number of respondents in Table 40 (349) is not the same as the total number of respondents who reported being homeless less than one year in Table 39 (373) because not all respondents would have answered the question about how long they had been in the city where they were found.

<sup>63</sup> This includes 88 children under the age of 19 who were accompanied by a parent who was homeless (sheltered and unsheltered).

## Seniors

A total of 371 homeless seniors (55 and older) were identified in the 2014 Homeless Count. Most of these seniors were found in Vancouver (55%) and Surrey (17%). In contrast to the findings for homeless youth, region-wide, a higher proportion of seniors were sheltered rather than unsheltered. However, this was not the case in Burnaby, Langley, New Westminister, the North Shore, and Richmond, where most of the homeless seniors were unsheltered.

**Table 42: Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless Seniors by Municipal Sub-Region, 2014**

Sub-Region	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Burnaby	2	1%	8	5%	10	3%
Delta/White Rock	4	2%	1	1%	5	1%
Langley	6	3%	8	5%	14	4%
Ridge Meadows	9	4%	6	4%	15	4%
New Westminister	5	2%	6	4%	11	3%
North Shore	8	4%	23	15%	31	8%
Richmond	4	2%	7	5%	11	3%
Surrey	45	20%	19	13%	64	17%
Tri-Cities	3	1%	2	1%	5	1%
Vancouver	135	61%	70	47%	205	55%
<b>Total</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 7.5 Aboriginal Identity and Municipal Sub-Region

A total of 582 homeless people identified as an Aboriginal person in the 2014 Homeless Count. Most of them were in Vancouver (71%) and Surrey (12%). A higher proportion of Aboriginal Peoples who responded to the survey were unsheltered rather than sheltered, and this was the case throughout the region.

**Table 43: Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless Aboriginal Peoples by Municipal Sub-Region, 2014**

Sub-Region	Sheltered Homeless		Unsheltered Homeless		Total Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Burnaby	2	1%	11	3%	13	2%
Delta/White Rock	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Langley	2	1%	13	4%	15	3%
Ridge Meadows	7	3%	14	4%	21	4%
New Westminister	7	3%	9	3%	16	3%
North Shore	10	4%	13	4%	23	4%
Richmond	0	0%	6	2%	6	1%
Surrey	27	11%	40	12%	67	12%
Tri-Cities	2	1%	4	1%	6	1%
Vancouver	178	76%	237	68%	415	71%
<b>Total</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 8. Conclusions and Recommendations

All homeless counts are undercounts. They are a complex and challenging undertaking, especially on a regional scale. The 2014 Homeless Count built on past experiences and lessons learned from previous counts. According to the project team, the process to implement the count was as good as it could possibly be, and the count was well organized. Nevertheless, many communities have expressed frustration that despite their “extraordinary efforts” to implement the count, the results do not reflect the true extent of homelessness in their communities.

The count coordinators have recommended more research and consultation to find alternatives to the Homeless Count and to improve the methodology to achieve a more accurate estimate of the number of people who are homeless in the region. It has also been recommended that steps be taken to improve the response rate among homeless people in the shelters – since a low survey response rate makes it difficult to draw reliable conclusions about the sheltered homeless population.

While the Homeless Count has provided a great deal of information about the homeless population in the Metro Vancouver region and about changes in the homeless population since 2002, it has also raised several questions. It is suggested that further research be undertaken to address the following questions:

- According to the Homeless Count data, it appears that the proportion of respondents with no health conditions has declined over the years while the proportion with two or more health conditions has increased. Is this because people who first become homeless have more health issues than in the past, do people with more serious health issues face more barriers to housing compared to homeless people with fewer health issues, or is an increase in health conditions due to an aging homeless population?<sup>64</sup>
- Do the newly homeless get housed quickly or do they become the long-term homeless?
- It appears that among shelter users, a higher proportion stayed for less than 30 days in 2014 compared to 2011. Is this because they found housing or were they unable/unwilling to stay longer?<sup>65</sup>
- While the number of people identified in Homeless Counts has remained fairly stable since 2008, is this because of greater success in helping people to exit homelessness or are fewer people becoming homeless?
- Looking at all the Homeless Counts in the Metro Vancouver region, an average of 300 people became homeless every month. Are these individuals who are homeless for the first time or are they are episodically homeless (i.e. have experienced a previous episode of homelessness within the year).<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> It has been suggested that multiple health conditions are a barrier to housing - especially with more visible issues (e.g. teeth and a limp).

<sup>65</sup> It has been suggested that outreach workers are having success with first-time homeless individuals. However, it is taking a long time for income assistance applications to be processed.

<sup>66</sup> This should not be interpreted as a net increase of 300 new homeless individuals each month as some people who are homeless are also likely to exit homelessness each month.

## Appendix A – Estimate of Annual Prevalence of Homelessness in the Metro Vancouver Region

The Corporation for Supportive Housing in the U.S. developed the following formula to estimate the annual prevalence of homelessness based on point-in-time homeless counts.

$$\text{Annual Prevalence} = A + [(B*51)*(1-C)]$$

A = Point-in-time count of currently homeless people, including adults and children, found in the street and shelter counts

B = Number of currently homeless adults and children who became homeless within the last 7 days of the count

C = Proportion (expressed in decimals) of currently homeless adults and children who had a previous homeless episode within the past 12 months of the count.

This formula was adjusted by the Streethome Foundation because data on the episodically homeless was not available. The ratio used by Streethome to estimate annual prevalence was the number of people homeless one year or more/total number of homeless with information on length of time homeless.<sup>67</sup>

The following calculation was used to estimate the annual prevalence of homelessness in the Metro Vancouver region based on the 2014 Homeless Count.

$$\text{Annual Estimate} = A + [(B*51)*(1-C)]$$

A = Total number of people identified as homeless in the point-in-time count =  
2689 + 88 children = 2,777.

B = Number of individuals who were homeless within 7 days (i.e. up to and including 7 days) =  
97 + 7 children = 104.

C = Proportion (expressed in decimals) of people homeless one year or more/total number of homeless with information on length of time homeless =

$$\frac{751 + 2 \text{ children}}{1817 + 55 \text{ children}}^{68} = \frac{753}{1872} = 0.4022435$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Annual estimate} &= 2,777 + [(104*51)*(1-.4022435)] \\ &= 2,777+[5304*.5977565] \\ &= 2,777+3171 \\ &= \mathbf{5,948} \end{aligned}$$

<sup>67</sup> The CSH approach states that children should be included in this calculation. The Streethome calculation may not have included children.

<sup>68</sup> Information on length of time homeless is available for 55 children who were accompanied by a parent.

## Appendix B – Locations for Shelters, Transition Houses, and Safe Houses

Surveyed Shelters, Safe Houses and Transition Houses	Municipality	Type	Capacity
Burnaby EWS	Burnaby	Shelter	27
Fraserdale Short Stay Shelter	Burnaby	Shelter	10
Dixon House	Burnaby	Transition	10
Scottsdale House	Delta	Shelter	10
Salvation Army Gateway of Hope	Langley	Shelter	32
Ishtar Transition House	Langley	Transition	12
Iron Horse Youth Safe House	Maple Ridge	Safe	5
Salvation Army Caring Place	Maple Ridge	Shelter	40
Cythera Transition House - Closed for maintenance	Maple Ridge	Transition	0
Elizabeth Gurney House	New West	Shelter	12
Fraserdale Family Shelter	New West	Shelter	12
New West EWS	New West	Shelter	27
Russell Housing	New West	Shelter	16
Stevenson House, Salvation Army	New West	Shelter	14
Monarch Place	New West	Transition	12
North Shore Youth Safe House	North Vancouver	Safe	8
North Shore Shelter - Lookout	North Vancouver	Shelter	45
Sage Transition House	North Vancouver	Transition	18
Joys Place Transition House	Port Coquitlam	Transition	15
Bridge Shelter/Hope for Freedom	Port Moody	Shelter	30
Richmond House, Salvation Army	Richmond	Shelter	10
Nova Transition House	Richmond	Transition	10
All Nations Youth Safe House	Surrey	Safe	6
Servants Anonymous	Surrey	Safe	21
Cynthias Place	Surrey	Shelter	14
Hyland House - Cloverdale	Surrey	Shelter	10
Hyland House - Newton	Surrey	Shelter	35
Keys Gateway	Surrey	Shelter	40
Maxxine Wright Shelter	Surrey	Shelter	12
Sheenas Place (Family)	Surrey	Shelter	12
SUMS EWS	Surrey	Shelter	60
Ama Transition House	Surrey	Transition	7
Durrant House	Surrey	Transition	10
Evergreen Transition House	Surrey	Transition	10
Shimai Transition House	Surrey	Transition	10
Virginia Sam - Closed for maintenance	Surrey	Transition	0
Aboriginal Youth Safe House	Vancouver	Safe	7
Walden Safe House -FSGV	Vancouver	Safe	9
201 Central St Aboriginal Shelter	Vancouver	Shelter	100
412 Womens Emergency Shelter	Vancouver	Shelter	50
Anderson Lodge	Vancouver	Shelter	10
Belkin House	Vancouver	Shelter	72
Belkin House Downtown Community Court	Vancouver	Shelter	11
Catholic Charities	Vancouver	Shelter	102

Covenant House Drake	Vancouver	Shelter	24
Covenant House Pender	Vancouver	Shelter	30
First Baptist Church	Vancouver	Shelter	25
First United Church	Vancouver	Shelter	60
Lookout Downtown	Vancouver	Shelter	47
Lookout Yukon	Vancouver	Shelter	71
New Fountain, PHS	Vancouver	Shelter	46
Powell Place, Bloom	Vancouver	Shelter	52
Raincity Ontario	Vancouver	Shelter	45
Raincity Richards	Vancouver	Shelter	37
Raincity Triage	Vancouver	Shelter	28
Salvation Army Beacon	Vancouver	Shelter	60
Salvation Army Crosswalk	Vancouver	Shelter	36
Salvation Army Haven	Vancouver	Shelter	40
Salvation Army Anchor of Hope	Vancouver	Shelter	40
Springhouse Bloom	Vancouver	Shelter	32
Union Gospel Mission	Vancouver	Shelter	72
Union Gospel Mission Day Shelter	Vancouver	Shelter	20
Vi Fineday	Vancouver	Shelter	18
Helping Spirit Lodge	Vancouver	Transition	10
Kate Booth Transition House	Vancouver	Transition	25
Vancouver Rape Relief	Vancouver	Transition	10

## Appendix C – Locations for People with No Fixed Address (NFA)

Municipal Sub-Region	No Fixed Address Locations		
	Hospitals	Detox	Jails
Burnaby	Burnaby Hospital	PLEA Youth Detox (Coquitlam and Burnaby)	Burnaby RCMP
Delta	Delta Hospital		
White Rock	Peace Arch Hospital		
Langley	Langley Memorial		Langley RCMP
Ridge Meadows	Ridge Meadows Hospital		
New Westminster	Royal Columbian Hospital		New West Police Department
North Shore	Lions Gate Hospital		West Vancouver Police Department
North Shore	Magnolia House		North Vancouver RCMP
Richmond	Richmond Hospital		Richmond RCMP
Richmond	Bridge House		
Surrey	Yale Road Centre	Creekside Withdrawal Management	Surrey RCMP
Surrey	Surrey Memorial	Quibble Creek Sobering and Assessment Centre	
Tri-Cities	Eagle Ridge Hospital	PLEA Youth Detox (Coquitlam and Burnaby)	Port Moody Police
Tri-Cities			Coquitlam RCMP
Vancouver	UBC Hospital	FSGV Youth Detox	Vancouver Police Department
Vancouver	Vancouver General Hospital	Salvation Army Cordova Detox (Harbourlight)	
Vancouver	St. Paul's Hospital	Vancouver Detox	
Vancouver	Mt. St. Joseph's Hospital		
Vancouver	BC Women's and Children's Hospital		

**Shelter Survey**  
*2014 Metro Vancouver Homeless Count*



Interviewer Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Facility Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Shelter, Safe House, Transition House, or Detox Centre)

**PART I : SCREENING**

- 1. Will you be sleeping here tonight?  
 Yes  
 No (END)
- 2. Have you already answered this survey tonight (with someone wearing a yellow button)?  
 Yes (END)  
 No
- 3. Do you currently have a place to stay that you pay rent for?  
 Yes (END)  
 No (Go to Q. 4)

**PART II : SURVEY**

- 4. How long have you been without a place of your own? \_\_\_\_\_  
# Days # Weeks # Months # Years
- 5. What is your age or year of birth?  
Age \_\_\_\_\_ Year of Birth \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. Observed gender. (Youth interviewers ask: How do you identify)?  
Male Female Transgendered Unknown
- 7. Including tonight, how many nights in a row have you stayed at this shelter? \_\_\_\_\_  
# Days # Weeks # Months # Years
- 8. Is there anybody with you tonight?  
 No (Go to Q.9)  
 Yes **Who?**  
**Check all that apply.**
  - Partner/Spouse
  - Child(ren) Age(s) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Friend(s)
  - Pet(s)
  - Relative(s)
- 9. How long have you lived in this city?  
# Days # Weeks # Months # Years
- 10. Where were you living before you came to this city? (i.e. what city)?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (Specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- 11. What do you think is keeping you from finding a place of your own? **Check all that apply.**
  - Income too low
  - No income/no income assistance
  - Rent too high
  - Family breakdown/abuse/conflict
  - Evicted
  - Health or disability issues
  - Mental health issues
  - Addiction
  - Conflict with the law
  - Poor housing condition
  - Pets
  - Discrimination
  - Other (Specify): \_\_\_\_\_



## PART II : SURVEY ( Continued )

**12.** Do you consider yourself to be an Aboriginal \_\_\_\_\_ person?

- Yes (**Go to Q.14**)
- No

**13.** Are you new to Canada within the last 5 \_\_\_\_\_ years?

- Yes **From where?** \_\_\_\_\_
- No

**14.** What is your first language?

- English
- French
- Other (**Specify**): \_\_\_\_\_

**15.** Where do you get your money from?

**Check all that apply.**

- Welfare/income assistance
- Disability benefit
- Employment insurance
- Old age security/guaranteed income supplement
- CPP or other pension
- Job full-time
- Job part-time or casual
- Panhandling
- Binning/bottle collecting
- Money from family/friends
- Youth agreement
- Other (**Specify**): \_\_\_\_\_
- No income

**16.** Do you have the following health problems?

**(Read List)            Yes    No**

Medical condition						Specify: _____
Physical disability						
Addiction						
Mental illness						

**17.** What services have you used in the past 12 months? **Check all that apply.**

- Ambulance
- Emergency room
- Hospital (non emergency)
- Dental clinic or dentist
- Mental health services
- Addiction services
- Employment/Job help
- Parole or services for ex-offenders
- Drop-in
- Food banks
- Meal programs/soup kitchens
- Health clinic
- Newcomer services
- Transitional housing
- Housing help/eviction prevention
- Outreach
- Legal
- Budgeting/trusteeship
- Other (**Specify**): \_\_\_\_\_
- None

**18.** How many different times in the past 12 months have you been without a place of your own? (*i.e. In and out of homelessness*)?

- First time homeless
- If more than one, how many times? \_\_\_\_\_ # times
- Don't know

**19.** Have you ever had any military service in the Canadian Forces? (*Includes army, navy, airforce*).

- Yes
- No

# Street Survey

## 2014 Metro Vancouver Homeless Count



Interviewer Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Individuals observed to be homeless but **not** interviewed:

Perceived Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Perceived Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Reason **not** interviewed: \_\_\_\_\_

Nearest Intersection/Facility found: \_\_\_\_\_

### PART I : SCREENING

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <p>1. Have you already answered a survey today (<b>with someone wearing a yellow button</b>)?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes (END)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> | <p>3. Where did you stay last night?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Outside or in a vehicle<br/>(Go to Q. 4)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Someone else’s place<br/>(Go to Q.4)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parent(s)/guardian’s house – If <b>youth</b> (END)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Shelter, Safe House, Transition House (END)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Detox (END)</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> Recovery house (END)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hospital (END)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Own place inside (Specify): _____ (END)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify): _____ (Go to Q.4)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No answer (END)</p> |
| <p>2. Do you currently have a place to stay that you pay rent for?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes (END)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No (Go to Q.3)</p>                |   |  |

### PART II : SURVEY

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>4. How long have you been without a place of your own?</p> <p>_____</p> <p><b># Days   # Weeks   # Months   # Years</b></p>   | <p>8. How long have you lived in this city?</p> <p>_____</p> <p><b># Days   # Weeks   # Months   # Years</b></p>  |
| <p>5. What is your age or year of birth?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Age                      Year of Birth</p>  | <p>9. Where were you living before you came to this city (<i>i.e. what city</i>)?</p> <p>_____</p>  |
| <p>6. Observed gender. (<i>Youth interviewers ask: How do you identify</i>)?</p> <p>Male    Female    Transgendered    Unknown</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/>           <input type="checkbox"/>           <input type="checkbox"/>           <input type="checkbox"/></p>  | <p>10. What do you think is keeping you from finding a place of your own? <b>Check all that apply.</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Income too low</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Evicted</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No income/no income assistance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Addiction</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Rent too high</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mental health issues</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Family breakdown/abuse/conflict</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Conflict with law</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pets</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Poor housing conditions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify): _____</p> |
| <p>7. Is there anybody with you today?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No (Go to Q.8)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <b>Who?</b></p> <p><b>Check all that apply.</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partner/spouse</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Child(ren) Age(s) _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Friend(s)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pet(s)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Relative(s)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify): _____</p> |   |

## PART II : SURVEY ( Continued )

11. What is the **main** reason you did not stay in a shelter last night? **Check only one.**

- Able to stay with a friend
- Don't feel safe
- Turned away - Shelter full
- Turned away - Other reason
- Can't get to shelter
- Didn't know about shelters
- Bedbugs/pests
- Dislike (**Reason**): \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (**Specify**): \_\_\_\_\_

12. Have you stayed in a shelter in the last 12 months?

- Yes
- No

13. Do you consider yourself to be an Aboriginal person?

- Yes (**Go to Q.15**)
- No

14. Are you new to Canada within the last 5 years?

- Yes **From where?** \_\_\_\_\_
- No

15. What is your first language?

- English
- French
- Other (**Specify**): \_\_\_\_\_

16. Where do you get your money from?

**Check all that apply.**

- Welfare/income assistance
- Panhandling
- Disability benefit
- Binning/bottles
- Employment insurance
- Youth agreement
- Money from family/friends
- Job full-time
- Job part-time or casual
- Old age security/guaranteed income supplement
- CPP or other pension
- No income
- Other (**Specify**): \_\_\_\_\_

17. Do you have the following health problems?

(**Read List**)      **Yes**      **No**

Medical condition	Yes	No	Specify: _____
Physical disability			
Addiction			
Mental illness			

18. What services have you used in the past 12 months? **Check all that apply.**

- Ambulance
- Emergency room
- Hospital (non emergency)
- Dental clinic or dentist
- Mental health services
- Addiction services
- Employment/Job help
- Parole or services for ex-offenders
- Drop-in
- Food banks
- Meal programs/soup kitchens
- Health clinic
- Newcomer services
- Transitional housing
- Housing help/eviction prevention
- Outreach
- Legal
- Budgeting/trusteeship
- Other (**Specify**): \_\_\_\_\_
- None

19. How many different times in the past 12 months have you been without a place of our own? (**i.e. in and out of homelessness**)?

- First time homeless
- If more than one, how many times? \_\_\_\_\_ # of times
- Don't know

20. Have you ever had any military service in the Canadian Forces? (**Includes army, navy, airforce**).

- Yes
- No

21. **Interviewer:** Note nearest intersection **or facility** where interview is taking place. Be specific (**i.e. intersection of Davie & Burrard**):

## Appendix F – Homeless Count Volunteers

A total of 954 individuals completed an on-line registration form for the Homeless Count in 2014, while 915 completed a training session and signed waivers to participate. This was a 32% increase compared to 2011, and a 14% increase compared to 2008. In 2005, 300 volunteers participated throughout the region.

**Table A1. Total Homeless Count Volunteers (2008 to 2014)**

Sub-Region	2008 Volunteers	2011 Volunteers	2014 Volunteers	Change 2011 to 2014	
				#	% Change
Burnaby	58	99	90	-9	-9%
Delta	0	16	8	-8	-50%
Langley	42	37	45	8	22%
Ridge Meadows	18	33	40	7	21%
New Westminster	48	70	36	-34	-49%
North Shore	60	19	51	32	168%
Richmond	51	39	54	15	38%
Surrey/White Rock	125*	77	162	85	110%
Tri-Cities	45	52	39	-13	-25%
Vancouver**	252	173	330	157	91%
Aboriginal Strategy	71	76	60	-16	-21%
Shelter Volunteers	36	Included above	Included above		
<b>Total</b>	<b>806</b>	<b>691</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>32%</b>

\*Includes Delta

\*\*Includes volunteers for Pacific Spirit Regional Park, in Electoral Area A.

## Appendix G - Sheltered and Unsheltered Homeless Population Found in Municipal Sub-Regions since 2008

**Table 4.1 Sheltered Homeless in Metro Vancouver by Municipal Sub-Region (2008 to 2014) - Trends**

Sub-Region	2008 Sheltered Homeless		2011 Sheltered Homeless		2014 Sheltered Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Burnaby	9	1%	8	0%	14	1%
Delta/White Rock	6	1%	1	0%	14	1%
Langley	12	1%	43	2%	38	2%
Ridge Meadows	50	5%	47	2%	45	2%
New Westminster	52	5%	91	5%	72	4%
North Shore	60	6%	67	4%	59	3%
Richmond	19	2%	15	1%	16	1%
Surrey	95	9%	170	9%	263	14%
Tri-Cities	18	2%	20	1%	32	2%
Vancouver	765	70%	1,427	75%	1,267	70%
Unspecified	0	0%	3	0%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,086</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,892</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,820</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 4.2: Unsheltered Homeless in Metro Vancouver by Municipal Sub-Region (2008 to 2014) - Trends**

Sub-Region	2008 Unsheltered Homeless		2011 Unsheltered Homeless		2014 Unsheltered Homeless	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Burnaby	77	5%	70	9%	44	5%
Delta/White Rock	11	1%	13	2%	5	1%
Langley	74	5%	60	8%	54	6%
Ridge Meadows	40	3%	63	8%	39	4%
New Westminster	72	5%	41	5%	34	4%
North Shore	67	4%	55	7%	60	6%
Richmond	37	2%	34	4%	22	2%
Surrey	307	20%	230	30%	140	15%
Tri-Cities	76	5%	28	4%	23	2%
Vancouver	811	52%	154	20%	536	56%
Unspecified	2	0%	10	1%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,574</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>758</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>957</b>	<b>100%</b>