

**Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness in Durham
&
The Council to End Homelessness in Durham**

Findings from the 2010 Point-in-Time Count
Of Homeless People in Durham
Thursday, March 18, 2010

This count was conducted in emergency and transitional shelters on January 27, 2010. Outreach to unsheltered homeless people to identify and count them was done throughout the evening of Jan. 27 and during the day on January 28.

Total Homeless Count

The overall number of homeless people counted in Durham increased twenty-six percent, from 535 to 675 people, between 2009 and 2010. This significant increase was not unexpected, especially in light of a local unemployment rate that more than doubled between December 2007 (3.9%) and December 2009 (7.9%).

An expanded and improved effort to identify unsheltered homeless people, i.e. people living in the woods or abandoned houses, resulted in the unsheltered count nearly doubling, from 34 to 66 persons. The additional 32 persons counted “on the streets” represented twenty-three percent of the total increase of 140 persons.

Homeless Families and Children

Homeless service providers anticipated at the time of the 2009 PIT report that homelessness among families would increase in 2009. Unfortunately, that proved to be true, as the number of homeless families increased by fifty percent between 2009 and 2010, from 34 to 51 families. The count identified 84 homeless children, an increase of thirty-five percent from 2009. The increase in homelessness among families accounted for thirty percent of the total increase, although the 141 people in homeless families represented only twenty-one percent of the total count.

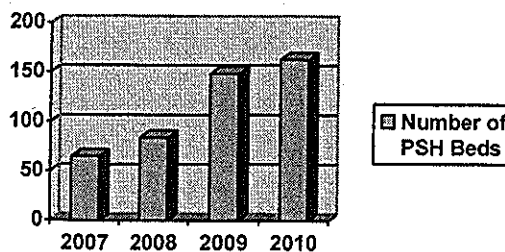
The Importance of Permanent Supportive, Transitional, and Emergency Shelter

Durham’s Continuum of Care for homeless people is working, although the homelessness caused by the economic crisis is straining the system’s capacity. The graph on the left below shows that, of the total number of homeless people, the percentage of them counted in emergency shelters has decreased from nearly 60% in 2007 to about 43% in 2010, while the percentage of people in transitional shelter has increased correspondingly. The graph on the right illustrates the growth in the number of permanent supportive housing beds in Durham in the last three years.

Percentage Comparison: Emerg. Shelter Vs. Trans. Hsg, 2007-2010



Growth in PSH Beds, 2007-2010



Durham's inventory of emergency and transitional shelter beds has increased, in an effort to meet the increased need. Of special note are the addition of 24 beds of transitional housing for homeless veterans operated by Volunteers of America of the Carolinas and ten beds of transitional housing for victims of domestic violence recently opened by the Durham Crisis Response Center.

It is also significant to note that the supply of permanent supportive housing has increased by over 150% in just three years, from 65 beds in 2007 to 163 beds in 2010. "Permanent" means housing secured by a lease, with rights and responsibilities for the leaseholder. "Supportive" means that the tenant has easy access to services as needed, which may include mental health and addictions treatment, primary health care, vocational development, and financial management, etc. In 2010, 141 formerly homeless persons were in permanent supportive housing, compared to just 76 persons in 2008. (Note: these individuals are not included in the PIT Count, since they now are in permanent housing.)

Homelessness and Publicly Funded Institutions

This year's PIT count showed significant decreases in the number of homeless persons discharged from a publicly funded institution, e.g. jails, prisons, state mental hospitals, addiction treatment facilities, general hospitals, prior to their last episode of homelessness. The number decreased by over thirty percent, from 243 individuals in 2009 to 168 people in 2010. Discharges from criminal justice institutions and hospitals decreased by forty-three and forty-four percent, respectively.

Of particular note is that, according to The Durham Center, in the period July-Dec. 2009, 26 homeless people in Durham were admitted to hospitals for mental health or addictions treatment. Upon discharge, only four (15%) were discharged to an emergency shelter. By comparison, in the six month period, Jan.-June 2008, 26 people had been discharged into homelessness.

Chronically Homeless People

The number of chronically homeless people was nearly identical to that of the previous year; 141 people in 2010 and 142 people in 2009 were identified as chronically homeless. With the overall increase in the number counted, the percentage of the total population that was chronically homeless decreased from 27% in 2009 to 21% in 2010. A chronically homeless is defined as someone who has been homeless for a year or longer or who has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the last three years.

Homeless Veterans

The number of homeless veterans increased by fifteen percent, to 106 persons. This represents sixteen percent of the total count. On the national level, in 2009, the Veterans Administration set a goal of ending homelessness among veterans in five years! Some of the increase may be attributed to the Volunteers of America of the Carolinas opening a 24-unit transitional housing program for homeless veterans in 2009. The VA is working with HUD (the Dept. of Housing & Urban Development) to increase the supply of Section 8 certificates to enable more homeless veterans in Durham to secure permanent housing.

About the Ten Year Plan and the Council to End Homelessness in Durham

The Ten Year Plan (TYP) is a bold initiative to end long-term homelessness in Durham and to reduce the length of time any homeless person would spend in an emergency shelter to less than forty-five days. The plan was adopted by the Durham County Board of Commissioners and the Durham City Council in 2006.

Established, in 1995, the Council to End Homelessness in Durham (CEHD) is a coalition of housing and homeless service providers working collaboratively to seek solutions to homelessness and to advocate for effective public policies and funding.

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