During Guelph-Wellington Registry Week 2016, 295 individuals in our community were found to be experiencing homelessness during a three-day period (April 25th to April 27th).

Key Findings

- During Guelph-Wellington Registry Week 2016, 295 individuals were found to be experiencing homelessness during a three-day period (April 25th to April 27th). This includes 14 families, comprised of 15 parents/guardians and 19 dependents.
- In total, 29% of individuals were youth between 16 and 24 years, and 71% were adults aged 25 years and older. The average age was 34.5 years.
- The three main reasons individuals lost their housing was family conflict or violence (30%), housing issues (28%), and income (16%).
- When asked where do you sleep most frequently, 42% of individuals said couch surfing, 26% said an emergency shelter, 14% said sheltered at a friend’s or family’s home, 12% said they went to the street, and 12% said they alternated between friends and family.
- A considerable number of youth (68%) and adults (60%) were experiencing chronic homelessness (homeless for six months or more in the past year), while 25% of youth and 30% of adults were facing episodic homelessness (three or more episodes of homelessness within the past year). A number of youth (18%) and adults (36%) were both chronically and episodically homeless.
- Related to physical health, 18% of youth and 21% of adult respondents said their physical health has caused them to lose their housing and a high number (66% of youth and 57% of adults) said they avoid getting help when sick or not feeling well.
- Analysis demonstrates that 30% of youth and 23% of adult respondents were tri-morbidity, meaning they were living with physical health, mental health, and substance use issues (Figure 2).
- Information from Registry Week is collected to help determine the best type of support and housing intervention for an individual by providing a score based on overall vulnerability and acuity (depth of need). Among adults, 7% scored low (no housing intervention or case management needed), 38% scored medium (recommended for rapid re-housing), and 57% scored high (permanent supportive housing needed). Among youth, 0% scored low, 34% scored medium, and 66% scored high.

Next Steps

Following Registry Week 2016, the Guelph-Wellington 20,000 Homes Campaign set a local target of helping 30 of the most vulnerable individuals experiencing homelessness to find and maintain housing. Additional outcomes have since been identified, including the development of a Coordinated Entry System and an up-to-date By Name List.

Six-month targets will be continually set by the 20,000 Homes Leadership Committee until July 2018, when the campaign ends. As a participating community of 20,000 Homes, Guelph-Wellington has committed to a number of practices, including: using a common assessment tool, prioritizing supports to people identified as the “most vulnerable”, using a Housing First approach, reporting monthly on the number of people who secured housing, conducting a community self-assessment, developing a by-name list and sharing ideas with participating communities.

References

- Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness. “About 20,000 Homes.” 20,000 Homes, 7 July 2016.

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