



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 29, 2020

EVERYONE COUNTS **District-wide homelessness count results**

North Bay, ON – Over a 24 hour period between March 11 and March 12, 2020, there were a total of 293 individuals counted as being homeless. Of that number, 254 completed surveys. These are the results of a Point in Time (PiT) enumeration of homelessness in Nipissing District, which included the municipalities of North Bay, Mattawa, and West Nipissing. In the previous PiT count in 2018, 182 people were counted and of those, 147 were surveyed over a four day period. Using these figures, the homelessness count has increased by nearly 62%.

The objective of the Everyone Counts - Nipissing District initiative, overseen by the District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board (DNSSAB), was to gather demographic, numerical, and community need information on the District's homeless population in order to more accurately understand the issues facing homeless individuals in the District. This initiative was funded by the Government of Canada's Reaching Home Strategy.

"These surveys provide us with an important snapshot of what is going on in our district so that we can better support the needs of homeless individuals," says DNSSAB Chair, Mark King. "This information is even more valuable now during the pandemic where managing homelessness is becoming more critical," he adds.

It is important to note that Nipissing was one of the few districts able to complete the PiT count before the forced cancellation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks go to the seven local organizations that are members of the Nipissing District Housing and Homelessness Partnership (NDHHP) and volunteered to sit on a Committee to support this enumeration of homelessness from planning through to execution of the survey.

SEE BELOW AND ATTACHED INFOGRAPHIC FOR REPORT FINDINGS

Among the 293 people counted/surveyed, the following homelessness categories included:

- 72 people Emergency/VAW sheltered (administrative count).
- 10 people transitionally housed (administrative count).
- 91 people counted as homeless in public institutions with no fixed address.
- 68 people surveyed as hidden homeless.
- 7 people surveyed as unsheltered (public space, vehicle, abandoned building, etc.).
- 12 people surveyed as unsure of where they are staying but with no fixed address.
- 33 dependent children counted or surveyed as homeless by their parent/guardian.

Of 254 individuals who completed the survey, the demographic background of participants included:

- 67% identified as male and 32% identified as female (99%)
- 42% of participants identified as Indigenous
- 59% of participants experienced their first time homeless before the age of 25.
- 27% of participants identified as being in the child welfare system (foster care, adoption, group home etc.)
- 83% of participants were single adults
- 70% of participants had a source of income that was social assistance (OW/ODSP)

Survey participants also responded to questions that identified their community need: In the last 12 months:

- 22% of survey participants had been hospitalized,
- 56% had experienced interactions with police
- 39% had spent 1+ days in jail/prison.

Top two reasons for housing loss:

- Addiction/substance use (21%)
- Incarceration (19%)

Top three barriers to finding housing

- Low income (57%)
- Discrimination and stigma (56%)
- Addiction/substance use (52%)

57% of participants identified as having mental health challenges.

74% of participants identified as having substance abuse challenges.

50% of participants were identified as *chronically homeless* (6 months or more of homelessness in the past year)

18% of participants were identified as *episodically homeless* (having experienced 3 or more different instances of homelessness over the past year)

For more information:

Everyone Counts 2020 Infographic (Attached)

Contact information

Media Contact:

Marianne Zadra, Executive Coordinator and Communications: 705.474.2151 x 3127

marianne.zadra@dnssab.ca