The Rest of the Story

A report by the People’s Emergency Center

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PEOPLE’S EMERGENCY CENTER

The People’s Emergency Center’s mission is to nurture families, strengthen neighborhoods and drive change in West Philadelphia. Through a community of more than 200 housing units and three educational centers offering job training, parenting and early childhood education, and technology coursework, PEC seeks to change the life trajectory for the women and children who seek its services and inspire them to aspire to new heights. PEC community development programs respond to community needs and build on neighborhood assets to help bridge the digital divide, expand mixed-income housing opportunities, stimulate economic growth, create wealth, and improve the quality of life for all West Philadelphia residents.

This report was written by Leigh Wilson, Policy Analyst, and Joe Willard, Vice President, of PEC’s Policy Department.

* Figures on the cover page do not add up to the exact total due to a calculation to adjust for duplication of services. Refer to the Methodology section for more information.

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INTRODUCTION

Can we end homelessness if we do not know how many homeless people there are?

Without a reliable number, how would legislators know the level of resources needed to eradicate the problem? Without a reliable number, how would we know — from year to year — if we have made progress against the problem?

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and eighteen regional jurisdictions called the “Continuum of Care” (CoC) programs all have plans to end homelessness, but how can they measure success without a reliable number?

The People’s Emergency Center contends that an accurate count is essential in order to set the baseline for policy makers, legislators, and providers that are interested in ending homelessness. To that end, for each of the past three years, PEC has issued a series of reviews of the national Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR) to understand what this report says about Pennsylvania.

The national AHAR is a Congressionally-mandated report requiring the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD gathers data from more than 430 regions. Each region is called a “Continuum of Care.” In anticipation of HUD’s 2011 AHAR report, PEC contacted Pennsylvania’s 18 Continuums of Care (CoC) in May and in June of 2012 and asked for copies of the detailed AHAR reports they sent to HUD.

By aggregating the data from these continuums, The Rest of the Story sets out to provide an answer to the questions posed above. The data presented in this report provides the estimated total number of people sheltered throughout an entire year. It also offers information on HUD’s permanent supportive housing, prevention and rapid re-housing programs. Given the transient nature of this population, estimating the number of homeless persons is complex. Therefore, it is important to note not only who is counted in the AHAR, but also who is not counted in the AHAR, which includes the following:

- Unsheltered persons; individuals and families who are doubled up with friends or family, those residing in places not meant for human habitation.
- Individuals and families housed by domestic violence shelters, and non-HUD funded housing programs which includes many religious organizations;
- Families and individuals who are turned away when seeking housing.

In the past, policymakers and the media relied on the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) “Point in Time” (PIT) count to illustrate the scale of the need. The PIT is an estimate of the number of people living on the streets, in locations unfit for human habitation, or in shelter. The count, as is indicated by its name, is taken on one day during the year — at one point in time. Its overall value is that it is HUD’s most important method for
counting people who live on the street or outdoors. Pennsylvania’s PIT count in 2011 estimated there were 15,096 persons experiencing homelessness. PIT, however, does not correctly reflect the total number of homeless people who sought and received services during the course of an entire year, nor the ones who do not get counted. That number is far greater than 15,096.

In addition to the PIT and AHAR, the third important HUD report is the “Housing Inventory Chart (HIC). PEC report on this summary in 2011; this report can be found at www.pec-cares.org/publications.

The Rest of the Story presents the AHAR data to policymakers and practitioners with a measure of the scale of the need and the system’s response. It can add understanding to important outcome measurements that HUD, other funders, and program evaluators can use to measure success, including:

- How many people exited shelter for permanent housing?
- How many people left with employment?
- How many people did not become homeless again?
- How many people were connected to mainstream human service systems, i.e., health care, training, etc., that would help them not become homeless again?

By comparison, measuring effectiveness in the homeless system is similar to the education world. School districts enroll a number of students who start in the beginning of the school year, and then are measured on key outcomes, i.e., graduation rates, test scores, dropout rates, etc. These data sets provide the public with outcomes demonstrating success within the system.

Someone entering the homeless system comes in, receives services, and leaves. Where do they go? Are they stably housed? Do they ever come back into the homeless system? Did the support they received from the provider work to end their homelessness? Can this data be reported year to year? The answers to these questions are important to understand if today’s strategies to end homelessness are effective.

The Rest of the Story presents a start for the Commonwealth’s policy makers to understand a baseline of the scope of homelessness in Pennsylvania as they consider supporting efforts to end homelessness. PEC intends to dialogue with policy makers, members of the media and the public to raise the awareness of the need for high quality data that demonstrates the effectiveness of the homeless services delivery system.
KEY FINDINGS:

This report is based primarily on data reported by 15 of Pennsylvania’s 18 regions that coordinate homeless strategies across Pennsylvania for the 2011 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR). The AHAR is released by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). It shows that 34,000 citizens, or 1 out of every 352 Pennsylvanians, slept at least one night in temporary housing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pennsylvanians Served in the Homeless Housing System, 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Pennsylvanians who experienced homelessness in 2011 and slept at least one night in emergency or transitional housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of individuals (not accompanied by a family member) who accessed emergency or transitional housing ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58% of all homeless persons served</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of persons in a family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42% of all homeless persons served</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children 0-18 years of age as counted in the AHAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of children under the age of 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27% of all homeless persons served</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children under the age of 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15% of all homeless persons served</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children under age 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3% of all homeless persons served</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of people served by other homeless programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of persons served in Permanent Supportive Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of persons served in Housing Prevention and Rapid Re-housing programs (HPRP)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PENNSYLVANIA IN PERSPECTIVE

HOMELESSNESS BY REGION

Figure 1. The number of persons experiencing homelessness served in Pennsylvania by Continuum of Care in 2011

* The figures for each Continuum of Care do not add up to the exact total due to a calculation to adjust for duplication of services. Refer to the Methodology section for more information.
HOW LARGE IS 34,000?

The size of the 34,000 homeless Pennsylvanians are roughly equivalent to the populations of a number of local cities: Bethel Park, Chester, Drexel Hill, Mt. Lebanon, Monroeville, Norristown, Radnor, Ross, Shaler, State College, Wilkes-Barre, Williamsport, and York.

Figure 2.
PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION SERVED

The following graph shows the percentage of the total population by CoC that was served in the homeless housing system in 2011, which was 0.27% for the state of Pennsylvania. Chi-square analyses were used to determine if the percentage of the population served in each CoC was statistically different than the overall state percentage of people served. Statistical significance was found for each CoC, except Delaware County CoC. This graph demonstrates the variability in the concentration of persons experiencing homelessness across the state, suggesting geographical differences in available resources, the extent of poverty and demand for those resources, funding availability, and the extent of supporting service programs.

Figure 3.
CHILDREN AND YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

- In 2011, the percentage of children within the homeless population served in Pennsylvania (27%) slightly exceeded the national percentage in 2010 (22%).

- Within each Continuum, the percentage of persons experiencing homelessness who are children ranged from 44% (Delaware County, n=623) to 13% (Berks County, n=186).

- Children in emergency and transitional housing are most likely to be infants ages 1-5 (Figure 4), while children in permanent supportive housing are most likely to be ages 6 and above (Figure 8).

Figure 4.

Children Experiencing Homelessness in PA Served by Housing System, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children under the age of one</td>
<td>949</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children ages 1-5</td>
<td>4,298</td>
<td>46.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children ages 6-17</td>
<td>3,917</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Children ages 0-18</td>
<td>9,165</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

- 19,635 unduplicated individuals accessed emergency or transitional housing, which is the majority (58%) of those served in Pennsylvania.

- 17,266 individuals were served in emergency housing, which is 51% of the homeless population served in Pennsylvania, and 88% of all homeless individuals served.
• 107 (0.5%) unduplicated individuals experiencing homelessness in 10 reporting CoCsix were children under the age of 18. Thirty-two of these children were under age 6, and 17 were under the age of 1.ix

HIGHLIGHTS FROM CONTINUUMS OF CARE

• Ten of the fifteen Continuums of Care serve more individuals than persons in families in homeless housing.

• Most CoCs provide primarily emergency housing, with only three CoCs providing more transitional housing: Allentown/Northeast PA CoC (55% of persons were served in transitional housing), Bucks County CoC (60% transitional housing), and Beaver County CoC (63% transitional housing).

• Philadelphia’s emergency and transitional housing accounts for 43% (n=14,467) of the persons served in the fifteen CoCs counted, and accounts for 40% (n=12,187) of the year-round beds.x

• Over 60% of the clients served in Delaware County, Bucks County, and Allentown/Northeast Pennsylvania CoCs were served as part of a family.

• In Bucks County, almost 70% of services are for persons in families. Homeless housing focused on families has been developed as an alternative to foster care placements.xi

• Berks County has several emergency housing facilities that serve a large population of individuals experiencing homelessness, which influences the percentage of persons in families served in that Continuum.xii Increasing homeless housing services for persons in families is being addressed within the Continuum.xiii (Refer to Figure 5.)

• York County noticed a large increase in individuals served in emergency housing in 2011. It is speculated that this is due, in part, to the fact that an increased number of persons in families received rental assistance through HPRP (144 persons were served through HPRP funds in 2011, 89 of which were in families), and therefore avoided the homeless housing system. The low percentage of persons in families served was also affected by underreporting from one organization.xiv (Refer to Figure 5.)
Individuals and persons in families experiencing homelessness served by Continuum of Care October 1, 2010 - September 30, 2011

- Individuals
- Persons in Families

Graph showing percentages for different regions.
### TOTAL PERSONS SERVED BY CONTINUUM OF CARE

**Figure 6.**

Total persons residing at least one night in either emergency, transitional or permanent supportive housing in 15 Continuum of Care programs in Pennsylvania, October 1, 2010 – September 30, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Emergency Housing (EH)</th>
<th>Transitional Housing (TH)</th>
<th>Total Homeless Persons Served (EH + TH adjusted for duplicates)</th>
<th>Total Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) (adjusted for duplicates)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pennsylvania</strong></td>
<td>26,518</td>
<td>9,227</td>
<td>34,004**</td>
<td>9,368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>12,237</td>
<td>2,971</td>
<td>14,467</td>
<td>4,916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware Co.</td>
<td>1,140</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>1,431</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luzerne Co.</td>
<td>854</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>984</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berks Co.</td>
<td>1,020</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>1,395</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altoona/Central PA</td>
<td>888</td>
<td>545</td>
<td>1,363</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lackawanna Co.</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>795</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allentown/Northeast PA</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>724</td>
<td>1,254</td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lancaster Co.</td>
<td>1,501</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>2,132</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucks Co.</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>811</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York Co.</td>
<td>1,578</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>1,645</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pittsburgh/Allegheny</td>
<td>2,933</td>
<td>1,206</td>
<td>3,937</td>
<td>1,204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest PA</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>1,574</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest PA</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaver Co.</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erie Co.</td>
<td>1,224</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>1,512</td>
<td>462</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Please Note:** The number of individuals and persons in families does not add up to the total due to the adjustment for duplicates. Refer to the Methodology section for more details.
PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING IN PENNSYLVANIA

- The AHAR reports data on “Permanent Supportive Housing” (PSH) separately because although it is part of the homeless housing funding system, residents of PSH are classified as “formerly homeless” while residents of emergency and transitional housing are classified as “homeless.”

- PSH serves a different population than those served in emergency and transitional housing. According to the 2010 AHAR: “Adult PSH tenants are more than twice as likely as adults in shelters to have a disabling condition (79 % versus 37%). More than half of adults in PSH had a substance abuse problem, a mental illness, or both. Having a disabling condition is an eligibility criterion for entrance into most McKinney-Vento funded PSH programs.”

- In 2010-2011, the majority of Pennsylvania’s year-round homeless housing inventory beds (which includes emergency housing, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, HPRP and Safe Havens) were designated for permanent supportive housing (32%, n= 9,895), with a 19% increase from the year before. This is similar to the national breakdown, in which 35% (n=236,798) of the year-round homeless housing beds were designated to permanent supportive housing in 2010-2011.

Figure 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUMBERS OF PERSONS IN PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING (PSH) IN PA, 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The number of persons served in PSH was . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of individuals served in PSH was . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47% of total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of persons in families served in PSH was . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53% of total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of children under age 18 served in PSH was . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32% of total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of children under age 6 served in PSH was . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13% of total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of children under age 1 served in PSH was . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1% of total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
*Please Note:* The number of individuals and persons in families does not add up to the total due to the adjustment for duplicates. Refer to the Methodology section for more details.

**HIGHLIGHTS OF PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING**

- Unlike emergency and transitional housing, the majority (53%, n=4,947) of those served in permanent supportive housing in Pennsylvania in 2011 were persons in families. This percentage exceeds the national 2010 average, in which 43% (n=125,737) of those served in PSH in the United States were members of a family. xvii

- 32% of persons (n=3,019) served in permanent supportive housing are children under the age of 18, while 13% (n=1,244) of those served are under the age of six. Only 1% (n=105) of persons served in permanent supportive housing are under the age of 1.

- Lackawanna County CoC did not have any PSH family providers in 2011, but was awarded a new PSH project through the annual CoC NOFA. This PSH will serve eight family households, and is due to open in September 2012. xviii (Refer to Figure 9.)

- York County CoC’s low number of PSH units for families is something that Continuum administrators are aware of and have discussed. There are plans to incorporate this issue into the CoC’s 10-year plan to end homelessness. xix (Refer to Figure 9.)

- During the reporting period, Bucks County did not have any permanent supportive housing providers for families, and served 34 individuals in PSH. A PSH family provider was added in December 2011, xx and another will open in 2013. xxi (Refer to Figure 9.)
Figure 8.

Children in Permanent Supportive Housing in PA, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage of Children in PSH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children under the age of one</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children ages 1-5</td>
<td>1,139</td>
<td>37.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children ages 6-17</td>
<td>1,775</td>
<td>58.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Children ages 0-18</td>
<td>3,019</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 9.

**Individuals and persons in families in permanent supportive housing by CoC**

*October 1, 2010 - September 30, 2011*
HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION AND RAPID RE-HOUSING (HPRP)

- While emergency, transitional and permanent housing make up the majority of the HUD housing inventory, the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing program (HPRP) has added thousands of beds in the last three years.\textsuperscript{xxii} HPRP beds are classified separately. HPRP is included in this report to demonstrate the additional services provided by housing programs to those at risk of homelessness or currently homeless receiving prevention or rapid re-housing services.

- HPRP was implemented in 2009 through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act as a three-year program designed to combat the recession and the housing crisis by focusing on homelessness prevention and the rapid re-housing of families in emergency shelters.\textsuperscript{xxiii} Services included in HPRP are: rental subsidies (maximum of 18 months), case management around housing searches, assistance with moving and stabilization, and financial assistance with moving costs, utilities, arrears and utility payments.\textsuperscript{xxiv} According to the 2010 AHAR, persons receiving services through HPRP were more likely than other sheltered populations to be: women, younger, living in their own home, and less likely to be doubled-up with friends or family.\textsuperscript{xxv}

- While all eighteen CoCs reported HPRP data, some could not be used in the total calculation due to different categorical classifications and different reporting periods. Of the 18 CoCs, 12 are included in Figure 10 due to the fact that they reported comparable data for FY 2011.\textsuperscript{xxvi} It is important to note that five Continuums of Care reported HPRP data for different reporting periods, and could not be calculated into the total. These CoCs are: Philadelphia (7/1/09-9/30/10: 5,860 served), Harrisburg/Dauphin County (1/1/2011-12/31/2011: 660\textsuperscript{xxvii}); Lackawanna County (1/1/2011-12/31/2011: 476), Montgomery County (10/2009-6/2012: 393), and Pittsburgh/Allegheny County (entire grant period: 8,937). Lancaster County reported HPRP data but could not be included due to categorical differences in data.

Figure 10.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUMBERS OF PERSONS SERVED WITH HPRP SERVICES IN PA, 2011: (12 CoCs Reporting)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The number of persons served by HPRP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of persons served in HPRP homelessness prevention programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81% of total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of persons served in HPRP rapid re-housing programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19% of total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*\textit{Please note:} Prevention programs and rapid re-housing programs do not add up to total due to data reported as unknown.
Figure 11.

Percentage of Housing Prevention and Rapid-Rehousing in HPRP in Pennsylvania, 2011
GLOSSARY

• **Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR):** The AHAR is a Congressionally-mandated national report released annually by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to report on homelessness. This report aggregates and reports on nationwide homelessness data, which includes HMIS, the Point in Time (PIT) Count, Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), and the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP).

• **Continuum of Care (CoC):** A “Continuum of Care” is a regional group of service providers that collaborate in order to coordinate service provision and data collection, implement long-term strategic planning, and apply for and distribute McKinney-Vento funds. xxviii

• **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS):** HMIS is a data collection system that generates unduplicated counts of clients served at the community level within the homeless housing system and permanent supportive housing over a 12-month reporting period. xxix HMIS data provides an unduplicated count of clients served by the homeless housing system nationwide. HUD aggregates and reports this data in the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR). xxx

• **Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP):** The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act implemented this three-year program in 2009 in order to combat the recession and the housing crisis by focusing on homelessness prevention and the rapid re-housing of families in emergency shelters. Services included in HPRP are: rental subsidies (maximum of 18 months), case management around housing searches, assistance with moving and stabilization, and financial assistance with moving costs, utilities, arrears and utility payments. xxxi

• **Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH):** PSH refers to long-term housing with supportive services. Tenants of PSH are classified as formerly homeless, and are therefore reported separately from those served in emergency and transitional housing. xxxii Data on PSH is collected in HMIS. It is designed to aggregate client-level data to generate an unduplicated count of clients served within a community’s system of homeless services, and reported in the Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR).

• **Point in Time (PIT) Count:** Continuums of Care are required to conduct a PIT Count every other year. The PIT Count reflects the number of sheltered and unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness on a single night in January. In order to calculate this figure, housing programs report the number of sheltered persons served, while volunteers count the number of unsheltered persons.
The Rest of the Story

METHODOLOGY

DATA SOURCE

This report is based primarily upon Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data collected for the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR), and includes data from the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing program (HPRP), as well as HUD’s housing inventory data.

Pennsylvania’s 18 Continuums of Care (CoC) were contacted in May and June of 2012 and asked to share their HMIS data gathered for HUD’s 2011 AHAR, as well as HPRP data for a 12-month reporting period. While all 18 Continuums of Care (CoC) contributed to this study, three CoCs could not be included in the HMIS portion of the report. Harrisburg (501) and Chester County (505) were only able to report non-HMIS data that could not be used. Both Continuums of Care reported HPRP data, and have plans to implement HMIS and submit data to future AHAR reporting periods. Montgomery County’s CoC (504) also contributed HMIS and HPRP data to this report, but due to categorical differences in the data reporting the HMIS data could not be included. Lancaster County’s HPRP data could not be used for the same reason.

State Housing Inventory data (the number of year-round beds available in emergency, transitional and permanent housing) was collected from HUD’s 2011 Housing Inventory Chart Report, a report based on CoCs’ January 2011 Point-In-Time counts. The national Housing Inventory data was extracted from the 2010 AHAR.

Please note: “Homeless persons” and “persons experiencing homelessness” are used in this report in accordance with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) definition, which includes only those in emergency and transitional housing programs. Individuals and families in permanent supportive housing are classified as “formerly homeless.”

UNDERESTIMATION AND DATA CHALLENGES

The numbers calculated in this report underestimate the number of those served by housing providers in Pennsylvania. Factors that affect these calculations are:

- Data from three Continuums of Care (out of a total of 18) are not included in this report due to inconsistency in data categories and reporting methods (see Data Source for more details).

- Fifteen of the reporting categories from five Continuums of Care did not meet AHAR minimum data quality standards, most likely due to low bed utilization rate, low bed coverage rate (resulting in an abnormally high bed utilization), or a lack of consistent reporting by providers in the region. These data were included in the report with the acknowledgment that they underreport the actual number served in the region. More information on data quality standards can be found in Appendix B of the 2010 AHAR.
HMIS data have limitations, the details of which can be found below.

**LIMITATIONS OF HOMELESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (HMIS)**

HUD implemented the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) in order to provide a means of collecting and tracking data on homelessness nationwide. There are limitations to these data that include the type of organizations that participate and the classification of populations that are counted.

HMIS homelessness data includes only those persons who are classified as eligible for housing according to HUD’s definition of homelessness. While this definition was revised and expanded by the 2009 HEARTH Act and went into effect in January 2012, it remains less inclusive than other federal departments for select populations, including children. In addition to those not included in this definition, HMIS data exclude:

- Unsheltered persons; individuals and families who are doubled up with friends or family, those residing in places not meant for human habitation.
- Individuals and families housed by domestic violence shelters, and non-HUD funded housing programs which includes many religious organizations;
- Those who access non-housing supportive services such as mental health services or food banks;
- Families and individuals who are turned away when seeking services due to the reduction in beds as a result of decreases in state funding.

Finally, HMIS data is reported within six categories, based on two types of classifications: type of housing (emergency, transitional, and permanent), and type of person (individuals and persons in families). Families are defined by HUD as at least two individuals, in which at least one individual is an adult (18 or older) and one is a child (18 or younger). Therefore, two adults who are married are counted as individuals, as are parents under the age of 18 with children. Therefore, the count of persons in families served is likely an underestimate.

**ADJUSTMENT FOR DUPLICATED DATA**

HMIS data is categorized by emergency, transitional and permanent housing. This makes it possible to double count individuals and persons in families who access multiple types of housing services. Therefore, unduplicated estimates of the total number of persons served were calculated for homeless housing (emergency and transitional housing), and for permanent supportive housing.

To create an unduplicated estimate, the raw total count of persons served by emergency and transitional housing programs were added together and multiplied by 0.9513 (the adjustment factor used in the 2010 AHAR). To determine the unduplicated estimate of total persons served by permanent supportive housing (accounting for persons who may have been counted both in the individual and in the family category), the total number of persons served
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(individuals and persons in a family) was multiplied by 0.9997 (the adjustment factor used in the 2010 AHAR). xli

ENDNOTES

i The regions referred to are the Continuums of Care, of which there are 18 in Pennsylvania. While all 18 Continuums of Care (CoCs) in Pennsylvania contributed to this report, only 15 CoCs are included in the calculations due to lack of HMIS data and categorical differences. Refer to the Methodology section for more details.

ii Residents of both emergency and transitional housing are considered homeless by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) definition. Emergency housing is meant for immediate and short-term stays, while transitional housing is intended as a transition into permanent supportive housing. Residents can stay in transitional housing for up to 24 months. Refer to HUD’s Homelessness Resource Exchange for more information: http://www.hudhre.info/.

iii The number of children under age 1 was only available for 11 of the 18 CoCs. These CoCs were: Philadelphia (500), Delaware County (502), Berks County (506), Central Pennsylvania (507), Lackawanna County (508), Northeast Pennsylvania (509), Lancaster City & County (510), Bucks County (511), York City & County (512), Southwest Pennsylvania (601), and Northeast Pennsylvania (602).

iv This figure reflects 12 out of 18 CoCs. The 12 CoCs who reported HPRP data for FY 2011, as well as provided a breakdown of prevention and rapid re-housing data were: Delaware County, Luzerne County, Chester County, Berks County, Altoona/Central PA, Allentown/Northeast PA, Bucks County, York County, Southwest PA, Northwest PA, Beaver County, and Erie County. The remaining CoCs reported information that could not be included in the total calculation due to differences in reporting period and categorization of data.

v S. Perlman, personal communication, July 12, 2012.

vi Ibid.


viii The ages of individuals were only available for 11 out of 18 CoCs. These CoCs were: Philadelphia (500), Delaware County (502), Berks County (506), Central Pennsylvania (507), Lackawanna County (508), Northeast Pennsylvania (509), Lancaster City & County (510), Bucks County (511), York City & County (512), Southwest Pennsylvania (601), and Northeast Pennsylvania (602).

ix Most children in AHAR are counted as “persons in families” while residing in emergency or transitional housing. A small number, however, are classified as “individuals.” Children are classified as individuals in such circumstances as runaway or unaccompanied youth, or teenage parenthood. For the purposes of this report, children as individuals were calculated into the count of total children and total individuals. For more information on data classifications in HMIS, refer to: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2011, November). An introductory guide to the annual homeless assessment report. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office. Retrieved from: http://www.hmis.info/classicAsp/documents/Introductory%20Guide%20to%20AHAR.pdf


xii N. Szamborski, personal communication, July 12, 2012.

xii A. Chmelewski, personal communication, July 10, 2012.

xiv S. Parker, personal communication, July 10, 2012.

xiv K. Blechertas, personal communication, July 9, 2012.
Pennsylvania has 18 Continuum of Care programs, 15 of which are represented here. Please refer to the Methodology section for a full explanation. The sums of those served in EH and TH may not add up to the total due to the adjustment factor for duplicates determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). See Adjustment for Duplicated Data under the Methodology section for a full explanation.


N. Gosh, personal communication, July 9, 2012.

K. Blechertas, personal communication, July 9, 2012.

E. Weisser, personal communication, June 8, 2012.

N. Szamborski, personal communication, July 12, 2012.


Ibid.


The 12 CoCs who reported HPRP data for FY 2011, as well as provided a breakdown of prevention and rapid rehousing data were: Delaware County, Luzerne County, Chester County, Berks County, Altoona/Central PA, Allentown/Northeast PA, Bucks County, York County, Southwest PA, Northwest PA, Beaver County, and Erie County. The remaining CoCs reported information that could not be included in the total calculation due to differences in reporting period and categorization of data.

Harrisburg’s reported HPRP numbers reflect the program in Dauphin County, but not within the City of Harrisburg.

For more information, refer to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Continuum of Care 101, found at: http://www.hudhre.info/index.cfm?do=viewResource&ResourceId=600


Ibid.

xxxv D. Fox, personal communication, June 4, 2012.


xxxvii The full definition of homelessness used by HUD can be found here: http://www.hudhre.info/index.cfm?do=viewResource&ResourceID=4519.


xxxix Ibid.


xli Ibid.