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# PIT Count Webinar

Newfoundland & Labrador Provincial Housing  
First Conference Prep Webinar #3

February 25, 1-2:15 PM EST

ALINA TURNER, PhD

# Background Context

- End Homelessness St. John's (EHSJ) commitment to systems approach to ending homelessness locally, articulated in local Plan.
- By end of May 2016, initiative to develop:
  - System Coordination Framework
  - **Point-in-Time Count Implementation Model**
  - Prevention/Rapid Rehousing Program Model
- EHSJ Advisory Team working with Dr. Alina Turner, Dr. Steve Gaetz & Andrew Harvey to lead this work locally
- Consultations (survey, focus groups, meetings, webinars) underway to gain community input
- **March 1-4** conference is a key milestone for community input in development of deliverables
- **May 1-4** follow-up community conversations on proposed direction; present to EHSJ Board **May 31**

# Today's Agenda

- Overview of national methodology – Jesse Donaldson, Canadian Observatory on Homelessness
- Implementation considerations for St. John's – Alina Turner, Turner Research & Strategy



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# Point-in-Time Counts 101

# What is a PiT Count?

- A strategy to determine the extent of homelessness in a community on a given night, or at a single point in time.

# Benefits of a PiT Count

- Provides a snapshot or an estimate of the number of people experiencing absolute homelessness in a community.
- Supports system planning.
- Compliments other data collection methods.
- Galvanizes community support to end homelessness.



# Most significantly ....

PiT Counts measure progress in reducing homelessness!

*“.... Is what we’re doing working?”*

# Progress in Canada

# Canadian Expertise

- Communities such as Vancouver, Kamloops, Calgary, Lethbridge, Edmonton and Toronto have conducted multiple counts
- Others such as Regina, Yellowknife, Halifax and more have begun to conduct counts
- First provincially coordinated count in Alberta, 2014.

# Who's next?

Summerside, Bathurst, Fredericton, Moncton  
Saint John, Sydney/ Cape Breton, Halifax,  
Charlottetown, Kelowna, Nanaimo, Nelson  
Prince George, Victoria, Whitehorse, Regina  
Prince Albert, Brandon, Thompson, Halton,  
Hamilton, Kingston, London, Nipissing/ North Bay,  
Peterborough, St. Catherines/ Niagara/ Thorold,  
Windsor, Sault Ste. Marie, Thunder Bay,  
Brantford, York/Newmarket

# A Growing Movement

- By the end of the year, we'll have seen significant progress and increased capacity to conduct counts.
- Unprecedented coordination

# The 2016 Coordinated Count Methodology

# The Homelessness Partnering Strategy Approach

- 8 Core Standards including: timeframe, survey questions, survey locations and reporting
- 5 Recommended Standards including: governance, public systems counts and knowledge mobilization

\* Based on the **Guide to Point-in-Time Counts in Canada**

# Core Populations

**Unsheltered homelessness** includes people who are sleeping in places unfit for human habitation, including the following locations: streets, alleys, parks and other public locations, transit stations, abandoned buildings, vehicles, ravines and other outdoor locations where people experiencing homelessness are known to sleep.

\* Based on the **Guide to Point-in-Time Counts in Canada**

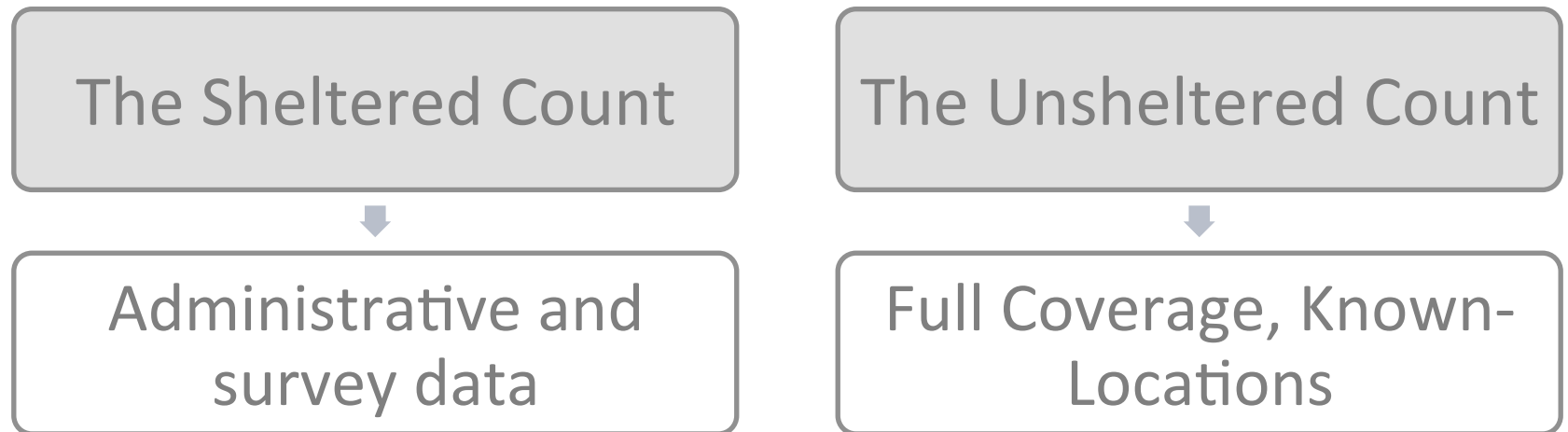


# Core Populations

**Sheltered homelessness** includes people sleeping in the following locations: emergency shelters (general and specific to men, women, youth, etc.), extreme weather shelters, Violence Against Women (VAW) shelters, and transitional housing. It may include people who receive hotel/motel vouchers in lieu of shelter beds. It does not include people in Housing First programs or in social or subsidized housing.

\* Based on the **Guide to Point-in-Time Counts in Canada**

# Survey Locations



\* Based on the **Guide to Point-in-Time Counts in Canada**

# Survey Questions

- 3 Screening Questions
- 12 Core Questions covering: family status, age, gender, Aboriginal identity, military service, migration, immigration status, experience of homelessness in the past year, emergency shelter use, loss of housing and income

\* Based on the **Guide to Point-in-Time Counts in Canada**

# Data and Reporting

- HIFIS PiT Count Module
- Facilitates consistent data input and analysis
- Ability to export reports and contribute data to a national picture

\* Based on the **Guide to Point-in-Time Counts in Canada**

# Local Adaptations

# Survey Design

- Community discretion to add local questions
- 11 Optional COH Questions covering: gender, on and off-reserve migration, residential schools, military service, citizenship, first age of homelessness, LGBTQ2 identity, education, foster care, language preferences, racial identity, service use, desire for housing, barriers to housing, contact information

# Hidden Homelessness

- While the PiT Count methodology is not traditionally designed to capture hidden homelessness, a number of communities are electing to include it in their counts.
- Can yield important information but should hidden homelessness results should be communicated thoughtfully.

# Additional Survey Locations

- Public Facilities Counts
- Service Counts
- Magnet Events



# Other Research Methods

- Some communities are combining their PiT Counts with other research initiatives and rehousing efforts ex. 20K Homes.

# The Benefits of Alignment

# A National Picture

- Comparable results
- Large scale system planning
- National baseline count of homelessness
- Shared learning!

# The COH PiT Count Toolkit

# Key Principles

- Canadian Definition of Homelessness
- Aboriginal Homelessness
- Youth Homelessness
- COH Survey Questions
- Volunteer Training
- Stakeholder and Community Engagement

Are there other resources  
available?

# Yes!

- HPS Guide to PiT Count in Canada
- Community Workspace on Homelessness
- Experiences and learning from other communities

# Implementation Considerations for St. John's

- Dr. Alina Turner working with EHSJ staff to develop methodology, engagement process, and implementation plan
- Cross-sectoral Sub-Committee advises on all aspects of Count
- Local coordinator to manage implementation logistics
- Engagement of providers is commencing (emergency shelters, transitional housing, and key public systems)
- Call for volunteers in spring/summer (likely we will need 100-150)
- Count slated for October 2016; preliminary release pending data quality planned for December– final report can be expected January 2017.



# HIFIS Alignment

- Explore use of HIFIS as web-based platform for survey entries
- HIFIS data can be complemented by facility and participant surveys
- Able to confirm sample reliability
- Expand future role in PIT Counts
- Provide additional trends analysis for the final PIT report

# March Forum

Community feedback in March on:

- Count scope: rough sleepers, hidden homeless, shelters/transitional housing facilities, youth
- Survey questions
- Zone mapping
- Engagement of facilities/systems
- Volunteer recruitment
- Use of web-based platforms

# Next Steps

- Key stakeholder engagement: participating facilities, public systems, outreach, lived experience focus groups
- Incorporate into PIT Implementation Plan
- Provide overview of proposed approach May 1-4 for further input.
- Finalize Implementation Plan by May 31.
- Commence PIT Implementation.

# Getting Involved

- Provide input via email/in-person with project team as implementation commences – contact Andrew Harvey, Local Coordinator
- Participate in March Forum or May follow-up
- PIT Count Advisory Team
- Volunteering – team lead/enumerator, shelter/facility participation
- Donations/transportation support

Questions?  
Comments?



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