Built for Zero Canada

COMMUNITY PROGRESS: DATA DASHBOARDS

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Built for Zero Canada (BFZ-C) is committed to using data to track progress and to make decisions to improve a community's homeless programs and the system as a whole. To keep the movement honest, accurate, and continually improving, we rely on a user-friendly but rigorous data collection, analysis and reporting process.

BFZ-C supports communities to measure for improvement, not for judgement. This means we measure to understand if changes being made are leading to improvements (e.g. reductions in chronic active homelessness). Our approach allows communities to see results quickly and adapt accordingly, putting less strain on resources and more focus on outcomes.[1]

We have ten communities who have agreed to be the first to publicly share their data dashboards for **Chronic Active Homeless** numbers and/or **Chronic Active Move-In** numbers.

A few important points about the data dashboards and data included:

- They are currently viewable in google sheets, with the intention of moving to Tableau in the coming months
- They automatically update each month as communities submit monthly data
- All data submitted by local communities is aggregate and non-identifying
- Communities use the note sections to contextualize the data presented
- The indicator value or y-axis is the number of chronic active homeless or chronic move-ins and the unit of time in months is on the horizontal or x-axis
- Each visual shows a median. The median is the value separating the higher half of the data set from the lower half. In simple terms, it may be thought of as the "middle" value of a data set. The data used to calculate the median is outlined in the notes section for each visual. A median is selected rather than a mean (the "average") because a median is less impacted by outliers or numbers far outside of the normal range.
- The Chronic Active Homeless visual displays the chronic threshold line. The number of individuals experiencing chronic active homelessness must be below this threshold (as measured by a quality By-Name List and sustained for at least three months) for a community to achieve chronic functional zero (as further defined below).

Important definitions:

- **Chronic Homelessness** – BFZ-C has adopted the Reaching Home definition of chronic homelessness, which:

  "Refers to individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness AND who meet at least 1 of the following criteria:

  - they have a total of at least 6 months (180 days) of homelessness over the past year
  - they have recurrent experiences of homelessness over the past 3 years, with a cumulative duration of at least 18 months (546 days)

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[1] Institute for Healthcare Improvement (2019). *Successful measurement for improvement.* Available here: http://www.ihi.org/resources/Pages/ImprovementStories/SuccessfulMeasurementForImprovement.aspx

Chronic homelessness includes time spent in the following contexts:

1. Staying in unsheltered locations, that is public or private spaces without consent or contract, or places not intended for permanent human habitation (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (COH) Typology: 1.1 and 1.2).
2. Staying in emergency shelters, including overnight shelters for people experiencing homelessness (including those for specific populations, such as youth, families, and newcomers), shelters for people impacted by family violence, and emergency shelters for people fleeing a natural disaster or destruction of accommodation (COH Typology: 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3).
3. Staying temporarily with others without guarantee of continued residency or the immediate prospects for accessing permanent housing, or short-term rental accommodations (for example, motels) without security of tenure (COH typology: 3.2 and 3.3).

It does not include situations where individuals have access to **secure, permanent housing**, whether subsidized or not. The definition also does not include time spent in **transitional housing** or in **public institutions** (for example, health and corrections), although individuals who are discharged into homelessness from transitional housing or public institutions can be considered chronically homeless if they were experiencing chronic homelessness upon entry to transitional housing or the public institution."[2]

- **Chronic Functional Zero** – To achieve chronic functional zero, chronic homelessness accounts for three or less people as measured by a Quality By-Name List. This must be sustained for three consecutive months. For larger communities, with more than 4,000 actively homeless on their By-Name List – chronic homelessness accounts for less than 0.1% of actively homeless, as measured by a Quality By-Name List. Again, this must be sustained for three consecutive months. More on Functional Zero can be found in the BFZ-C Functional Zero Q&A.
- **Chronic Active Homeless** – refers to people actively experiencing chronic homelessness in a community at the end of the reporting month.
- **Chronic Active Move-Ins** – refers to people experiencing chronic homelessness in a community who are housed in permanent and/or long-term housing within the reporting month.

To understand more about monthly reporting at a community level, visit the BFZ-C Data Balancing Workbook.

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[2] Government of Canada (2019). *Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy Directives*. Available here: https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/homelessness/directives.html#h2.2