**KEY MESSAGES**

**Waterloo Region Registry Pilot for the**

**Canadian 20,000 Homes Campaign**

**What’s happening in Waterloo Region?**

Waterloo Region is the first community in Canada to pilot the 20,000 Homes Campaign. We are undertaking a Registry Week where we will be asking people experiencing homelessness (in shelters, on the street, and those couch surfing) to answer a short health and housing survey over November 30th and December 1st. The approach is to know every person experiencing homelessness in our community by name and to prioritize those most vulnerable, to help them get into housing as quickly as possible.

**What is the 20,000 Homes Campaign?**

The 20,000 Homes Campaign is an initiative of the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH), inspired by the success of the [100,000 Homes Campaign](http://www.100khomes.org) in the United States.

The 20,000 Homes Campaign will be a national movement, where every community will be encouraged to get involved to work towards the goal of housing 20,000 people across Canada who are experiencing persistent homelessness between June 2015 and July 2018.

**What is the 100,000 Homes Campaign?**

100,000 Homes was a campaign to house 100,000 of the most vulnerable and persistently homeless individuals and families across the US from July 2010 to July 2014:

* Achieved Goal - 186 cities, counties and states housed 105,580 vulnerable and persistently homeless individuals and families (people were counted as permanently housed if they signed a lease).
* People Stayed Housed - Eighteen communities participated in a housing retention study that showed 85% retained their housing at one year (this is similar to findings of At-Home/Chez-Soi).
* Ending Homelessness Faster - Communities participating in the Campaign achieved significant improvement in their housing performance. They went from housing an average of 1.6 percent of their chronically homeless populations each month to 5.1 percent. Additionally, 60 of these communities in 2014 are now on track to end chronic homelessness outright in the next three years - in 2011, that number was just twelve.
* Taxpayer Savings - An analysis developed by Liana Downey and Associates, a strategic government advisory firm, estimates the total taxpayer savings from housing 100,000 chronically homeless Americans at more than $1.3 billion annually, based on a review of existing studies.

**Why is undertaking the Waterloo Region Registry Week important?**

This process will ensure everyone experiencing homelessness is accounted for, will assist in understanding the big picture of need and level of vulnerability of people experiencing homelessness across Waterloo Region, and to plan and prioritize appropriate responses.

**How does it work?**

We will have 22 teams, made up of street outreach and shelter workers along with community volunteers who were invited to participate from the K-W Out of the Cold, the cities, the Business Improvement Areas, the health system, funders, and the universities. These teams will canvass the streets, shelters and drop-ins over November 30th and December 1st and conduct a short health and housing survey with anyone[[1]](#footnote-1) experiencing homelessness who wishes to participate. The data collected will be compiled and shared back at a Community Debrief session on December 3rd from 10am-Noon at Regional Council Chambers for anyone interested in hearing more about more about the campaign, the registry week, the results, and the next steps.

**What are the Next Steps? What will you do with this information?**

Our STEP Home or Support to End Persistent Homelessness Programs will use this list to help inform who will be offered intensive support to help find, establish and retain housing. Over the past five years, over 500 people experiencing persistent homelessness have been supported to permanent housing through STEP Home.

In addition, the information gathered from the surveys will be helpful in understanding the big picture of need so that we can plan and prioritize resources and educate the broader community.

**How can people get involved?**

**If people are interested in the Registry Week, they should attend the** Community Debrief session on December 3rd from 10am-Noon at Regional Council Chambers for anyone interested in hearing more about more about the campaign, the registry week, the results, and the next steps.

If people are interested in getting involved in supporting people experiencing homelessness, they can connect with one of the many agencies across the community – Initial List of Housing Stability Volunteer Opportunities - Winter 2014/2015.

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1. Focus is on singles experiencing homelessness. Families are being served/supported separately through the [Emergency Shelter Diversion](http://socialservices.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/communityPlanningPartnerships/resources/DOCS_ADMIN-1647862-v4-Family_Shelter_Diversion_2-Pager.pdf#Shelter Diversion for Families 2014) pilot. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)