

The State of Homelessness in Wisconsin 2013

*An annual Wisconsin
Homeless Management
Information System
(HMIS) report*



Homelessness in Wisconsin

27,556

Clients experiencing homelessness served by HMIS agencies in 2013



Up 18% since 2010



42% live in Dane and Milwaukee counties



64% newly homeless



6% sleeping outdoors or in places not meant for human habitation

Executive Summary

The goal of this report is to serve as an overview of homelessness in Wisconsin and to provide recommendations moving forward in the effort to end homelessness statewide. It provides point-in-time and annual counts of clients experiencing homelessness over a number of years. Demographics including race, age, and household composition are reported. The demographic differences between chronic and non-chronic homeless individuals are explored, as are regional differences between Continua of Care (CoCs). The report analyzes the current state of homeless services in Wisconsin and provides policy and program recommendations informed by HUD recommendations.

Contrary to the decline in homelessness witnessed at a national level, homelessness in Wisconsin has increased in the last five years. This contradiction should urge Wisconsin homeless service providers to examine best practices and explore new ways to re-tool current systems to function more effectively. Services and resources, which may include rapid re-housing and a Housing First model of permanent supportive housing, should be targeted toward clients' needs with a focus on moving clients to stable permanent housing as quickly as possible.

The State of Homeless in Wisconsin: 2013 was compiled by the Institute for Community Alliances (ICA) through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) reporting tool.

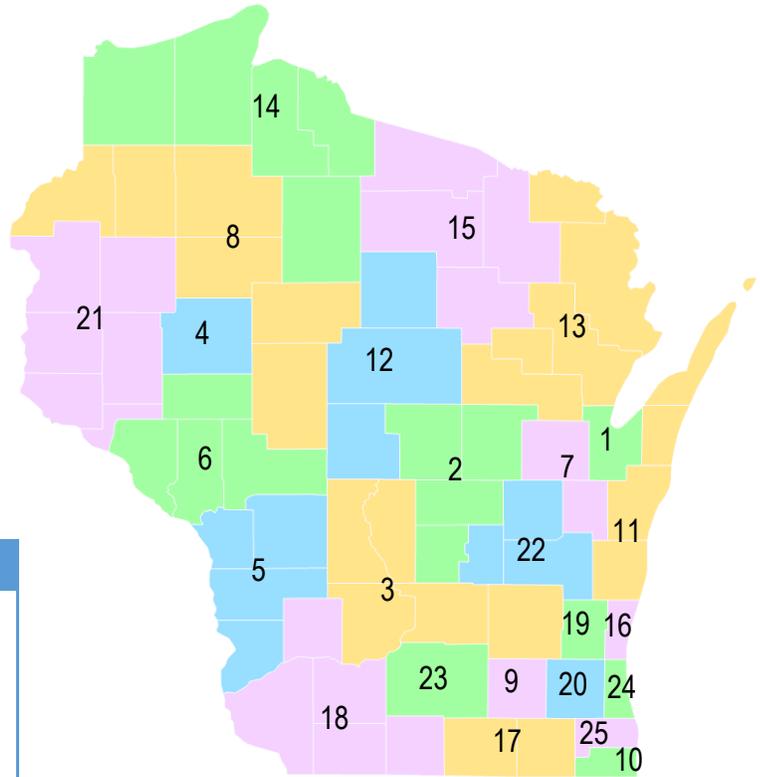
Key Findings

- ◆ 27,556 Wisconsinites experienced homelessness over the course of 2013 and received services and/or shelter from Wisconsin HMIS agencies. This count does not include persons who received services from non-HMIS agencies, nor does it include unsheltered persons who did not receive services from HMIS agencies. It is likely an undercount of the total number of persons experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin in 2013.
- ◆ 42% of clients were served in Milwaukee and Dane counties.
- ◆ Some rural areas served many more clients than might be expected based on their size. Brown County, the Northwest CoC region, and the West Central CoC region have the highest rates of homelessness in Wisconsin after Milwaukee and Dane counties.
- ◆ In 2013, 64% of clients were newly homeless, having not received any services or shelter from HMIS agencies in the past two years.
- ◆ The annual number of persons experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin has increased by approximately 18% since 2010. This is at odds with a national decrease in homelessness.
- ◆ On January 30, 2013, 6% of persons experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin were sleeping outdoors or in places not meant for human habitation.

CoC Breakdown

A Continuum of Care (CoC) is a community working with a plan to deliver services and provide housing to individuals experiencing homelessness. Many Wisconsin housing projects are funded through federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care grants. HUD collects and reports data on the Dane, Milwaukee, Racine, and Balance of State CoCs in Wisconsin.

As of 2013*, the Balance of State CoC was made up of 22 local continua (numbered 1-22).



Continuum of Care	Counties
1 BOS – Brown CoC	Brown
2 BOS – CAP CoC	Marquette, Portage Waupaca, Waushara
3 BOS – Central CoC	Adams, Columbia Dodge, Juneau Sauk
4 BOS – Chippewa CoC*	Chippewa
5 BOS – Couleecap CoC	Crawford, La Crosse Monroe, Vernon
6 BOS – Dairyland CoC	Buffalo, Eau Claire Jackson, Trempealeau
7 BOS – Fox Cities CoC	Calumet, Outagamie
8 BOS – Indianhead CoC	Burnett, Clark Rusk, Sawyer Taylor, Washburn
9 BOS – Jefferson CoC	Jefferson
10 BOS – Kenosha CoC	Kenosha
11 BOS – Lakeshore CoC	Door, Kewaunee Manitowoc, Sheboygan
12 BOS – North Central CoC	Lincoln, Marathon Wood
13 BOS – Northeast CoC	Florence, Marinette Menominee, Oconto Shawano

Continuum of Care	Counties
14 BOS – Northwest CoC	Ashland, Bayfield Douglas, Iron Price
15 BOS – N*Wish CoC	Forest, Langlade Oneida, Vilas
16 BOS - Ozaukee CoC	Ozaukee
17 BOS - Rock Walworth CoC	Rock, Walworth
18 BOS - Southwest CoC	Grant, Green Iowa, Lafayette Richland
19 BOS - Washington CoC	Washington
20 BOS - Waukesha CoC	Waukesha
21 BOS - West Central CoC	Barron, Dunn Pepin, Pierce Polk, St. Croix
22 BOS - Winnebago CoC	Fond du Lac Green Lake Winnebago
23 Dane CoC	Dane
24 Milwaukee CoC	Milwaukee
25 Racine CoC	Racine

* On February 1, 2014, the Chippewa CoC merged with the West Central CoC.

Introduction

In 2010, the federal administration released *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*. Benchmarks were set to end chronic homelessness by 2015,* to prevent and end homelessness among veterans by 2015, to prevent and end homelessness for families, youth, and children by 2020, and to set a path for ending all types of homelessness.¹

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds emergency, transitional, and permanent housing programs throughout the country to alleviate and end homelessness. The federally-recognized definition of homelessness includes those who are 1) literally homeless; 2) at imminent risk of homelessness; 3) homeless under other federal statutes; and 4) fleeing/attempting to flee domestic violence.²

This annual report on homelessness in Wisconsin is based on data compiled by the Institute for Community Alliances through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) reporting tool, which collects real-time data on approximately 80% of homeless projects (90% of beds) in the state. (In Wisconsin, this system is also referred to as WISP.) The data do not include information from domestic violence shelters, from persons living with friends or family, or on most unaccompanied youth. The Department of Children and Families (DCF) collects data on unaccompanied youth as part of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Management Information System (RHYMIS). The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) collects data on homeless school-aged children using a more expansive federal definition of what constitutes homelessness.

Included in this report are both point-in-time and longitudinal counts of clients utilizing shelter and services from Wisconsin homeless service providers. Demographics including race, age, and household composition are reported. The demographic differences between chronic and non-chronic homeless individuals are explored, as are regional differences between Continua of Care (CoCs). The report analyzes the current state of homeless services in Wisconsin and provides policy and program recommendations.

The goal of this report is to serve as an overview of homelessness in Wisconsin and to provide recommendations moving forward in the effort to end homelessness statewide.

Limitations

This report is based on data entered into the Wisconsin Homeless Management Information System. Thus, all information presented in this report is based only on those providers who enter into HMIS (unless otherwise specified). Individuals and families who are unsheltered, “doubled up,” or served by domestic violence providers without any interaction with HMIS providers are not included in this report. 90% of all Wisconsin shelter beds are included in HMIS.

The data used in this report have been cleaned and monitored for accuracy and completeness. While some data errors are unavoidable, HMIS users strive to report timely and accurate information. Milwaukee, Dane, and the Balance of State Continua have instituted quarterly APR (annual progress report) reviews in an effort to maintain high data quality.

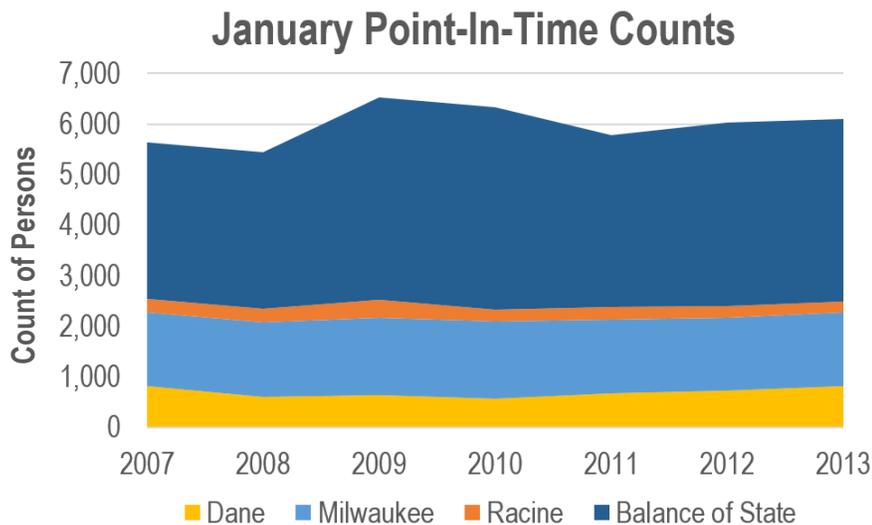
* Because homeless projects were funded below the level recommended in *Opening Doors*, the United States Inter-agency Council on Homeless is considering pushing this target back to 2016.

Snapshot of Homelessness

January Point-In-Time Counts

During the last week of January, communities nationwide participate in the annual Point-In-Time Count in order to capture a snapshot of homelessness in the United States. Communities must submit a count based on complete census coverage and/or statistically reliable sampling and extrapolation methods. While information on populations including unsheltered homeless youth, veterans, and persons experiencing chronic homelessness may be difficult to capture, the point-in-time count serves an important function in estimating the scope of homelessness nationally.³

On the night of January 30, 2013, volunteers in Wisconsin surveyed 6,104 persons experiencing homelessness. The estimated number of persons experiencing homelessness on a given night in January has increased by 8.1% since 2007 with little change since 2012 (+1.3%). The largest increase has been in the Balance of State region of Wisconsin, which is made up of all counties excluding Milwaukee, Dane, and Racine. While counts remained steady from 2012 to 2013 (-0.2%), the estimated number of people experiencing homelessness in the Balance of State region is up 16% since 2007. Nationally, homelessness has *decreased* by 9% since 2007 and 4% since 2012. These point-in-time counts include individuals and families served by HMIS agencies, domestic violence shelters, and other non-HMIS agencies.



2013 CoC Counts

3,610	Balance of State
221	Racine
1,442	Milwaukee
831	Dane



Annual PIT Count

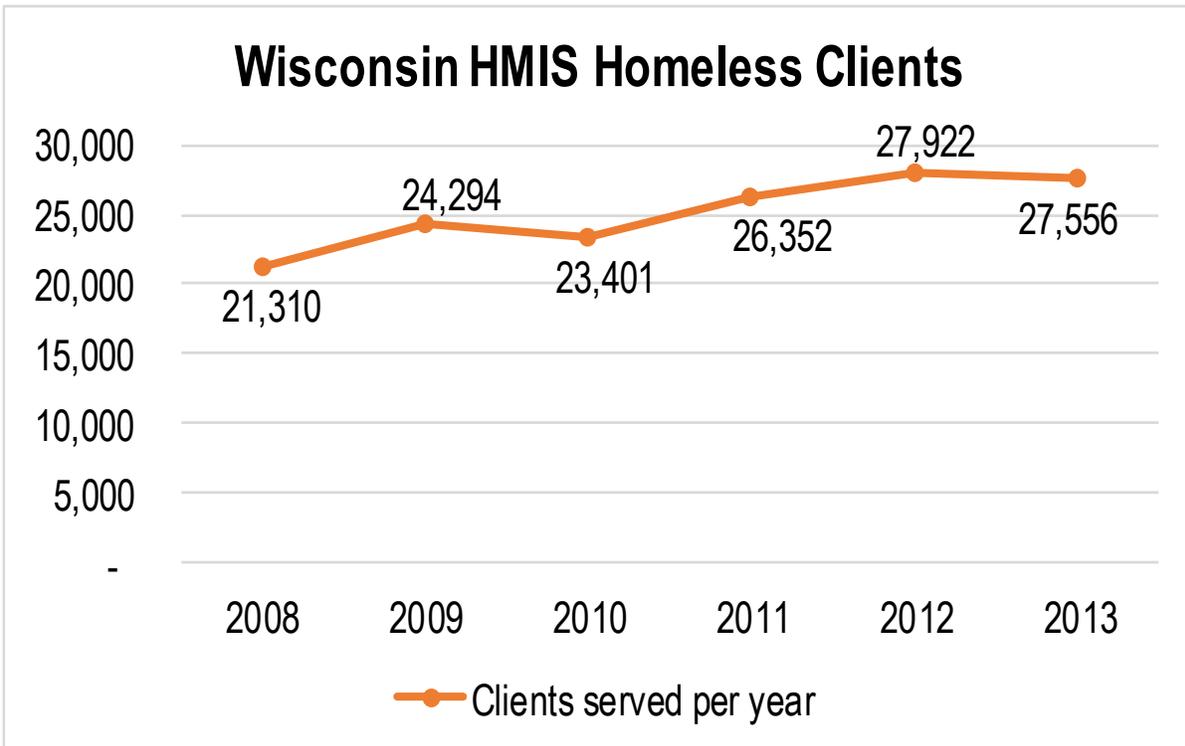
2007	5648
2008	5449
2009	6525
2010	6333
2011	5785
2012	6027
2013	6104

State Totals

Homelessness in Wisconsin

Client Served by Year, 2008-2013

27,556 clients experiencing homelessness received services and shelter from HMIS agencies in Wisconsin in 2013. This marks an increase of 29% since 2008 and 18% since 2010. While some of this increase can be attributed to new projects contributing data to the HMIS database, it also signals that homelessness in the state has risen over time. There was little change between 2012 and 2013 (a 1% decrease).

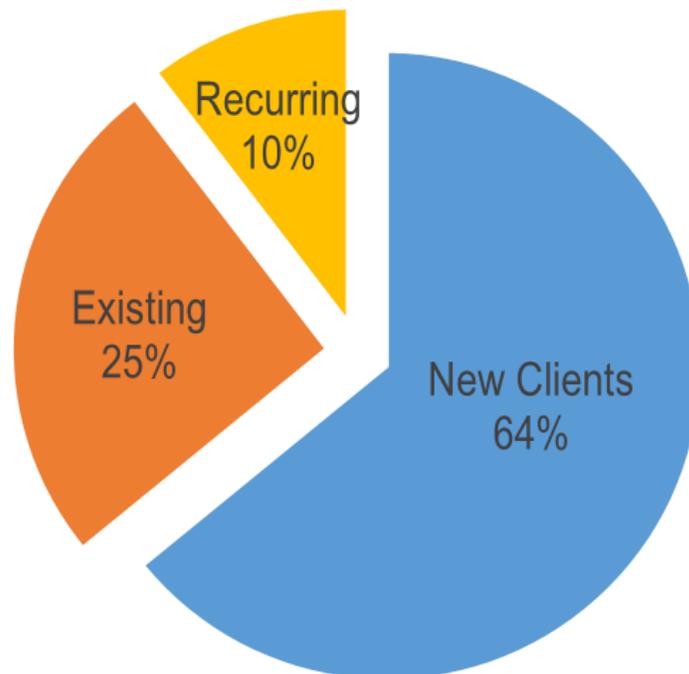


Out of those experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin in 2013, 77% of clients used emergency shelter or motel vouchers. Some clients received longer-term temporary services and housing in transitional housing (16%) and safe haven (1%) projects. 9% of clients entered rapid re-housing projects, which aim to return individuals and families to permanent housing as quickly as possible. 2% of clients entered permanent supportive housing during 2013, and 13% received services through homeless outreach.

Chronicity of Homelessness, 2013

A majority of clients are homeless for a short period of time and soon return to housing. 64% of individuals and families served by Wisconsin homeless service providers in 2013 were new clients who had not received any services from HMIS providers in the past two years. 25% of clients were either continuing services began in 2012 or had exited to a temporary housing destination and returned during 2013. Finally, 10% of clients served in 2013 received services at some point in the past two years and exited to permanent housing, but they returned to the homeless services system. 78% of clients served in 2012 did not return to shelter in 2013.

Of Wisconsin residents experiencing homelessness in 2013, 3,107 (11%) are considered chronically homeless. As established by the HUD definition of chronic homelessness, they have a mental illness or disabling condition and have been without stable or permanent housing for more than one year or 4 times over the past 3 years.² 73% of chronically homeless clients are male, compared to 55% of non-chronically homeless individuals. They are generally older, with 60% of clients age 40 or older compared to 32% of non-chronic clients.

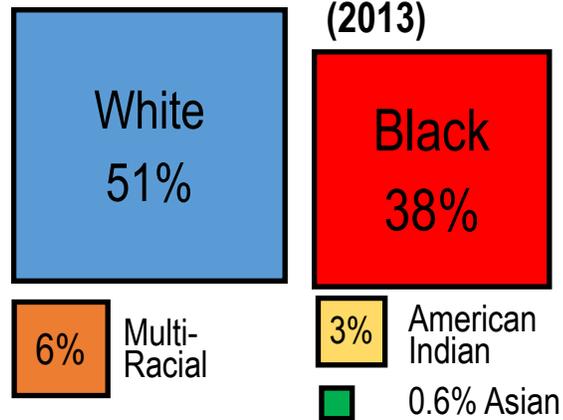


Race and Ethnicity

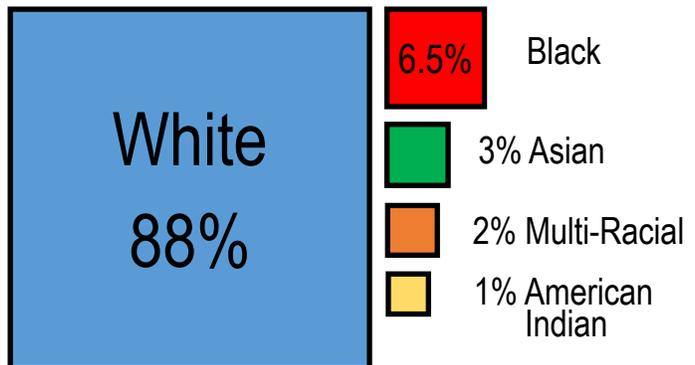
While White/Caucasian persons make up a slight majority (51%) of individuals experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin, they are more significantly represented in Wisconsin's total population (88%). Individuals from racial minority groups (including Black/African American, multi-racial, and American Indian/Alaska Native) experience homelessness in Wisconsin at a disproportionately higher rate. The distribution of race for clients experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin is comparable to that of the United States as a whole.^{4,5}

The ethnic composition of the homeless population does not vary significantly from that of the state as a whole. About 6.2% of Wisconsinites are Hispanic/Latino, as are 7.1% of homeless individuals.⁵

Race of Clients Experiencing Homelessness (2013)



Race of Wisconsin Residents (2013)



Age and Household

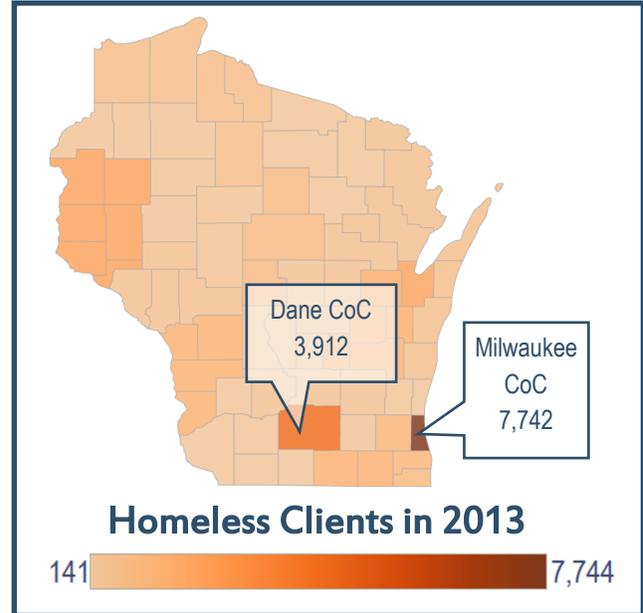
48% of persons experiencing homelessness sought services as a member of a family or household. 91% of these households contain at least one adult and one child. (8% of households are adults only, though they may include adult children.) In 2013 there were 591 unaccompanied children who received homeless services. This is 2% of the total homeless population and 7% of all children experiencing homelessness. Because there are few shelter options available for unaccompanied youth, it is likely that this population is undercounted. Approximately 29% of all persons experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin are under the age of 18.

	Non-Chronic Homeless	Chronic Homeless	Wisconsin ⁵
 Under 18	30.5%	7.2%	23.0%
 18 - 64	68.2%	91.1%	62.6%
 65 +	1.3%	1.7%	14.4%

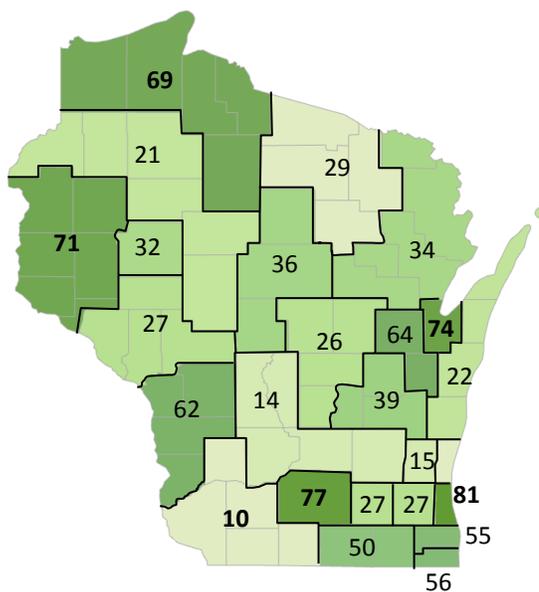
Analysis

Distribution of Homelessness

Nationally, the distribution of persons experiencing homelessness is overwhelmingly urban. Urban areas have the highest rates of homelessness followed by “mostly urban” areas, while the rates of homelessness within rural communities varies widely. Many people in rural areas facing extreme poverty will live “doubled up” with family or friends, or they may live in substandard housing. In other cases, they may leave rural areas for the promise of increased employment opportunities and social services in larger communities.⁶



In 2013, 42% of homeless clients were served in Milwaukee and Dane counties. While a large portion of Wisconsin’s population (about 26%) live in these two counties, they also have the highest rates of homelessness in the state. Approximately 1 out of every 126 residents in Dane and Milwaukee counties experienced homelessness in 2013 (0.8% of residents). Brown County, the Northwest CoC region, and the West Central CoC region have the highest rates of homelessness in Wisconsin after Milwaukee and Dane counties, where 1 in 139 residents experienced homelessness in 2013 (0.7%). The Southwest CoC region has the lowest rate of homelessness, where only 1 out of every 1,038 residents experienced homelessness (0.1%).



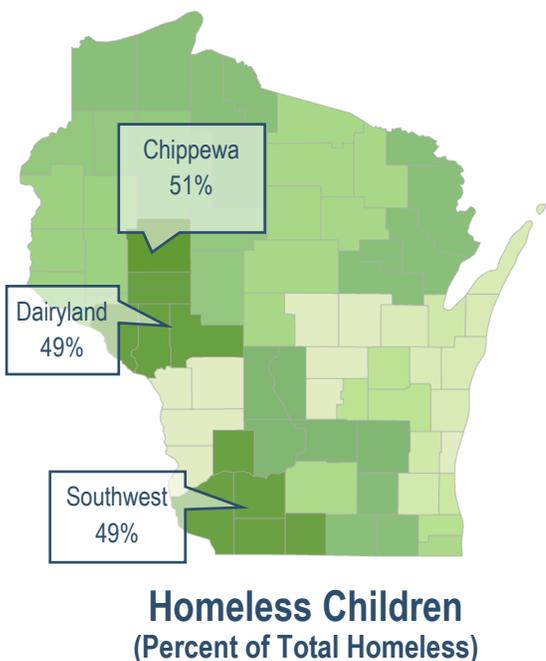
Homeless Clients per 10,000 Residents

1 in 208

Wisconsin residents experienced homelessness in 2013

Analysis

CoC Demographic Differences



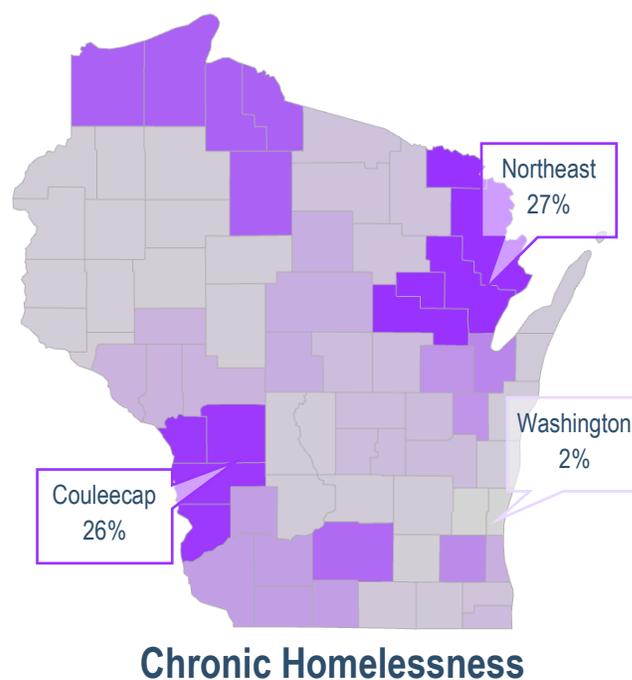
Age and Gender

Families make up a significant portion of those experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin, and children account for 29% of all homeless persons. In Chippewa CoC, 51% of clients are under the age of 18. Southwest and Dairyland CoCs had similarly high rates (49%) of children experiencing homelessness. In CAP and Couleecap CoCs, men accounted for the highest percent of adults experiencing homelessness, 71% and 68% respectively. In these two CoCs, children made up the smallest portion of the total homeless clients served at 20%. In most cases, CoCs serving a higher percentage of children also serve a higher percentage of adult women as compared to adult men.

Chronic Homelessness

Statewide, 11% of persons seeking emergency shelter from HMIS agencies are chronically homeless. Northeast and Couleecap CoCs have the highest rates of chronic homelessness at 27% and 26%, respectively, followed by the Northwest CoC (21%) and Dane County (20%). The lowest rate of chronic homelessness is in Washington County at 2%, closely followed by Jefferson County (3%).

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) projects are typically recommended for persons experiencing chronic homelessness. The communities with the highest rates of chronic homelessness and zero permanent supportive housing units are the Northwest CoC and Brown County. Couleecap, Fox Cities, Northeast, Waukesha, and West Central CoCs all have less than 50% as many PSH beds as individuals in emergency shelter experiencing chronic homelessness. Chippewa, Rock Walworth, Dane, Milwaukee, and Racine CoCs all have at least as many permanent housing beds as persons in shelter experiencing chronic homelessness. However, not all of these beds may be available for new clients. By nature of the program design, permanent supportive housing turnover rates are low. Further research may explore how more units or better utilization of current units can help end chronic homelessness in Wisconsin.



Analysis

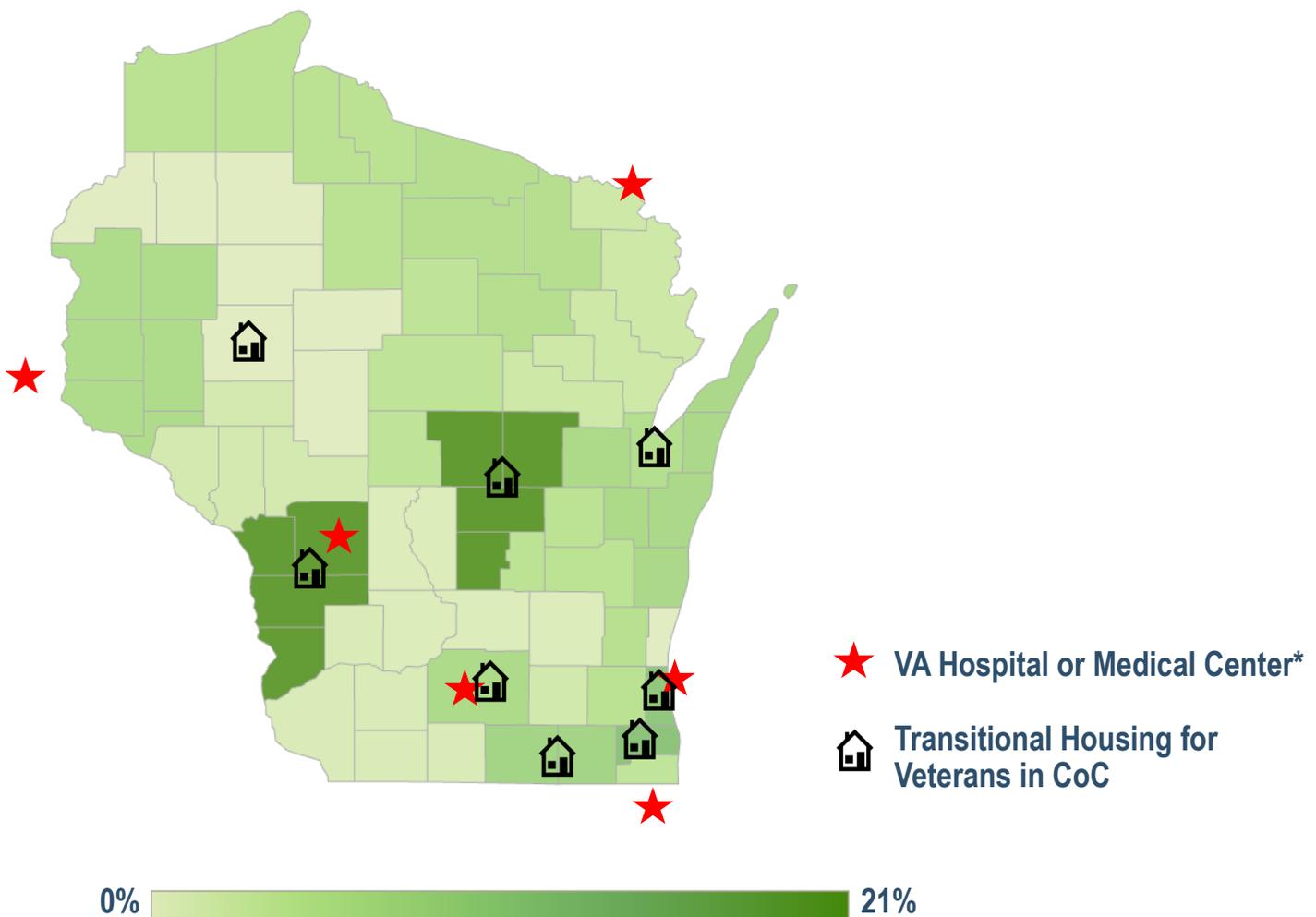
CoC Demographic Differences

Veterans

Of persons utilizing HMIS emergency shelters in 2013, 5.3% identified as having served in the US military. Rates ranged from 8% (Fox Cities and Racine CoCs) to less than 1% (Indianhead and Southwest CoCs).

Some communities have large transitional housing projects and medical centers specifically targeted to veterans that draw clients from the surrounding areas, often beyond CoC borders. The rates of overall veteran homelessness in these communities is thereby increased. The map below is colored based on the percent of individuals using homeless services who identified themselves as US military veterans. While only 7% of clients utilizing emergency shelter in CAP and Couleecap CoCs are veterans, 21% of all clients using homeless services are veterans. These CoCs also have a significant concentration of transitional housing for veterans and VA services.

How Many Individuals Using Homeless Services are Veterans?



*See va.gov/directory for all locations

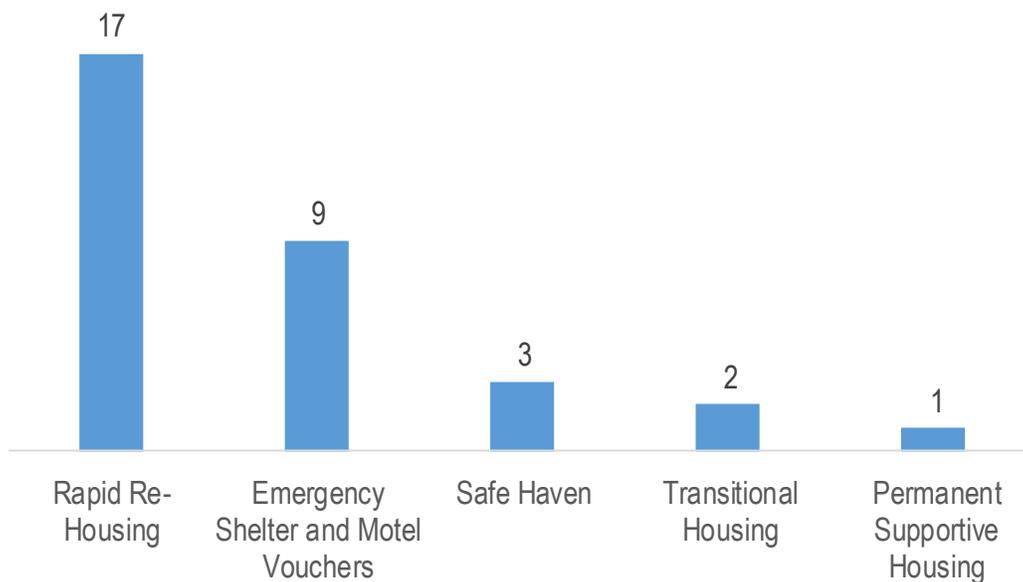
Analysis

Current State of Services

The annual Point-in-Time count is a useful tool to analyze the effectiveness of homeless services in Wisconsin. On January 30, 2013, 6% of persons experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin were sleeping outdoors or in places not meant for human habitation. Three CoCs (Northeast, Southwest, and WinnebagoLand) had zero unsheltered homeless people, and 11 others found five or less persons sleeping on the streets.

As of December 2013, there were 129 emergency shelter or motel voucher programs in Wisconsin using HMIS, providing a total of 2,400 beds to persons experiencing homelessness. 97 transitional housing projects and 4 safe haven projects provided temporary housing with 2,454 and 64 beds, respectively. Permanent supportive housing projects (56) provided a solution to homelessness with 2,040 beds throughout the state. 52 rapid re-housing projects (many of which were still in development) offered 88 beds in 2013.

Clients Served per Bed



For programs with shorter client stays, more clients can be served per bed annually. In 2013, approximately 17 clients were served for each rapid re-housing bed. 9 clients were served for each emergency shelter bed or motel voucher, and 3 individuals were served for each safe haven bed. Transitional housing and permanent supportive housing, by nature of being longer-term programs, averaged two clients and one client per bed, respectively.

Analysis

Homelessness and Poverty

According to the United States Census Bureau, an estimated 12.5% of Wisconsin residents live below the poverty line.⁵ This rate varies considerably by CoC, from 4.6% in Ozaukee County to 21% in Milwaukee County.

While there is a correlation between poverty and homelessness, people living in poverty are incredibly adept at managing limited resources and keeping themselves out of homelessness. Of those living below the poverty line in Wisconsin, an estimated 3.8% experienced homelessness in 2013. While this measure does not include persons who may be doubled-up, living in insufficient housing, staying in non-HMIS shelters, or utilizing homelessness prevention resources, it serves as an indicator of the resilience of families and individuals living in poverty. The vast majority of Wisconsinites living below the poverty line did not experience homelessness in 2013.

3.8%

Of individuals in poverty experienced homelessness in 2013

Shelter Recurrence

Rapid Re-Housing and Transitional Housing

An important measure of success for housing projects is whether a client returns to emergency shelter after participating in the program. Rapid re-housing is a program type designed to provide clients with the appropriate level of service and financial assistance needed to get back into housing as quickly as possible. Transitional housing is a program type that provides additional services and housing support for up to 24 months.

Of clients served in rapid re-housing in 2012, 6% returned to emergency shelter within 6 months of exiting the program. After 18 months, 10% had returned. Of clients served in transitional housing projects, 9% returned to shelter within 6 months. 15% had returned to emergency shelter within 18 months of exiting transitional housing.

In general, rapid re-housing projects serve more clients annually per bed and help families and individuals experiencing homelessness return to permanent housing more quickly. In Wisconsin, rapidly rehoused clients are a bit more likely to remain stably housed than clients who participated in a transitional housing program.

Future studies may include a comparison of client demographics and barriers between these two programs.

Last Permanent Address

Of all clients experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin in 2013, an estimated 90% were already Wisconsin residents, based on the provided zip code of last permanent address. Approximately 10% of clients' last permanent addresses were in other states. It is unknown how many Wisconsin residents have moved to other states and utilized homeless services.

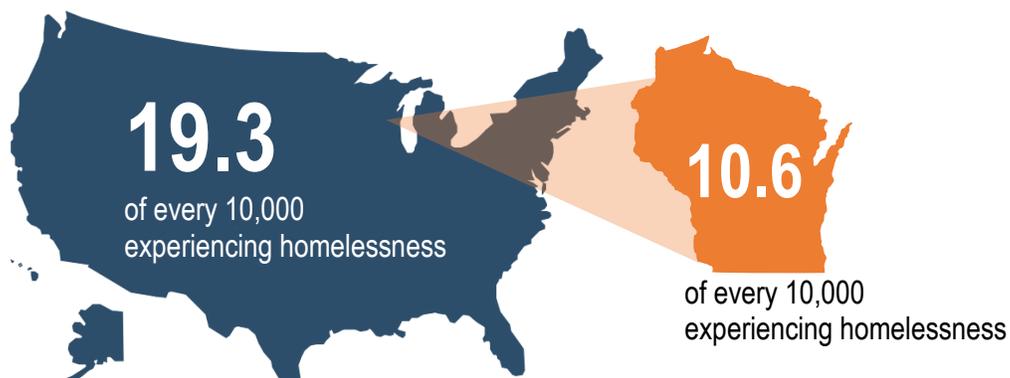
Homelessness in America

How Does Wisconsin Compare?

As measured in January 2013, 19.3 of every 10,000 persons in the United States are homeless at a given point in time. Homelessness is less prevalent in Wisconsin, where 10.6 persons per 10,000 are experiencing homelessness.⁸ Unsheltered homelessness is also less prevalent in Wisconsin, where the rate decreased to 6% in January 2013. Nationally, 35% of people experiencing homelessness are sleeping on the streets or in places not meant for human habitation.⁷ (In July 2013, 17% of Wisconsinites experiencing homelessness were unsheltered, which is still well below the national average.)

Since 2010, homelessness has decreased by over 6% nationwide. It declined by nearly 4% between 2012 and 2013.⁷ Six states (Colorado, Wyoming, Nebraska, Missouri, Louisiana, and Georgia) decreased homelessness by over 15% during the year. Based on Point-In-Time data, homelessness in Wisconsin increased by 1.28% from 2012-2013, with an overall decrease of 3.6% since 2010.⁸ (These rates are based on January Point-In-Time counts. The annual number of clients served in HMIS has increased by 18% since 2010.) Chronic homelessness in Wisconsin increased by 19% between 2012 and 2013.⁸ The rate of chronic homelessness in Wisconsin is still below the national average (11% in Wisconsin compared to 18% nationally.⁷) Similarly, veteran homelessness in Wisconsin is less prevalent than in the nation as a whole (13.6% of homeless clients in-state compared to 27.3% nationally,) but it increased by 2.4% in 2013. Nine states decreased veteran homelessness by more than 20% from 2012 to 2013.⁸

While the prevalence of homelessness in Wisconsin is less than that of the nation as a whole, we are not progressing closer to the goal of ending homelessness.



Recommendations

In order to meet the benchmark of the *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness* to end chronic homelessness by the end of 2016 and progress toward ending family homelessness by 2020, service providers in Wisconsin will need to change some aspects of the current homeless service delivery system. For persons with disabilities who have been without stable housing for an extended period of time, permanent supportive housing (PSH) has proven to be a successful intervention.⁹ Housing First model PSH projects offer extensive services but only require that clients maintain the terms of their leases, thereby helping clients experiencing long-term homelessness find and maintain permanent housing. Permanent supportive housing would likely be an effective addition to the Northwest and Brown County CoCs' housing options for chronically homeless persons as both of these regions currently have high rates of chronic homelessness and zero PSH beds. Other communities should aim to ensure that existing permanent supportive housing is reserved for those clients in need of permanent and intensive assistance in order to most effectively use this more costly intervention. Couleecap, Fox Cities, Northeast, Waukesha, and West Central CoCs may benefit from additional units.

In Wisconsin in 2013, 64% of clients experiencing homelessness were newly homeless, and the majority of persons experienced homelessness for a brief period of time. First time homeless families are ideal candidates for rapid re-housing.⁷ Providers should aim to assist these clients with returning to permanent housing as quickly as possible, using only the least amount of supportive services and financial assistance required. While there were few rapid re-housing projects in Wisconsin in 2013, they served many clients and prove to be effective solutions to homelessness. Communities should incorporate this program into their service delivery systems, and transitional housing providers in Wisconsin should consider adopting a rapid re-housing model in an effort to expedite ending homelessness in their communities.

Homelessness does not look the same from community to community in Wisconsin. Services and resources should be targeted toward clients' needs with a focus on moving clients to stable permanent housing. CoCs with many people experiencing chronic homelessness should embrace the principles of Housing First and permanent supportive housing, while ensuring that units are reserved for clients with significant need. Communities with a high rate of children and families experiencing homelessness should consider focusing efforts on rapid re-housing.

Contrary to the decline in homelessness witnessed at a national level, homelessness in Wisconsin has increased in the last five years. This should urge Wisconsin homeless service providers to look for best practices and new ways to re-tool current systems to function more effectively. Together, we can work to end homelessness in Wisconsin.

References

- ¹ United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*. United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, 2010. Web. 7 Aug. 2014.
- ² U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. "Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing: Continuum of Care Program; Interim Final Rule." *Federal Register* 77:147(2012). Web. 7 Aug. 2014.
- ³ Abt Associates, Inc. *2014 Point-In-Time Count Methodology Guide*. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2014. Web. 18 September 2014.
- ⁴ United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. "Exhibit 3-1: Demographic Characteristics of Sheltered Homeless Persons in 2010 Compared to the 2009 US. And Poverty Populations." *The 2010 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress*. United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, 2011. Web. 7 Aug. 2014.
- ⁵ United States Census Bureau. "Wisconsin." *State and County Quickfacts*. United States Census Bureau. Web. 7 Aug. 2014.
- ⁶ National Alliance to End Homelessness. "How do we compare urban and rural homelessness?" *Frequently Asked Questions*. National Alliance to End Homelessness. Web. 7 Aug. 2014.
- ⁷ United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. *The 2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress*. United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. Web. 7 Aug. 2014.
- ⁸ National Alliance to End Homelessness. *The State of Homelessness in America 2014*. National Alliance to End Homelessness. Web. 7 Aug. 2014.
- ⁹ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Policy Development and Research. *The Applicability of Housing First Models to Homeless Persons with Serious Mental Illness*. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2007. Web. 7 Aug. 2014.
- ¹⁰ National Alliance to End Homelessness. *Rapid Re-Housing: A History and Core Components*. National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2014. Web. 7 Aug. 2014.

About ICA

The State of Homeless in Wisconsin: 2013 was compiled by the Institute for Community Alliances (ICA) through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) reporting tool. ICA is a non-profit organization based in Des Moines, Iowa that provides HMIS training and support for Wisconsin, Iowa, Omaha, Nebraska, and Missouri homeless service agencies. The Institute for Community Alliances engages in research and produces reports on homelessness and related issues. In cooperation with state and federal agencies, private research firms, and university researchers, ICA works to inform regional and national efforts to end homelessness.

We welcome your questions, feedback, and input. Please direct correspondence to:

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Distribution of Homelessness

Clients Served in 2013

Nationally, the distribution of persons experiencing homelessness is overwhelmingly urban. Urban areas have the highest rates of homelessness followed by “mostly urban” areas, while the rates of homelessness within rural communities varies widely. Many people in rural areas facing extreme poverty will live “doubled up” with family or friends, or they may live in substandard housing. In other cases, they may leave rural areas for the promise of increased employment opportunities and social services in larger communities.¹



	Provider CoC Code	Clients Experiencing Homelessness in 2013
1	Brown	1,891
2	CAP	416
3	Central	361
4	Chippewa	201
5	Couleecap	1,294
6	Dairyland	438
7	Fox Cities	1,464
8	Indianhead	250
9	Jefferson	228
10	Kenosha	935
11	Lakeshore	541
12	North Central CAP	860
13	Northeast	446
14	Northwest	652

	Provider CoC Code	Clients Experiencing Homelessness in 2013
15	N*WISH	249
17	Rock-Walworth	1,309
18	Southwest	141
19	Washington	193
20	Waukesha	1,078
21	West Central	1,898
22	WinnebagoLand	1,144
23	Dane	3,912
24	Milwaukee	7,742
25	Racine	1,070
	Balance of State	15,430
	State of Wisconsin	27,556

There were no HMIS homeless service providers in Ozaukee County in 2013. Thus, counts were not calculated.

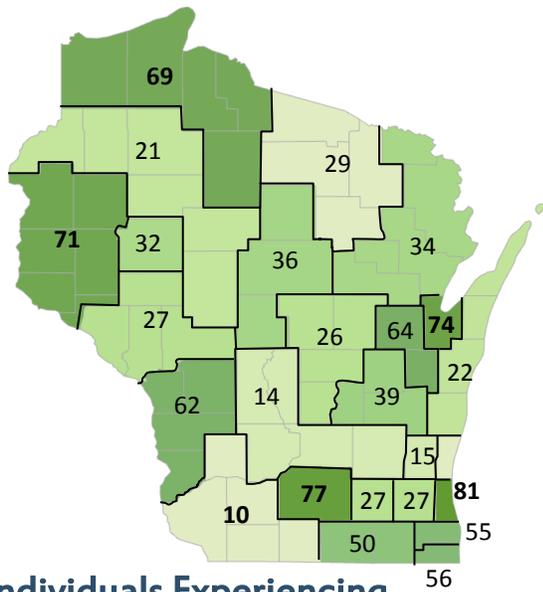
¹ National Alliance to End Homelessness, “How do we compare urban and rural homelessness?” *Frequently Asked Questions*. National Alliance to End Homelessness. Web. 7 Aug. 2014.

Distribution of Homelessness

Clients per 10,000 Residents

1 in 208

Wisconsin residents experienced homelessness in 2013



Individuals Experiencing Homelessness per 10,000 Residents

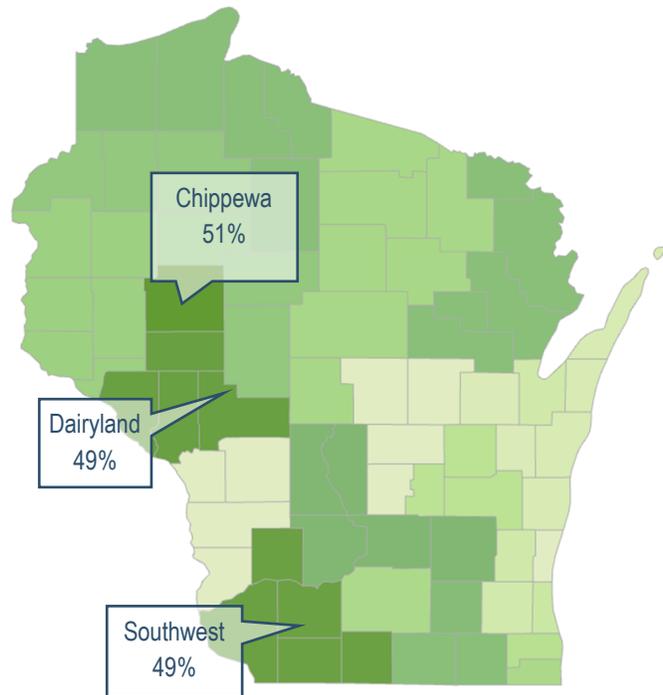
	Provider CoC Code	Homeless Clients per 10,000 Residents
1	Brown	74
2	CAP	26
3	Central	14
4	Chippewa	32
5	Couleecap	62
6	Dairyland	27
7	Fox Cities	64
8	Indianhead	21
9	Jefferson	27
10	Kenosha	56
11	Lakeshore	22
12	North Central CAP	36
13	Northeast	34
14	Northwest	69
15	N*WISH	29
17	Rock-Walworth	50
18	Southwest	10
19	Washington	15
20	Waukesha	27
21	West Central	71
22	Winnebago	39
23	Dane	77
24	Milwaukee	81
25	Racine	55
	Balance of State	38
	State of Wisconsin	48

In 2013, there were no HMIS homeless service providers in Ozaukee County. Thus, rates were not calculated.

Age

CoC Demographic Differences

Families make up a significant portion of those experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin, and children account for 29% of all homeless persons. In Chippewa CoC, 51% of clients are under the age of 18. Southwest and Dairyland CoCs had similarly high rates (49%) of children experiencing homelessness. In CAP and Couleecap CoCs, children made up the smallest portion of the total homeless clients served at 20%.



Homeless Children
(Percent of Total Homeless)

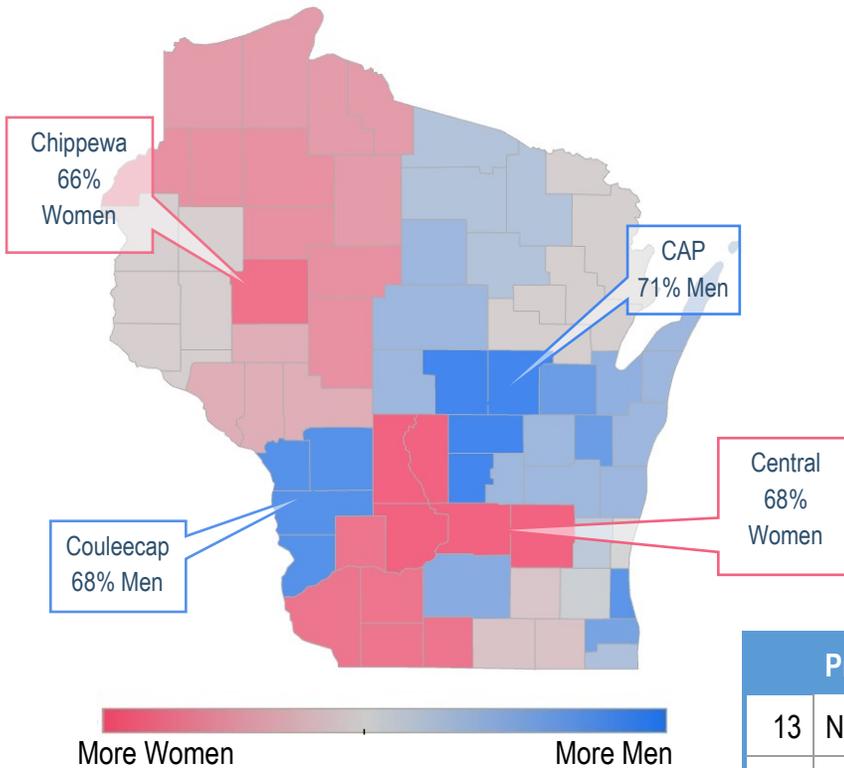
	Provider CoC Code	% Youth
1	Brown	23%
2	CAP	20%
3	Central	41%
4	Chippewa	51%
5	Couleecap	20%
6	Dairyland	49%
7	Fox Cities	22%
8	Indianhead	36%
9	Jefferson	39%
10	Kenosha	30%
11	Lakeshore	22%
12	North Central CAP	31%
13	Northeast	39%
14	Northwest	39%

	Provider CoC Code	% Youth
15	N*WISH	31%
17	Rock-Walworth	39%
18	Southwest	49%
19	Washington	23%
20	Waukesha	23%
21	West Central	34%
22	WinnebagoLand	27%
23	Dane	30%
24	Milwaukee	24%
25	Racine	28%
	Balance of State	30%
	State of Wisconsin	29%

There were no HMIS homeless service providers in Ozaukee County in 2013. Thus, rates were not calculated.

Gender (Adults)

CoC Demographic Differences



In CAP and Couleecap CoCs, men accounted for the highest percent of adults experiencing homelessness, 71% and 68% respectively. In these two CoCs, children made up the smallest portion of the total homeless clients served at 20%. Children made up the largest portion of the total clients served in Chippewa and Central CoCs, which also served the highest percentage of adult women as compared to adult men.

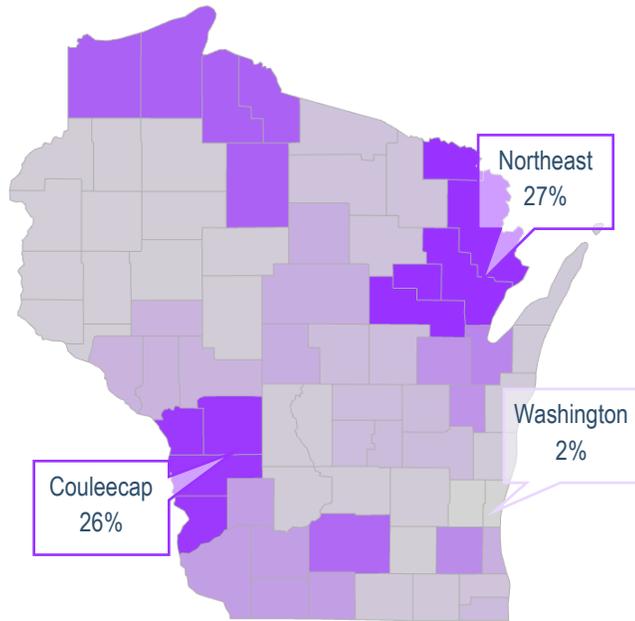
Provider CoC Code	Men	Women
1 Brown	61%	39%
2 CAP	71%	29%
3 Central	32%	68%
4 Chippewa	34%	66%
5 Couleecap	68%	32%
6 Dairyland	43%	57%
7 Fox Cities	66%	34%
8 Indianhead	39%	61%
9 Jefferson	47%	53%
10 Kenosha	56%	44%
11 Lakeshore	59%	41%
12 North Central CAP	59%	41%

Provider CoC Code	Men	Women
13 Northeast	49%	51%
14 Northwest	40%	60%
15 N*WISH	55%	45%
17 Rock-Walworth	47%	53%
18 Southwest	35%	65%
19 Washington	54%	46%
20 Waukesha	51%	49%
21 West Central	49%	51%
22 WinnebagoLand	58%	42%
23 Dane	62%	38%
24 Milwaukee	67%	33%
25 Racine	64%	36%
Balance of State	55%	45%
State of Wisconsin	60%	40%

There were no HMIS homeless service providers in Ozaukee County in 2013. Thus, rates were not calculated.

Chronic Homelessness

CoC Demographic Differences



Statewide, 11% of persons seeking emergency shelter from HMIS agencies are chronically homeless. Northeast and Couleecap CoCs have the highest rates of chronic homelessness at 27% and 26%, respectively, followed by the Northwest CoC (21%) and Dane County (20%). The lowest rate of chronic homelessness is in Washington County at 2%, closely followed by Jefferson County (3%).

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) projects are typically recommended for persons experiencing chronic homelessness.

Chronic Homelessness in Emergency Shelter

Provider CoC Code	Percent Chronically Homeless in Emergency Shelter
1 Brown	16%
2 CAP	7%
3 Central	4%
4 Chippewa	4%
5 Couleecap	26%
6 Dairyland	8%
7 Fox Cities	14%
8 Indianhead	4%
9 Jefferson	3%
10 Kenosha	7%
11 Lakeshore	4%
12 North Central CAP	10%

Provider CoC Code	Percent Chronically Homeless in Emergency Shelter
13 Northeast	27%
14 Northwest	21%
15 N*WISH	6%
17 Rock-Walworth	5%
18 Southwest	12%
19 Washington	2%
20 Waukesha	15%
21 West Central	4%
22 WinnebagoLand	7%
23 Dane	20%
24 Milwaukee	9%
25 Racine	5%
Balance of State	11%
State of Wisconsin	11%

There were no HMIS homeless service providers in Ozaukee County in 2013. Thus, rates were not calculated.

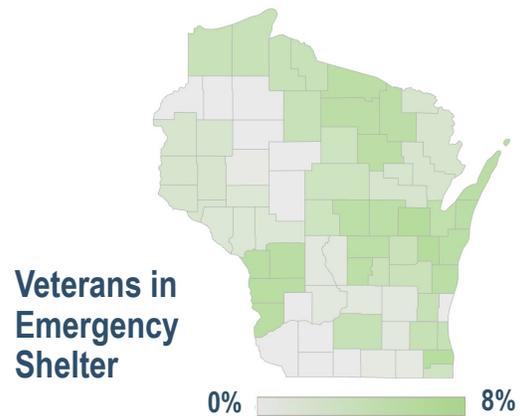
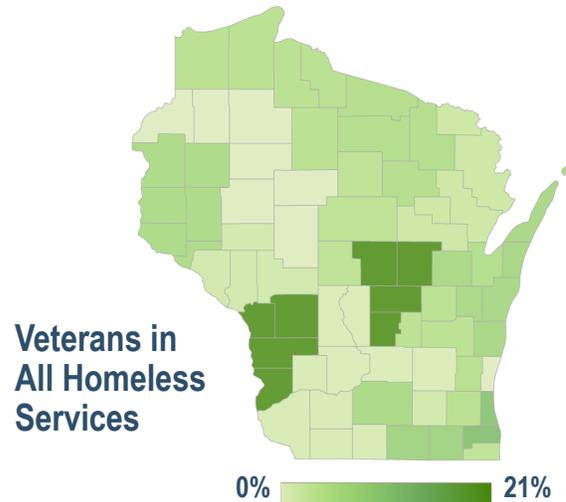
Veterans

CoC Demographic Differences

Of persons utilizing HMIS emergency shelters in 2013, 5.3% identified as having served in the US military. Rates ranged from 8% (Fox Cities and Racine CoCs) to less than 1% (Indianhead and Southwest CoCs).

How Many Individuals Using Homeless Services are Veterans?

	Provider CoC Code	Percent of Clients in Emergency Shelter	Percent of Homeless Clients
1	Brown	6%	6%
2	CAP	7%	21%
3	Central	2%	1%
4	Chippewa	1%	<1%
5	Couleecep	7%	21%
6	Dairyland	2%	2%
7	Fox Cities	8%	7%
8	Indianhead	<1%	<1%
9	Jefferson	1%	2%
10	Kenosha	4%	4%
11	Lakeshore	7%	7%
12	North Central CAP	4%	4%
13	Northeast	3%	3%
14	Northwest	5%	5%
15	N*WISH	7%	6%
17	Rock-Walworth	1%	8%
18	Southwest	<1%	1%
19	Washington	5%	5%



	Provider CoC Code	Percent of Clients in Emergency Shelter	Percent of Homeless Clients
20	Waukesha	5%	5%
21	West Central	3%	6%
22	WinnebagoLand	5%	5%
23	Dane	5%	7%
24	Milwaukee	5%	11%
25	Racine	8%	12%
	Balance of State	5%	7%
	State of Wisconsin	5%	4%

There were no HMIS homeless service providers in Ozaukee County in 2013. Thus, rates were not calculated.

2013 Summary Table

	CoC Code	Homeless Clients	Emergency Shelter Clients	Youth	Adult Men	Adult Women	Vets	Veterans in Emergency Shelter	Chronic	Chronic in Emergency Shelter
1	Brown	1891	1582	440	877	570	108	100	272	253
2	CAP	416	323	85	233	97	87	22	48	22
3	Central	361	199	148	64	135	4	3	10	8
4	Chippewa	201	114	103	34	66	1	1	8	4
5	Couleecap	1294	891	262	702	329	267	65	282	236
6	Dairyland	438	403	216	95	125	9	9	34	34
7	Fox Cities	1464	1156	316	750	395	100	90	184	160
8	Indianhead	250	215	90	60	95	1	1	8	8
9	Jefferson	228	205	90	66	73	5	3	8	7
10	Kenosha	935	752	283	354	277	38	31	78	55
11	Lakeshore	541	533	119	247	175	39	37	23	23
12	North Central CAP	860	808	266	320	226	36	35	78	77
13	Northeast	446	332	172	135	140	12	10	97	91
14	Northwest	652	523	252	162	241	31	26	113	111
15	N*WISH	249	174	77	94	76	14	12	12	10
17	Rock-Walworth	1309	864	505	372	421	106	10	110	39
18	Southwest	141	75	69	24	45	2	0	20	9
19	Washington	193	189	45	79	68	10	10	4	4
20	Waukesha	1078	936	248	423	401	52	49	176	142
21	West Central	1898	1670	638	610	636	121	50	75	60
22	Winnebagoland	1144	1032	304	478	340	52	51	74	72
23	Dane	3912	2909	1167	1676	1042	261	157	773	584
24	Milwaukee	7742	5212	1875	3903	1891	859	281	1013	478
25	Racine	1070	892	295	492	280	127	68	98	48
	Balance of State	15406	12525	4634	5869	4791	1029	574	1464	1336
	State of Wisconsin	27556	21114	7912	11601	7848	2164	1051	3107	2377

There were no HMIS homeless service providers in Ozaukee County in 2013. Thus, counts were not calculated.

Supplementary Data Report for *The State of Homelessness in Wisconsin: 2013 Annual HMIS Report*

Institute for Community Alliances
9/22/2014

The State of Homelessness in Wisconsin: 2013 aims to serve as an overview of homelessness in Wisconsin and to provide recommendations moving forward in the effort to end homelessness statewide. It provides point-in-time and annual counts of clients experiencing homelessness over a number of years. Demographics including race, age, and household composition are reported. The demographic differences between chronic and non-chronic homeless individuals are explored, as are regional differences between Continua of Care (CoCs). The report analyzes the current state of homeless services in Wisconsin and provides policy and program recommendations informed by HUD recommendations.

It is based on data entered into the Wisconsin Homeless Management Information System. Unless otherwise specified, information presented in the report is based only on those providers who enter into HMIS. Individuals and families who are unsheltered, “doubled up,” or served by domestic violence providers without any interaction with HMIS providers were not included in the report.

The data used in the report were cleaned and monitored for accuracy and completeness. While some data errors are unavoidable, HMIS users strive to report timely and accurate information. Milwaukee, Dane, and the Balance of State Continua have instituted quarterly APR (annual progress report) reviews in an effort to maintain high data quality.

This supplementary report aims to provide further information about the data presented in *The State of Homelessness in Wisconsin: 2013* and possible limitations.

Introduction

- “[T]he Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) reporting tool... collects real-time data on approximately 80% of homeless projects (90% of beds) in the state.”

The Wisconsin Housing Inventory Chart (HIC) lists shelter and housing projects in the state, the maximum number of beds and units available in each project, and whether or not a project enters data into Wisconsin’s HMIS. These figures are based on projects and bed counts detailed in the December 2013 HIC, compared with a list of active HMIS providers for accuracy.

Snapshot of Homelessness: January Point-In-Time Counts

- “On the night of January 30, 2013, volunteers in Wisconsin surveyed 6,104 individuals experiencing homelessness. The estimated number of individuals experiencing homelessness on a given night in January has increased by 8.1% since 2007 with little change since 2012 (+1.3%). ...While counts remained steady from 2012 to 2013 (-0.2%), the estimated number of clients experiencing homelessness in this region is up 16% since 2007.”
- Tables and Figures: January Point-In-Time Counts, 2013 CoC Counts, and Annual PIT Count: State Totals

Historical Point-in-Time Estimates by CoC are maintained by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and can be downloaded from the HUD Exchange website:

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. *2013 AHAR: Part 1 – PIT Estimates of Homelessness*. HUD Exchange. Web. 9 Sept. 2014.

- “Nationally, homelessness has *decreased* by 9% since 2007 and 4% since 2012.”

National trends in homelessness are captured in the 2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress:

United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. *The 2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress*. United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. Web. 7 Aug. 2014.

Homelessness in Wisconsin: Clients Served by Year, 2008-2013

- “27,556 clients experiencing homelessness received services and shelter from HMIS agencies in Wisconsin in 2013. This marks an increase of 29% since 2008 and 18% since 2010. There was little change between 2012 and 2013 (a 1% decrease).”
- Figure: Wisconsin HMIS Homeless Clients

The count of clients experiencing homelessness in 2013 consists of clients who were served in transitional housing, safe haven, emergency shelter, or homeless outreach projects between 1/1/2013 and 12/31/2013 by an active WISP provider. It also includes clients who started a rapid re-housing program or entered permanent supportive housing between 1/1/2013 and 12/31/2013 with active WISP provider. This count does not include individuals who received services from non-HMIS agencies, nor does it include unsheltered individuals who did not receive services from HMIS agencies. It is likely an undercount of the total number of individuals experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin. The number of clients served from 2008 to 2012 were calculated in a similar manner. (Note: Wisconsin’s HMIS includes providers serving out-of-state clients. These providers were excluded from all annual report calculations.) Counts are based on the state of the HMIS system on 17 July 2014.

- “77% of clients used emergency shelter or motel vouchers. Some clients received longer-term temporary services and housing in transitional housing (16%) and safe haven (1%) projects. 9% of clients entered rapid re-housing projects, which aim to return individuals and families to permanent housing as quickly as possible. 2% of clients entered permanent supportive housing during 2013, and 13% received services through homeless outreach.”

The number of clients experiencing homelessness in 2013 (as calculated above) was broken down by provider type. As rapid re-housing and permanent supportive housing are considered permanent housing solutions, only clients *entering* these projects are included in counts of individuals experiencing homelessness. Because some clients receive services from multiple providers with various program types, the rates sum to more than 100%. Counts are based on the state of the HMIS system on 6 August 2014.

Chronicity of Homelessness, 2013

- “64% of individuals and families served by Wisconsin homeless service providers in 2013 were new clients who had not received any services from HMIS providers in the past two years. 25% of clients

were either continuing services began in 2012 or had exited to a temporary housing destination and returned during 2013. Finally, 10% of clients served in 2013 received services at some point in the past two years and exited to permanent housing, but they returned to the homeless services system.”

- Figure: Pie chart

The total number of clients experiencing homelessness in 2013 was calculated as detailed above. Recurring clients were those who had an entry/exit type service or shelter stay with an exit to a permanent housing situation between 1/1/2011 and 12/31/2012. Existing clients either had an entry/exit type service or shelter stay with an exit to a temporary housing situation between 1/1/2011 and 12/31/2012, had a shelter stay or service between 1/1/2011 and 12/31/2012 with no recorded destination, or began a service or shelter stay before 1/1/2013 and had not yet exited. New clients are those who were neither recurring nor exiting. Counts are based on the state of the HMIS system on 15 July 2014.

- “78% of clients served in 2012 did not return to shelter in 2013.”

The total number of clients experiencing homelessness in 2012 was calculated as detailed above. Clients with a program entry or shelter stay start on or after 1/1/2013 and before 1/1/2014 were counted as “returners.” (This does not include clients who entered permanent supportive housing, which is considered a stable housing destination.) The number of clients who did not return was calculated by subtracting the number of returners from the total number of clients served. The rate was calculated by dividing this count by the total number of clients served. Counts are based on the state of the HMIS system on 9 September 2014.

- “Of Wisconsin residents experiencing homelessness in 2013, 3,107 (11%) are considered chronically homeless.”
- “73% of chronically homeless clients are male, compared to 55% of non-chronic homeless. They are generally older, with 60% of clients age 40 or older compared to 32% of non-chronic clients.”

The number of clients experiencing chronic homelessness is a count of the number of clients experiencing homelessness in 2013 (as calculated above) who answered “Yes” to the “Is Client Chronically Homeless?” question in Wisconsin’s HMIS. Demographic comparisons were made to all other clients experiencing homelessness. Approximately 5% of clients had a missing value for the chronically homeless question in HMIS. For the purposes of this report, it was assumed that all clients with a missing value were not chronically homeless. These comparisons were based on responses to the “Gender” and “Date of Birth” fields. A client’s age was recorded at service entry, calculated from the provided date of birth. Age comparisons are based on the state of the HMIS system on 8 August 2014. Less than 1% of client ages were missing. Gender comparisons are based on the state of the HMIS system on 14 July 2014. 2.5% of non-chronic client genders were missing, as were less than 1% of chronic client genders.

Race and Ethnicity

- Figure: Race of Clients Experiencing Homelessness (2013)
- “7.2% of individuals experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin are Hispanic/Latino.”

The race of clients experiencing homeless was determined from responses to the “Race” field in HMIS. Clients who specified “Other Multi-Racial” as a primary race or listed a secondary race (other than “Don’t Know”) were categorized as multi-racial. Client ethnicity was determined from responses to the “Ethnicity”

field in HMIS. Race and ethnicity percentages are based on the state of the HMIS system on 14 July 2014. 3% of client race responses were missing, as were about 4% of client ethnicities.

- Figure: Race of Wisconsin Residents (2013)
- “About 6.2% of Wisconsinites are Hispanic/Latino.”

Wisconsin race and ethnicity distributions were pulled from the United States Census Bureau:

United States Census Bureau. “Wisconsin.” *State and County Quickfacts*. United States Census Bureau. Web. 7 Aug. 2014.

Age and Household

- “48% of individuals experiencing homelessness sought services as a member of a family or household. 91% of these households contain at least one adult and one child. (8% of households are adults only, though they may include adult children.) In 2013 there were 591 unaccompanied children who received homelessness services. This is 2% of the total homeless population and 7% of all children experiencing homelessness...Approximately 29% of all individuals experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin are under the age of 18.”

The number of clients experiencing homelessness in families was determined by counting the number of clients (by Client Unique Id) in each household (from Household Id.) Clients in households with 2 or more individuals were considered members of a family. A client’s age was recorded at service entry, calculated from the response recorded in the “Date of Birth” field in HMIS. Less than 1% of client ages were missing. Household breakdowns are based on the state of the HMIS system on 16 July 2014.

- Table: Age Breakdown of Non-Chronic Homeless and Chronic Homeless

A client’s age was recorded at service entry, calculated from the response recorded in the “Date of Birth” field in HMIS. Client chronic and non-chronic status was determined by the most recent response to the “Is Client Chronically Homeless?” question in HMIS. Age percentages are based on the state of the HMIS system on 14 July 2014. Less than 1% of client date of birth responses were missing. Approximately 5% of clients had a missing value for the chronically homeless question in HMIS. For the purposes of this report, it was assumed that all clients with a missing value were not chronically homeless.

- Table: Age Breakdown of Wisconsin (US Census)

Wisconsin age distributions can be found from the United States Census Bureau’s *State and County Quickfacts*. (See citation above.)

Analysis: Distribution of Homelessness

- “In 2013, 42% of homeless clients were served in Milwaukee and Dane counties. While a large portion of Wisconsin’s population (about 26%) live in these two counties, they also have the highest rates of homelessness in the state. Approximately 1 out of every 126 residents in Dane and Milwaukee counties experienced homelessness in 2013 (0.8% of residents). Brown County, the Northwest CoC region, and the West Central CoC region have the highest rates of homelessness in Wisconsin after Milwaukee and Dane counties, where 1 in 139 residents experienced homelessness in 2013 (0.7%). The Southwest CoC region has the lowest rate of homelessness, where only 1 out of every 1,038 residents

experienced homelessness (0.1%).”

- Map: Homeless Clients per 10,000 Residents

The number of clients experiencing homelessness in 2013 was calculated as detailed above and broken down by “Providers COC Code” as listed in HMIS. Clients may have been served in multiple CoCs. Client counts are based on the state of the HMIS system on 14 July 2014. The rate of homelessness was determined based on 2013 population estimates, which can be found from the United States Census Bureau’s *State and County Quickfacts*. (See citation above.).

Analysis: CoC Demographic Differences

Age and Gender

- “[C]hildren account for 29% of all homeless persons [in Wisconsin.] In Chippewa CoC, 51% of clients are under the age of 18. Southwest and Dairyland CoCs had similarly high rates (49%) of children experiencing homelessness. In CAP and Couleecap CoCs, men accounted for the highest percent of adults experiencing homelessness, 71% and 68% respectively. In these two CoCs, children made up the smallest portion of the total homeless clients served at 20%. In most cases, CoCs serving a higher percentage of children also serve a higher percentage of adult women as compared to adult men.”
- Map: Homeless Children (Percent of Total Homeless)

The number of clients experiencing homelessness in 2013 was calculated as detailed above and broken down by “Providers COC Code” as listed in HMIS. A client’s age was recorded at service entry, calculated from the response recorded in the “Date of Birth” field in HMIS. CoC calculations reflect the percent of clients indicated to be under the age of 18. Less than 1% of clients had an incomplete date of birth field. These figures are based on the state of the HMIS system on 4 August 2014.

Chronic Homelessness

- “Statewide, 11% of persons seeking emergency shelter from HMIS agencies are chronically homeless. Northeast and Couleecap CoCs have the highest rates of chronic homelessness at 27% and 26%, respectively, followed by the Northwest CoC (21%) and Dane County (20%). The lowest rate of chronic homelessness is in Washington County at 2%, closely followed by Jefferson County (3%).”
- Map: Chronic Homelessness

The number of clients seeking emergency shelter is the number of clients experiencing homelessness in 2013 (as calculated above) who had a shelter stay with a provider listed with a provider type of “Emergency Shelter” in HMIS. Counts were broken down by “Providers COC Code” as listed in HMIS. Approximately 5% of clients had a missing value for the chronically homeless question in HMIS. For the purposes of this report, it was assumed that all clients with a missing value were not chronically homeless. These figures are based on the state of the HMIS system on 4 September 2014.

- “[There are] zero permanent supportive housing units [in] the Northwest CoC and Brown County. Couleecap, Fox Cities, Northeast, Waukesha, and West Central CoCs all have less than 50% as many PSH beds as individuals in emergency shelter experiencing chronic homelessness. Chippewa, Rock Walworth, Dane, Milwaukee, and Racine CoCs all have at least as many permanent housing beds as individuals in shelter experiencing chronic homelessness.”

The number of permanent supportive housing beds and units was determined based on the December 2013 Housing Inventory Chart (edited for accuracy.) The number of chronically homeless individuals seeking emergency shelter was calculated as detailed above.

Veterans

- “Of individuals utilizing HMIS emergency shelters in 2013, 5.3% identified as having served in the US military. Rates ranged from 8% (Fox Cities and Racine CoCs) to less than 1% (Indianhead and Southwest CoCs).”

The number of clients seeking emergency shelter is the number of clients experiencing homelessness in 2013 (as calculated above) who were served by a provider with provider type “Emergency Shelter” and with a “Yes” response to the “Is Client a U.S. Military Veteran?” question in HMIS. Counts were broken down by CoC and divided by the total number of clients seeking emergency shelter by CoC. Approximately 7% of clients did not answer the “Is Client a U.S. Military Veteran?” question or did not know their status. For calculation purposes, it is assumed that these clients are not veterans. These figures are based on the state of the HMIS system on 4 September 2014.

- Map: How Many Individuals Using Homeless Services are Veterans?

The percent of individuals utilizing homeless services in the CoC who are veterans is calculated as a count of the number of clients with a “Yes” response to the “Is Client a U.S. Military Veteran?” question in HMIS who experienced homelessness in 2013. This value is divided by the total number of clients experiencing homelessness in the CoC in 2013. Figures are based on the state of the HMIS system on 4 September 2014.

VA hospital and medical center locations were determined from the Department of Veteran’s Affairs resource directory:

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. “Find Locations.” *Locations*. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Web. 9 Sept. 2014.

The December 2013 Housing Inventory Chart was used to determine CoCs with transitional housing for veterans.

Analysis: Current State of Services

- “On January 30, 2013, 6% of individuals experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin were sleeping outdoors or in places not meant for human habitation. Three CoCs (Northeast, Southwest, and Winnebago) had zero unsheltered homeless individuals, and 11 others found five or less individuals sleeping on the streets.”

These calculations are based on the January 2013 Point-in-Time counts for local CoCs throughout Wisconsin. Point-in-Time Estimates by CoC (Dane, Milwaukee, Racine, and Balance of State) are maintained by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and can be downloaded from *2013 AHAR: Part 1 – PIT Estimates of Homelessness*. (See citation above.) Point-in-Time counts for local CoCs are maintained by the Wisconsin Balance of State Continuum of Care.

- “As of December 2013, there were 129 emergency shelter or motel voucher programs in Wisconsin using HMIS, providing a total of 2,400 beds to persons experiencing homelessness. 97 transitional

housing projects and 4 safe haven projects provided temporary housing with 2,454 and 64 beds, respectively. Permanent supportive housing projects (56) provided a solution to homelessness with 2,040 beds throughout the state. 52 rapid re-housing projects (many of which are still in development) offered 88 beds in 2013.”

The Wisconsin Housing Inventory Chart (HIC) lists shelter and housing projects in the state and the maximum number of beds and units available in each project. These figures are based on projects and bed counts detailed in the December 2013 HIC (edited for accuracy.)

- “For programs with shorter client stays, more clients can be served per bed annually. In 2013, approximately 17 clients were served for each rapid re-housing bed. 9 clients were served for each emergency shelter bed or motel voucher, and 3 individuals were served for each safe haven bed. Transitional housing and permanent supportive housing, by nature of being longer-term programs, averaged two clients and one client per bed, respectively.”
- Figure: Clients Served per Bed

These rates were determined by dividing the number of clients served in a particular program type by the number of available beds. The number of clients served in 2013 consists of those who were served in transitional housing, safe haven, emergency shelter, and permanent supportive housing between 1/1/2013 and 12/31/2013 by an active WISP provider and broken down by provider type. These figures are based on the state of the HMIS system on 16 July 2014. For rapid re-housing, only clients who received rent assistance (service code BH-3800.7000) between 1/1/2013 and 12/31/2013 with an Entry/Exit were counted. This element is based on the system as of 18 September 2014. The number of beds was determined by the bed counts listed in the December 2013 Housing Inventory Chart (edited for accuracy.) Overflow/Motel Voucher beds were included, and seasonal beds were counted as a fraction dependent on season length. For projects with no season start or end dates, a season was estimated to be 6 months.

Analysis: Homelessness and Poverty

- “An estimated 12.5% of Wisconsin residents live below the poverty line. (This rate varies considerably by CoC, from 4.6% in Ozaukee County to 21% in Milwaukee County.)”

The percent of Wisconsin residents living below the poverty line was determined based on 2013 population estimates in the United States Census Bureau’s *State and County Quickfacts*. (See citation above.) CoC estimates were calculated by estimating the number of individuals experiencing poverty by county (estimated 2013 county population * county poverty rate). The estimated number of individuals experiencing poverty by county was added for all counties in the CoC and then divided by the total estimated population of all counties in the CoC.

- “Of individuals living below the poverty line in Wisconsin, an estimated 3.8% experienced homelessness in 2013.”

Based on the assumption that all clients experiencing homelessness and using HMIS providers’ services in 2013 were also living below the poverty line at the time, this rate is determined by dividing the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin (served by HMIS providers) by the estimated number of individuals living below the poverty line.

Shelter Recurrence: Rapid Re-Housing and Transitional Housing

- “Of clients served in rapid re-Housing in 2012, 6% returned to emergency shelter within 6 months of exiting the program. After 18 months, 10% had returned. Of clients served in transitional housing projects, 9% returned to shelter within 6 months. 15% had returned to emergency shelter within 18 months of exiting transitional housing.”

The number of clients served in rapid re-housing and transitional housing in 2012 was calculated as detailed above. (See “Homelessness in Wisconsin: Clients Served by Year, 2008-2013.”) Clients who entered emergency shelter within 181 days of exiting rapid re-housing/transitional housing were counted to calculate the 6-month recidivism rate. Clients who entered emergency shelter within 547 days of exiting rapid re-housing/transitional housing were counted to calculate the 18-month recidivism rate. Figures are based on the state of the HMIS system on 4 September 2014.

Last Permanent Address

- “Of all clients experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin in 2013, an estimated 90% were already Wisconsin residents, based on the provided zip code of last permanent address. Approximately 10% of clients’ last permanent addresses were in other states.”

This calculation is based on the number of clients experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin as detailed above. Client’s previous zip codes were determined from the reported “Zip Code of Last Permanent Address” in HMIS. Nine-digit zip codes were converted to five-digit zip codes, and stray characters were deleted. These zip codes were then classified based on whether or not they were Wisconsin zip codes/partial zip codes. Approximately 9% of clients did not have a zip code of last permanent address listed in HMIS. Figures are based on the state of the HMIS system on 4 September 2014.

Homelessness in America: How Does Wisconsin Compare?

- “As measured in January 2013, 19.3 of every 10,000 individuals in the United States are homeless at a point in time. Homelessness is less prevalent in Wisconsin, where 10.6 persons per 10,000 are experiencing homelessness.”
- “Six states (Colorado, Wyoming, Nebraska, Missouri, Louisiana, and Georgia) decreased homelessness by over 15% during the year. Based on Point-In-Time data, homelessness in Wisconsin increased by 1.28% from 2012-2013.”
- “Chronic homelessness in Wisconsin increased by 19% between 2012 and 2013.”
- “[V]eteran homelessness in Wisconsin is less prevalent than in the nation as a whole (13.6% of homeless clients in-state compared to 27.3%,) but it increased by 2.41% in 2013. Nine states decreased veteran homelessness by more than 20% from 2012 to 2013.”

These data are from an annual report created by the National Alliance to End Homelessness:

National Alliance to End Homelessness, *The State of Homelessness in America 2014*. National Alliance to End Homelessness. Web. 7 Aug. 2014.

- “Nationally, 35% of individuals experiencing homelessness are sleeping on the streets or in places not meant for human habitation.”

- “Since 2010, homelessness has decreased by over 6% nationwide. It declined by nearly 4% between 2012 and 2013.”
- “[T]he rate [of chronic homelessness in Wisconsin] is still below the national average (11% in Wisconsin compared to 18% nationally.)”

These data are from *The 2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress* published by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. (See citation above.)

- “Based on the annual number of clients served in HMIS, homelessness has increased by 18% since 2010.”

The total number of clients experiencing homelessness in Wisconsin by year was calculated as detailed above (see “Homelessness in Wisconsin: Clients Served by Year, 2008-2013.”) The rate of increase was derived from these counts.

- “In July 2013, 17% of Wisconsinites experiencing homelessness were unsheltered.”
- “[T]he rate [of unsheltered homelessness in Wisconsin] decreased to 6% in January 2013.”
- “[There was] an overall decrease [in homelessness] of 3.6% since 2010.”

These data come from historical point-in-time estimates maintained by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. They can be downloaded from the HUD Exchange website. (See citation above.)

2013 Supplementary Tables

CoC counts for homeless clients, youth, adult men, adult women and veterans are based on the state of the HMIS system on 4 August 2014. CoC counts for emergency shelter clients, veterans in emergency shelter, and chronic individuals in emergency shelter are based on the state of the HMIS system on 4 September 2014. The statewide counts of all persons experiencing homelessness and chronically homeless individuals are based on the state of the HMIS system on 14 July 2014. Statewide counts of veterans, clients in emergency shelter, veterans in emergency shelter, chronically homeless persons in emergency shelter, youth, adult men, and adult women are based on the state of the HMIS system on 24 September 2014. All counts for the Balance of State CoC are based on the state of the HMIS system on 24 September 2014. The rate of homelessness was determined based on 2013 population estimates, which can be found from the United States Census Bureau’s *State and County Quickfacts*. (See citation above.).

For More Information

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