

Date: April 29, 2009
To: Homeless Services Consortium
From: Sue Wallinger
RE: 2002 Year-end Stats and Shelter Stats Comparison 1997-2002

What follows is a reporting of the data that was submitted to the CDBG Office from agencies that provide housing and services to those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The data was collected from ten (10) shelter and voucher programs, six (6) transitional or supported permanent housing programs and four (4) services only programs.

2002 Data on Homeless in Dane County

In 2002, 3,385 individuals were served in 283 Dane County shelter beds while 7,925¹ were turned away without shelter. Of those who requested shelter but were turned away, 90% were individuals in families. In addition to emergency shelter, 1,374 individuals received housing and services while residing in one of the 257 transitional/supported permanent housing beds/units and 2,887 individuals received services only from a Consortium agency. See the table below for a breakdown of those receiving assistance:

	Total # Individuals	# of Individuals in Families and # of Families	# Single Men	# Single Women	% Non-white
Served in Shelter	3,385	1,928 individuals 568 families	939 individuals	518 individuals	69%
Served in Transitional or Supported Permanent Housing	1,374	646 individuals 177 families	728 individuals		66%
Received Services Only	2,887	2,843 individuals 1,502 families	180 individuals		80%
Turned Away without shelter	7,825				

When asked about the **length of their current homeless episode**, a majority, 53%, say that they have been homeless for less than one month. However, there were a number of persons who have been homeless for more than six months – 10% of all families, 12% of all single men, and 17% of all single women indicate that they have been homeless for more than six months.

The reasons that persons give for seeking shelter vary by subpopulation. For families the **primary reasons for seeking shelter** (in order of frequency mentioned) are: threat or fear of violence (31%), eviction or non-renewal of lease (21%), low or no income (11%), and in transit or transient (10%). For single men the primary reasons for seeking shelter are: in transit or intransient (30%), roommate or family conflict (26%), low or no income (14%), eviction or non-renewal of lease (14%) and institutional

¹ May include some duplication and include some individuals who later received shelter.

discharge (13%). For single women the primary reasons for seeking shelter are: threat or fear of violence (20%), roommate of family conflict (19%), in transit or transient (14%), low or no income (13%) and evicted or non-renewal of lease (12%). Those persons living in transitional or supported permanent housing give the primary reasons for seeking housing and assistance are: evicted or non-renewal of lease (18%), can not find affordable housing (12%), low or no income (13%), institutional discharge (11%) and in transit or transient (10%).

Prior to receiving shelter/transitional and supported permanent housing, homeless individuals reported that they regularly slept:

- doubled-up with friends or relatives - 78% of families in shelter, 49% of single women in shelter, 43% of single men in shelter, and 32% of all individuals in transitional housing;
- in another emergency shelter - 15% of families in shelter, 16% of single women in shelter, 12% of single men in shelter, and 39% of all individuals in transitional housing;
- in a treatment facility – 1% of families in shelter, 2% of single women in shelter, 1% of single men in shelter, and 14% of all individuals in transitional housing; and
- in a vehicle or on the street – 15% of families in shelter, 14% of single women in shelter, 21% of single men in shelter, and 13% of all individuals in transitional housing.

Individuals who seek emergency shelter and transitional/supported permanent housing were asked how long they have **resided in Dane County and in Wisconsin** prior to seeking assistance. The answers varied by subpopulation²:

- For families, 47% of those who received emergency shelter have lived in Dane County for less than one year – 32% have lived in Dane County less than one month – and 52% have lived in Dane County for more than one year. The trend is similar for those who answered how long they lived in Wisconsin at the time of receiving assistance;
- For single women, 47% of those who received emergency shelter have lived in Dane County for less than one year – 36% have lived in Dane County less than one month – and 44% have lived in Dane County for more than one year. When asked about the time they lived in Wisconsin, 35% of single women answered they lived in the state for less than one year, while 59% answered they lived in the state for more than one year;
- For single men, 64% of those who received emergency shelter have lived in Dane County for less than one year – 53% have lived in Dane County less than one month – and 30% have lived in Dane County for more than one year. When asked about the time they lived in Wisconsin, 47% of single men answered they lived in the state for less than one year, while 44% answered they lived in the state for more than one year;
- For all individuals who received transitional and permanent housing with supportive services, 19% of those persons indicated that they had lived in Dane County for less than one year – 2% have lived in Dane County less than one month – and 75% answered that they have lived in Dane County for more than one year. The trend is similar for those who answered how long they lived in Wisconsin at the time of receiving housing and services.

Individuals were asked to self-report on whether they have **mental health or alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA) issues**. Of individuals in families in shelter, 22% said that there were mental health

² The percentages do not always add up to 100% because not every client answered the question.

issues in the family and 11% said that the family had issues with alcohol or other drugs. For single women in shelter, 48% said that they dealt with mental health issues and 30% reported issues with alcohol and other drugs. For single men in shelter, 19% said that they have issues with mental illness and 13% indicate AODA issues. The numbers for single men on mental health and AODA were significantly less than reported in previous years. I suspect a difference in collecting and/or reporting data may make it appear that the number of single men with mental illness or alcohol/drug abuse is much lower than it really is. For all individuals in transitional/supported permanent housing, 54% reported mental illness and 34% reported issues with alcohol and other drug abuse.

People were asked to report on whether they had any **income at the time of entering shelter or transitional/supported permanent housing**. Of families in shelter, 18% reported receiving wages, 18% reported receiving SSI or SSDI, and 14% reported receiving W-2 payments. For single women in shelter, 14% reported receiving wages, 23% reported receiving SSI or SSDI, and 2% reported receiving W-2. Single women in shelter who are receiving W-2, have in most cases, single parents who have left their children in the care of another adult friend or relative while they go to the shelter for assistance. For single men in shelter, 19% report receiving wages and 10% report receiving SSI or SSDI. Since an income is often required of those persons who apply for transitional/supported permanent housing, the numbers are significantly higher on income received – 42% reported receiving wages, 48% reported receiving SSI or SSDI, and 5% reported receiving W-2 payments.

Shelter Data Comparisons from 1997 – 2002

For most question categories, we have data related to individuals who received shelter. However, for transitional/ supported permanent housing and services only the data was: either not reported in previous years, not consistently reported and/or new programs reporting would make year-to-year comparisons meaningless. For the reasons mentioned above the following comparisons are for shelter and voucher users only.

The number of individuals who were served in shelter dropped slightly in 2002 from 2001 and continues a trend of fewer individuals served in shelter and with vouchers.

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2001
Individuals Served in Shelter	5,145	4,979	4,181	3,581	3,437	3,412

The number of individuals turned away without shelter or voucher showed a decrease from 2000 and 2001. The number of families turned away continues to be higher than the number turned away since 1999.

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2001
Individuals Turned Away Without Shelter	3,660	5,800	7,033	10,418	9,869	7,925

Of those individuals served in shelter, the number of families continues to show a slight decrease³, while the number of children in families rose to the level served in 2000. The number of single women served in shelter is the only subpopulation that shows steady growth, while the number of single men continues to drop.

³ Prior to 2000, family and single women data were accumulated together and began being separated in 2002.

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2001
Families Served in Shelter				595	576	568
Children Served in Shelter				1,242	1,121	1,233
Single Women Served in Shelter				401	434	518
Single Men Served in Shelter	1,397	1,301	622	1,087	1,016	939

The number of **female-headed households** who are served in shelter remain high – 72% in 1999, 75% in 2000, 77% in 2001 and 2002. The number of **large families** (five or more) continues to decrease from a high of 186 large families in 1997 to 30 large families in 2002.

The majority of the individuals served in shelter or with vouchers continue to be non-white (69%) with African-American being the largest group.

The majority of households served in shelter report that their current **episode of homelessness** has been less than one month (53%). The number is somewhat less that the previous year but higher than 2000. The number of households that report that they have been homeless for more than six months is declining. The data indicates that while people are taking longer to move from homelessness, the length of time is generally less than six months rather than more than six months.

	2000	2001	2002
Homeless episode less than 1 month	49%	55%	53%
Homeless episode 1-6 months	19%	22%	27%
Homeless episode more than 6 months.	28%	14%	13%

Not all households responded to question.

The **primary reason given for seeking shelter** has varied somewhat over time. Having conflicts with family or roommates that lead to seeking shelter is given as the #1 or #2 reason for being homeless from 1997 through the end of 2002. Being “In transit/transient” has been increasing for the six year period of collected data. The following are primary reasons given in order of frequency by year:

1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Roommate/family conflict	Roommate/family conflict	Evicted/Non-renewal of lease	Evicted/Non-renewal of lease	Roommate/family conflict	In transit/transient
Low/no income	Evicted/Non-renewal of lease	Roommate/family conflict	Roommate/family conflict	In transit/transient	Roommate/family conflict
Evicted/Non-renewal of lease	In transit/transient	In transit/ transient	In transit/ transient	Fear/Threat of violence	Fear/Threat of violence
	Low/no income	Fear/Threat of violence	Fear/Threat of violence	Evicted/Non-renewal of lease	Evict/Non-renewal of lease

For families, a “Fear or Threat of Violence” continues to be the primary reported reason for seeking shelter. For single women, “Roommate and Family Conflict”, “In Transit/Transient”, as well as “Fear or Threat of Violence” are consistently given as reasons for seeking shelter. For single men, “Roommate and Family Conflict”, In Transit/Transient”, as well as “Institutional Discharge” are consistently given as reasons for seeking shelter.

When asked, “**Prior to shelter, where did you regularly sleep?**”, 18% of all those receiving shelter reported having lived on the streets or in a vehicle. This is a slight decrease from 2001 (22%) but an increase over 2000 (15%). The following is a breakdown of the percentage of subpopulations who reported that they slept on the streets or in a vehicle:

Slept on Street or Vehicle	2000	2001	2002
Families	9%	15%	17%
Single Women	14%	17%	14%
Single Men	18%	28%	21%

In 2002, 57% of all those in shelter reported that prior to seeking shelter, they doubled-up with friends or family. This percentage has remained somewhat steady as there were 61% doubled up in 2000 and 56% doubled up in 2001. The following is a breakdown of the percentage of subpopulations who reported that they doubled-up with friend or family:

Doubled-up with Friends or Family	2000	2001	2002
Families	71%	58%	78%
Single Women	59%	56%	49%
Single Men	57%	55%	43%

The percentage of individuals who receive shelter who say that they have **lived in Dane County** continues to hold somewhat steady. The same is true of families. In 2002, 47% of families say that they have lived in Dane County for less than one year, compared to 53% in 2001 and 46% in 2000. There does appear to be a drop in the percent of individuals in families who seek shelter who report they have lived in Dane County for one month – 33% in 2000, 39% in 2001 to 32% in 2002. For single women there appears to be a trend toward residing in Dane County longer before seeking shelter – 47% lived in Dane County for one year in 2002 while 54% reported they lived in Dane County for one year in 2001. For single men, over 60% of those seeking shelter have lived in Dane county for less than one year and about half have lived in Dane County for less than one month. There are no significant changes from year to year.

The number of **veterans** has declined from 16% of the homeless people in shelter in 1997 to 6% in 2002.

The number of individuals who report that they, or someone in their household, have a **mental illness** may be increasing, decreasing or holding steady depending on the subpopulation reporting. Single women are far more likely to report having issues with mental illness than families or single men.

Mental Illness Issues	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2001
Families				21%	19%	22%
Single Women				57%	48%	48%
Single Men	26%	25%	20%	33%	25%	19%

For those individuals who report **alcohol or other drug abuse issues (AODA)**, the numbers would indicate a drop, however, the numbers for single men should be viewed with some degree of suspicion because of the wide range between 2000 and 2002.

AODA Issues	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2001
Families				14%	15%	11%
Single Women				34%	31%	30%
Single Men	43%	44%	62%	65%	32%	13%

The percentage of individuals who report being on **probation or parole** have remained less than 10% of the homeless population served in shelter since 2000. Those on probation or parole made up 6% of the homeless population in 2000, 5% in 2002 and 8% in 2002.

The number of individuals or households that reported earning wages at the time of entry into the shelter has declined from a high of 29% in 2000 to 19% in 2002 to 12% in 2002. The number of individuals or households that reported receiving SSI/SSDI or W-2 has recorded a slight decrease; in 2002, 5% of those in shelter received W-2 (99 households) and 15% received SSI/SSDI (321 households).