



# **2014 Alberta Point-in-Time Homeless Count: Provincial Report**

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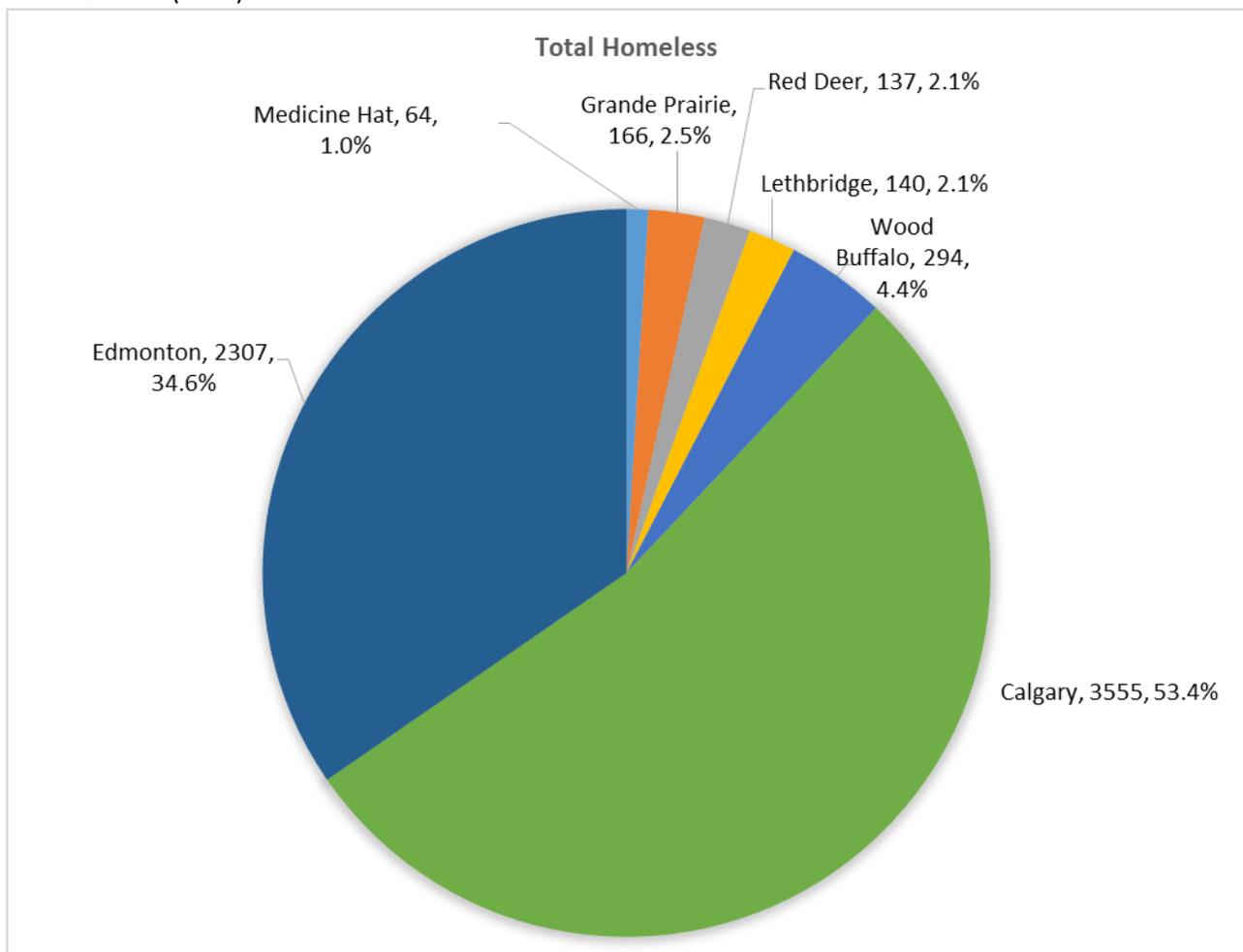
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## Key Findings

The 2014 Alberta Point-in-Time Homeless Count enumerated **6,663**<sup>1</sup> individuals experiencing homelessness across seven cities.

### Distribution across Alberta's Cities

Most of the homeless enumerated were in the two major urban centres: Calgary had about half of the total population and Edmonton over a third. The remaining 12% were distributed between the five smaller centres of Medicine Hat (1.0%), Grande Prairie (2.5%), Red Deer (2.1%), Lethbridge (2.1%) and Wood Buffalo (4.4%).

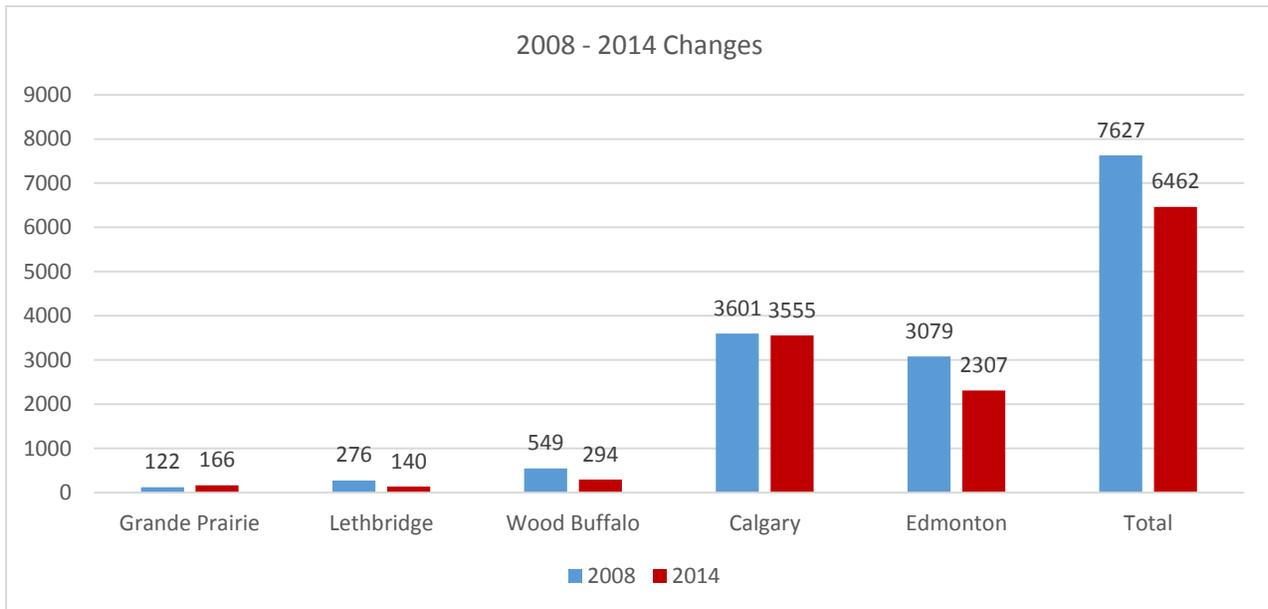


<sup>1</sup> Note that the Preliminary Report total homeless figure is different from this total. A total of 6,600 was reported initially. The difference of 63 is the result of 16 people being double counted in the street and in emergency shelter counts in Grande Prairie, an additional 24 people who were initially missed in data entry in Calgary's street count, and an additional 55 people in Edmonton as result of additional reports from shelters, which arrived after the initial release.

## Changes from Previous Counts

Notable methodological changes occurred in 2014; however, comparing communities who conducted counts at different times of the year in 2008 to the 2014 count, suggests an overall reduction of **15.3%**.

Comparing results from the most recent 2012-2013 counts in communities (excluding Medicine Hat) show an overall stabilization trend with a decrease of 3.7% despite considerable economic growth during this period. Each community's local report assess methodological changes and their impact on comparability in fuller detail.

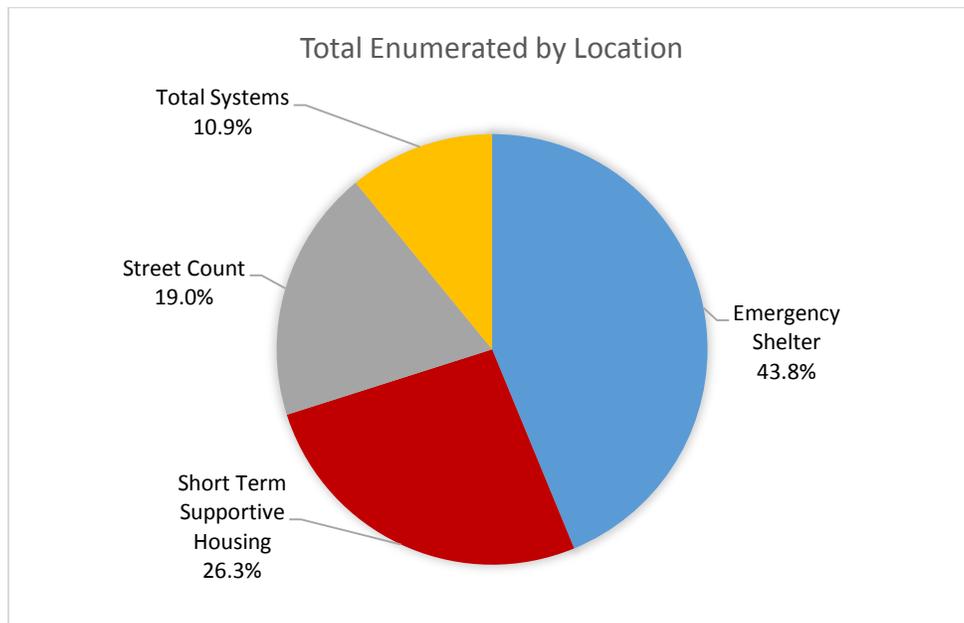


*\*Note these figures do not include Medicine Hat and Red Deer as they did not conduct counts in 2008.*

## Enumeration Locations

As the figure below suggests, most of those enumerated across the province were in emergency shelter (2,917) on the night of the count or in short term supportive housing (1,753). A total of 1,266 were enumerated during the street count, though they were not necessarily sleeping rough.

As many of the communities did not include all public systems in enumeration, the number of people enumerated in systems, at 727, is an under-representation of the total on the night of the count.



### Unique Local Dynamics

The prevalence of homelessness, while not unique to any Canadian city, is impacted by geographic-specific socio-economic factors that affect the number of people experiencing homelessness within each Albertan community. The unique dynamics impacting each local context reinforce the importance of community-based planning and delivery in our efforts to end homelessness.

### Key Demographics in Brief

The report provides the full analysis across each community regarding key demographics. The following is a brief overview at the provincial level.

These demographics reflect the samples surveyed rather than those enumerated as homeless (n=6,663). To provide a more accurate picture, survey and administrative data is specifically reported for age, gender, and Aboriginal status from Calgary, Red Deer and Lethbridge. Percentages will not add to 100% as not all categories of responses are included in the table; see full report for the breakdown.

- While demographic breakdowns varied from community to community, overall there were more males (73.0%) than females (25.8%) in the sample. There was a consistent under-representation of women across the province.
- About 6.7% of respondents had children with them at the time of the count.
- The proportion of youth under the age of 24 was 20.2%.
- Seniors 65 and over accounted for 3.6% of the population in the sample.
- Both seniors and youth are under-represented relative to the general population.
- Aboriginal people were consistently over-represented relative to the general population, averaging 30.1%. Some communities showed considerably higher rates of over-representation.

- Further, 11.4% were immigrants, and some communities showed over-representation of this group relative to their general population.
- About 18.4% had been in the community for less than 1 year, which is considerably higher than rates reported in the general population.
- Those whose most recent homelessness episode was longer than 1 year accounted for 37.6%; those homeless less than 1 month accounted for 11.3%.
- Respondents who reported serving in the Canadian Forces totaled 6.3%, which is about 3 times higher than the national average for veterans in the general population.

Key Demographic	Percent of Total	Sample (n=)	Data
Male	73.0%	5,627	Survey and Admin data from Calgary & Lethbridge
Female	25.8%	5,627	Survey and Admin data from Calgary & Lethbridge
Respondents with Accompanying Children	6.7%	2,495	Survey
Youth (up to 24)	20.2%	5,790	Survey and Admin data from Calgary & Red Deer
Seniors (65+)	3.6%	5,790	Survey and Admin data from Calgary & Red Deer
Aboriginal	30.1%	5,627	Survey and Admin data from Calgary & Lethbridge
Immigrant	11.4%	2,201	Survey (without Wood Buffalo)
New to Community (<1 year)	18.4%	2,495	Survey
Canadian Forces	6.1%	2,495	Survey
Duration of most recent homelessness episode is longer than 1 year	37.6%	1,034	Survey (without Edmonton)
Duration of most recent homelessness episode is less than 1 month	11.3%	1,034	Survey (without Edmonton)

### **Moving towards a Harmonized Count**

The count was part of an initiative led by the 7 Cities on Housing & Homelessness (7 Cities) in collaboration with the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness to develop a harmonized approach to homeless counts nationally.

Alberta is the first jurisdiction to implement measures towards a more standardized methodology, leading the way in Canada. Though counts across Alberta are becoming more aligned, this is the first time this effort has been undertaken.

There remain key methodological variances which have been identified as having a high likelihood of impacting the comparability of results across the province. As a result, this report recommends action to improve the Alberta methodology in future counts.

## Introduction

A point-in-time homeless count provides a snapshot of the population experiencing homelessness to help us better understand the extent of the issue in a community, as well as key demographic information. A homeless count can be a useful tool if used longitudinally to:

- Help assess emerging trends over time,
- Provide a method to measure progress,
- Raise community awareness about homelessness, and
- Improve efforts to end homelessness.

When methods are also aligned across communities, the value of the effort increases further. This is the first time a provincial count of people experiencing homelessness has been undertaken in Canada. The significance of a harmonized count in Alberta is manifold; firstly, it aligns definitions and creates consistency in data collected and examined allowing for meaningful comparative analysis. Secondly, it allows for regional analysis to create a more complete picture of homelessness in the province, rather than city by city only. This provides us with a valuable source of information to support collective efforts to end homelessness in Alberta.

The Alberta 7 Cities worked in partnership with the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness to test the draft national methodology for standardized homeless point-in-time counts. This methodology is fully aligned with Canadian Definition of Homelessness.<sup>2</sup>

To date, communities across Canada have developed local approaches and definitions which are unfortunately too disparate to allow for analysis and comparison. Alberta's role leading the way in harmonizing homeless counts has the additional benefit of contributing to wider, national efforts to end homelessness.

Future work by the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (COH) includes launching the national methodology for point-in-time homelessness counts, leveraging the learnings from the Alberta experience in 2014 for the rest of the country. The aims of this movement are to create standardized national methods for homeless counts across Canada, extending the benefit we see in Alberta across the country. The development of the national initiative strives to align local enumeration methods and definitions across the country to allow for aggregate data analysis and comparison.

Ultimately, these efforts are about 'making everyone count': what we do with the data collected will move the agenda to end homelessness forward collectively.

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 1 for the Canadian Definition of Homelessness.

## Overview of Approach

In October 2014, Alberta's 7 Cities agreed to pilot the proposed national methodology as a collaborative endeavour. The 7 Cities struck a Homeless Count Working Group who met regularly over the course of six months to ensure methods aligned, as well as messaging in community and learnings were shared in real time.

The lead organizations from the participating communities led the actual counts on the ground, conducted data entry and provided information about local methods to a lead researcher. Each city had access to the COH's national methods toolkit, which outlined recommended timing for the count, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and survey questions.<sup>3</sup>

The cities agreed to conduct the count in facilities (emergency shelters, short term supportive housing), systems (hospitals, jails, remand, police holding cells, Alberta Works and Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped [AISH] funded hotels), as well as on the street.

The cities adapted the proposed methods to meet their unique local circumstances. For example, the national survey has mandatory questions that all cities needed to ask, but also allows for additional questions dependent on community interest. Each city tailored the survey accordingly, but kept the mandatory questions to allow for comparison regionally in the survey.

Similarly, each city conducted an emergency shelter and street count at a minimum, but some communities had broader scope enumerating people in public systems, short term supportive housing, and in precarious housing situations.

The timing of the counts varied; though most cities enumerated on October 16, there were exceptions that must be noted. Further, two cities (Edmonton and Wood Buffalo) conducted daytime street counts, while the other five communities conducted night counts, which impacts the comparability of the results.

The inclusion and exclusion criteria for the analysis of the data showed variance as well, although the COH had explicit criteria in their materials. In addition, there were local dynamics which impact results further. These include the level of coverage and number of volunteers conducting the count, as well as extenuating circumstances. These methodological variances are discussed in further detail in this report.

The 7 Cities entered and submitted their data sets to one lead researcher to conduct the provincial analysis and reports. Individual reports were produced for each community, highlighting local dynamics. A preliminary report was released highlight key findings on November 21, 2014. The report contextualized the preliminary findings from the count against broader macro-economic and social data, as well as housing market information.

It is important to highlight that despite efforts to align, considerable challenges to comparability exist because of the differences in methods used. Recommendations regarding future counts address areas of improvement.

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<sup>3</sup> Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (2015). Canadian Point-in-Time Count: Methodology & Toolkit – A Guide for Participating Communities.

## Methodology Discussion

This section summarizes the methodological approaches taken across the 7 Cities, and highlights key differences that may bear on the final results. It is important to note that this was the first time a region has attempted to harmonize counts, thus the agreement in principle was to enhance alignment rather than build from ground zero. All cities but Medicine Hat had been conducting counts already, thus, a balance was sought which allowed comparison with previous approaches, while moving toward the national method.

However, there were communities which fully adopted the national standards: Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Red Deer and Grande Prairie. The aim is to improve the provincial method over time, and seek increasing opportunities for alignment in the future.

### Who was counted?

The chart summarizes the typology of the Canadian Definition of Homelessness. This typology helps communities define with great accuracy who they will count and ensures that the same language and categories are used when comparing results with others. In the Alberta count, communities counted individuals and families in the following situations, though these were applied variably across the 7 Cities, as will be outlined subsequently.

OPERATIONAL CATEGORY		LIVING SITUATION	Medicine Hat	Grande Prairie	Red Deer	Lethbridge	Wood Buffalo	Calgary	Edmonton	
1	Unsheltered	1.1 People living in public or private spaces without consent or contract	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
		1.2 People living in places not intended for permanent human habitation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2	Emergency Sheltered	2.1 Emergency overnight shelters for people who are homeless	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
		2.2 Violence-Against-Women (VAW) shelters	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
		2.3 Emergency shelter for people fleeing a natural disaster or destruction of accommodation due to fires, floods etc.								
3	Provisionally Accommodated	3.1 Interim Housing for people who are homeless	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
		3.2 People living temporarily with others, but without guarantee of continued residency or immediate prospects for accessing permanent housing.								✓
		3.3 People accessing short term, temporary rental accommodations without security of tenure								✓
		3.4 People in institutional care who lack permanent housing arrangements.			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		3.5 Accommodation / Reception centres for recently arrived immigrants and refugees							✓	
4	At-Risk of Homelessness	4.1 People at imminent risk of homelessness								
		4.2 Individuals and families who are precariously housed.								

## Methods Limitations

It is important to clarify that this report provides information on the total enumerated as homeless during the count, as well as an analysis of the valid surveys obtained during the count. This is an important distinction as the survey was not consistently applied across all locations that were subject to enumeration. Further, the survey provides a sample for analysis from the overall number enumerated.

### Facilities Count

Emergency shelters were included in all 7 communities. Short term supportive housing facilities were included in all cities with the exception of Grande Prairie. Both Calgary and Edmonton include short-term and interim housing facilities, as well as addictions treatment programs (if clients have no other address).

Facilities Count							
Element	Medicine Hat	Grande Prairie	Red Deer	Lethbridge	Wood Buffalo	Calgary	Edmonton
Timing	9pm-11pm October 16	8:30pm - 12:00am October 23	10:00pm- 12:00am October 16	10pm-1am October 16	8pm to 8am October 14	10pm-1am October 16	Overnight October 15
Emergency Shelters Included	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Accompanying Children Included	✓	✓	✓	✓	n/a	✓	✓
Short Term Supportive Housing Included	✓	none available	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Accompanying Children in Short Term Supportive Housing Included	✓	n/a	✓	✓	n/a	✓	✓
Addiction Treatment/ Detox Housing Included	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	✓	✓	✓

### Street Count

Coverage in the street count across the province varied from community to community, pending on the number of zones and volunteers in the count. For example, Calgary includes counts of people rough sleeping conducted by the three universities in Calgary, Calgary Transit, Stampede grounds, Calgary Parking Authority, and one provincial park (Fish Creek).

Edmonton had about 300 volunteers who approached approximately 4,000 people (though many were not homeless) at bottle depots, transit stations, drop-in centres and on walking routes across the city. Lethbridge had enough volunteers to cover all areas of their city.

As the following table outlines, considerable variation in coverage occurred depending on the number of zones included and available enumerators. Looking at Red Deer, Medicine Hat and Lethbridge for example compared to the larger centres, it is evident that the higher ratio of enumerators to those counted on the street is considerable and can impact results significantly due to the increased chances of finding eligible participants.

Street Count							
Element	Medicine Hat	Grande Prairie	Red Deer	Lethbridge	Wood Buffalo	Calgary	Edmonton
Timing	9pm-11pm October 16	4:30pm - 8:30pm October 23	10:00pm-12:00am October 16	10pm-1am October 16	8am – 6pm October 15	10pm-1am October 16	5am-10pm October 16
Number of Enumerators	83	42	200	135	54	84	300
Ratio of # Enumerators to # Enumerated on Street	16:1	0.8:1	9:1	5.6:1	0.3:1	0.5:1	0.3:1
Coverage	Full Downtown coverage & known areas	Full Downtown coverage & known areas	Full coverage of city	Full Downtown coverage & known areas			
Number of Zones	21	8	100	40	10	25	99
Approached all encountered	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

### Systems Count

Most communities included some public systems in their count – such as hospitals, remand or the arrest and processing units for those with No Fixed Address at admission. Notably, Edmonton includes only those discharged to No Fixed Address on the day of the count.

Under the Canadian Definition of Homelessness, those in custody or hospital with No Fixed Address are considered only provisionally accommodated and, thus, homeless. Since people’s housing status may change while institutionalized, it is impossible to know an exact number, but the Corrections and Health records are the best estimate available.

Red Deer, Lethbridge, Wood Buffalo, Calgary and Edmonton included health facilities. Red Deer, Lethbridge, Wood Buffalo, and Calgary included correctional facilities. Red Deer, Lethbridge, Calgary and Edmonton include Alberta Works-funded hotels as emergency housing. Edmonton included AISH-funded hotels as well. Notably, Red Deer administered the survey fully across health and corrections facilities, using consistent criteria aligned with their count.

Systems Count							
Element	Medicine Hat	Grande Prairie	Red Deer	Lethbridge	Wood Buffalo	Calgary	Edmonton
Health Facilities	n/a	n/a	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ Discharges
Correctional Centre	n/a	n/a	✓	✓	✓	✓	n/a
Alberta Works Hotels	n/a	n/a	✓	✓	n/a – none available	✓	✓
AISH Hotels	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a – none available	n/a	✓
Red Cross Hotels	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a
Police Holding Cells	n/a	n/a	✓	✓	✓	✓	n/a

### Variations across the 7 Cities

The table below summarizes key variations with respect to enumeration and survey administration across the 7 Cities. These factors impact the comparability of results.

Enumeration and Survey Administration Variations			
Community	Enumeration Administration	Survey Administration	Notes
Medicine Hat	Emergency Shelter Short Term Supportive Housing Street Count	Emergency Shelter Short Term Supportive Housing Street Count	No Systems included in this count.
Grande Prairie	Emergency Shelter Street Count Systems Count	Emergency Shelter Street Count	No Short Term Supportive Housing exists in community.
Red Deer	Emergency Shelter Short Term Supportive Housing Street Count Systems Count	Emergency Shelter Short Term Supportive Housing Street Count Systems Count	Systems enumeration included health and corrections capturing, and AB Works; Survey conducted health and corrections facilities. Administrated survey in corrections and health, not AB Works.
Lethbridge	Emergency Shelter Short Term Supportive Housing Street Count Systems Count	Emergency Shelter Short Term Supportive Housing Street Count Systems – partial survey in corrections (gender/Aboriginal)	Systems enumeration only captured numbers of NFA in health and corrections. AB Works hotels were included in enumeration.
Wood Buffalo	Emergency Shelter Short Term Supportive Housing Street Count Systems Count	Emergency Shelter Short Term Supportive Housing Street Count	Though Systems enumeration was included, no one was NFA. No AB Works or AISH hotels available in community.
Calgary	Emergency Shelter Short Term Supportive Housing Street Count Systems Count	Emergency Shelter Street Count	Systems enumeration included health and corrections capturing numbers of NFA; AB Works hotels included.
Edmonton	Emergency Shelter Short Term Supportive Housing Street Count Systems Count	Emergency Shelter Short Term Supportive Housing Street Count	Systems enumeration included health and corrections discharges to NFA; AB Works and AISH hotels included.

## Local Circumstances

In addition to these methodological variations, there were additional factors impacting the count. Weather was overall mild and dry, which may have influenced the likelihood for some to sleep rough. Very cold and wet conditions would increase the likelihood for people to seek shelter in facilities. This was reported to be the case for Grande Prairie, which eased enumeration as people tended to “congregate” at known locations.

Notably, the temperature change in Wood Buffalo was significant between the day of the facilities counts and street count. The colder temperature would make the potential street count smaller.

Weather Conditions							
Element	Medicine Hat	Grande Prairie	Red Deer	Lethbridge	Wood Buffalo	Calgary	Edmonton
Conditions	Mild; dry	Cool; wet	Mild; dry	Mild; dry	Mild; dry	Mild; dry	Mild; dry
Temperature Degrees Celsius (Government of Canada Historical Climate Data) <sup>4</sup>	Oct 16 13 High 4 Low	Oct 23 5.5 High -1.4 Low	Oct 16 10.9 High 2.1 Low	Oct 16 15 High 4.4 Low	Oct. 14 10.4 High 7.2 Low  Oct 15 7.2 High -0.5 Low	Oct 16 11 High 4 Low	Oct 15 10.1 High -2.7 Low  Oct 16 11.4 High 1.4 Low

The mid-October date was also selected to ensure that the payments from Alberta Works were not occurring during the same week. Access to funds is understood to increase the likelihood for those otherwise enumerated to stay in hotels or motels, thereby being missed in the count. Because Grande Prairie conducted their count a week later, this factor may have impacted their results.

Lastly, Red Deer reported a police sting operation to have been underway during the same night as the count, which may have impacted the number of people they enumerated as some may have been picked up by police.

## Different Definitions

It is important to note that although the national methods outlined a number of exclusions for potential participants, these were not followed in implementation. Thus, the Working Committee had to review actual results and determine common criteria based on practices.

Generally, the cities did not consistently apply the national methodology’s screening criteria. This resulted in variances in resulting data sets as many included surveys without consent, or from respondents who reported having permanent addresses. In other cases, data meant for the street survey was collected from participants who were surveyed in facilities, and vice versa.

In the 2014 count, an answer of either “Yes, I have a permanent residence” or “I stayed at my own apartment/house last night” defined a person as not homeless (See Appendix 2 for the national survey).

<sup>4</sup> Historical climate data available from [http://climate.weather.gc.ca/index\\_e.html#access](http://climate.weather.gc.ca/index_e.html#access).

Appendix 3 outlines the screening criteria used across the 7 Cities. Most communities enumerated all people who stayed in emergency shelters or short term supportive housing as homeless, regardless of their response to this question.

One city (Lethbridge) removed the number of people surveyed who reported having a permanent address from their total homeless count (there were only 3 people removed using this process). We know however, that there was no consistent screening applied across communities to deduce the number of emergency shelter users or short term supportive housing residents who otherwise had a permanent residence. Future counts should make efforts to understand this issue better as it was considered by the Working Group to have a higher prevalence than reported in the data.

During the street count, if a person noted they did not have a permanent home to go to, regardless of where they were staying on the night of the count, they were still included in the final homeless count. There were variations however: in Calgary if respondents didn't have a permanent residence but did say they were going to their own apartment/house, or to someone else's place they were excluded. In Edmonton there were respondents who said they had no permanent home but also answered "I stayed at my own place" the night prior to the count: these cases were excluded from the total. However, because Edmonton conducted a daytime street count, the number of people enumerated in these circumstances was much higher than in other communities and included people who had stayed in an emergency shelter or short term supportive housing facility the night prior to the count. Edmonton surveyed people staying in shelters and short term supportive housing during the street count for demographic information, but they were not included in the street count as they were already counted at the emergency shelter.

Because of these variances, the cleaning process was cumbersome but ultimately resolved many of these challenges. Whereas the survey data used was ultimately cleaned using similar standards, the enumeration for the total homeless reported remained a challenge.

The final criteria for inclusion and exclusion of surveys was applied across the 7 Cities. Any surveys were excluded if the respondents:

- did not provide consent;
- had a permanent residence that they can return to at the time of the count;
- had already participated in the survey;
- reported having their own apartment/house.

The other challenge in comparison comes from the Wood Buffalo methods, which did not include reporting total occupancy in their emergency and short term supportive housing facilities. This neither allows for a calculation of response rate for Wood Buffalo, nor a sense of total homeless enumerated in facilities.

## Timing Differences

One of the greatest variances in the Alberta count occurred as result of the timing of the counts. While most cities enumerated and surveyed on October 16, 2014 – this was not the case for Grande Prairie and Wood Buffalo, who undertook their counts on October 22 and 15 respectively.

The rationale for the variance was as follows:

- Wood Buffalo opted to count on a Wednesday as opposed to a Thursday in order to capture shift workers in the oil and gas sector.
- Grande Prairie had a major community event relying on volunteers on the week of October 16th, thus postponed their count to a week later to ensure adequate resources were in place.

Another timing variance was the result of the order in which the facilities and street counts were conducted. The national methodology outlines that the street and facilities count should occur at the same time to avoid double-counting.

The advantage of the simultaneous count is that it minimizes double-counting. The advantage of the day count is that it produces much greater access to unsheltered and provisionally accommodated individuals. However, as the national methods were not aiming to enumerate or survey hidden homeless populations, the decision was made to recommend a night-time count. Calgary, Lethbridge, Red Deer, Medicine Hat, and Grande Prairie conduct their street counts overnight on the same night they conduct the shelter count.

Edmonton conducted the facilities count the night prior and then a street count the following day, asking where participants stayed the previous night. Edmonton had used the national methods approach but abandoned this methodology as of 2012 due to significant double counting. Edmonton minimizes double-counting by excluding anyone on the street survey who said they have already completed this survey or said they stayed in a shelter last night.

Wood Buffalo has a similar approach to Edmonton, but in their street count survey asked where participants plan to stay that night. Medicine Hat's street count was conducted on the night of October 16, however the survey asked participants whether they had a permanent residence they stayed in the night prior and whether they could return to it the night of the count.

The daytime counts in Edmonton and Wood Buffalo are particularly challenging to compare against nighttime counts in the other five cities. Similarly, comparing the counts in facilities (emergency shelter in particular) using different inclusion and exclusion criteria impact comparability of the results.

## Modifications to the Survey Questions

Aside from the variances on the screening questions, the national questions were largely kept intact. There was an exception in Wood Buffalo who categorized responses in pre-determined ranges for a number of time-related questions including age, time in Canada and in the community. These are noted throughout the survey analysis.

The national methods require that a number of questions are consistently asked across communities (See Appendix 2 for the national survey instrument). This was done to a large extent in Calgary, Red Deer, Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, and Grande Prairie. A full analysis of the survey instruments used across the communities is provided in Appendix 3.

### Data Entry and Analysis Process

Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Calgary, and Grande Prairie used the Excel sheet developed by the working group to enter their survey data. As a result, the cleaning of their surveys and merging of data was possible. Unique identifiers were generated by the entry form, allowing for cross-tabulations.

Wood Buffalo did not enter their data in an individualized record manner. They were only able to provide summaries of responses for analysis. Surveys do exist in paper form and could be entered in a database to generate individualized records.

Edmonton used a scanning system for their survey forms; the data generated was analysed using Excel and submitted for the provincial report. The data could not be merged with the aforementioned cities as different coding was used for answers. This was also the case for Red Deer, who developed their own entry system. The data was then submitted for provincial analysis in Excel.

It is possible to develop a process to merge the data if individualized survey responses can be obtained from Wood Buffalo and the Edmonton and Red Deer data sets can be translated to merge with the other four cities.

<b>Methodology Issues in Summary</b>
<b>Facilities Count</b>
Timing varied: Oct 15 for Wood Buffalo and Edmonton; Grande Prairie on Oct 23, rest on Oct 16
Wood Buffalo not including accompanying children in facilities count
Addiction treatment and detox only included in Red Deer and Wood Buffalo in facilities count
<b>Street Count</b>
Timing varied: Oct 15 for Wood Buffalo; Grande Prairie on Oct 23, rest on Oct 16
Street Count timing varied from daytime in Edmonton to early and late evening
Number of Enumerators to population counted varied from 0.3:1 to 16:1
Coverage of downtown and known areas in all but Red Deer, where full coverage of city
<b>Systems Count</b>
Health Facilities not included in Medicine Hat and Grande Prairie
Correctional Facilities not included in Medicine Hat and Grande Prairie
Police holding cells not included in Edmonton, Medicine Hat, Grande Prairie
Alberta Works hotels not included in Medicine Hat and Grande Prairie
AISH hotels only included in Edmonton
Red Cross hotels included in Lethbridge
<b>Survey Administration</b>
All but Calgary administered survey in short term supportive housing (Grande Prairie has no such facilities)
Red Deer administered survey in systems
Local Circumstances
Weather was mild and dry in all but Grande Prairie (wet, cool)
<b>Defining who is counted as homeless</b>
Medicine Hat changed Screening question to: Do you have a permanent residence that you stayed at or could have stayed at last night (including rent or own residence, roommate, college residence, staying

<i>temporarily in Medicine Hat but have a residence in another community)?</i>
<b>Response Rate</b>
Most communities had response rates above 45%, except Calgary (12%);
No data to analyze Wood Buffalo response rate
Administrative data available for Calgary with 100% coverage – shows variance from survey
<b>Survey Questions</b>
Wood Buffalo Responses were categorized in ranges for age, time in community, etc.
Wood Buffalo Aboriginal identity was both observed and surveyed in some cases
Data was not entered using the same protocol
Wood Buffalo has no unique response-level data – already categorized

## Methodology Improvements in Future Counts

The Count has been compiled for several purposes: 1) to estimate the size of the homeless population in Alberta, 2) to estimate the distribution of the homeless population across the province, 3) to infer changes in the size of the homeless population and 4) to describe and compare the characteristics of the homeless populations. These items are all important for evaluating policy and initiatives aimed at addressing homelessness and to inform decision makers as to the scale of the problem.

For all of these intended purposes we ideally have 1) a common definition for who would be considered homeless and 2) a common methodology for sampling/identifying the homeless. Without these two conditions met, there is a risk that the same person(s) could be classified differently across location and time if definitions and methods vary across location or change over time. Like conditions such as unemployment or disability, the margins for defining who is homeless are socially constructed so there is no true standard by which to assess which classification is “true” or “correct”. The important thing in this situation is to define and classify consistently.

### Conducting Daytime vs. Nighttime Street Counts

The largest risk to reliability of the analysis comes from Calgary and Edmonton, particularly as they have the largest proportion of the homeless population amongst the 7 Cities, methodologies for counting matter a lot. Edmonton's use of a daytime count for the street is problematic for getting a comparable count to nighttime counts elsewhere in the province since there are generally more people out and about in the daytime and there risks of inflating the count. On the other hand, the use of the nighttime count for the street is problematic for getting a comparable count to daytime counts since there are generally more people out and about in the daytime and there are risks of underestimating the count. In either case, a decision has to be made to be consistent across communities, recognizing the limitations of the chosen method.

### Administrative Data Use to Validate Surveys

Calgary has a different issue, which is the very low number of survey responses in comparison to the administrative data available. At a minimum, a direct comparison of statistics from the survey to the administrative data is needed to see if the surveys and administrative data are likely representative of the same population.

## Aligning Definitions

For future counts, aligning definitions and methodology (timing, screening questions, locations. etc.) to the greatest extent possible is necessary. It is also recommended that survey analysis be completed on a location basis- thereby comparing results within emergency shelters, short term supportive housing, systems, and street counts separately as they are looking at different groups. As the methods vary according to location, it is important to qualify the comparison on the grounds that the methods and definitions varying are a source of misclassification bias.

## Comparing Like-Populations

Similarly, when comparing changes over time, we should determine what is happening with the consistently measured counts (e.g. emergency shelters, systems) and then the street count. If a community's success is only coming from changes in the street count and the sheltered persons count is not changing, then it may not be appropriate to not see this as a reduction in homelessness since the change could just be attributable to features of the street count in given years.

## Leveraging Survey and Administrative Data

With respect to the use of administrative data, for the survey data to be informative it is probably best to compare survey responses across cities only within given categories of respondents (e.g. emergency sheltered with emergency sheltered, street with street). In order to combine with administrative data, we also need to show that the samples of the surveyed respondents and those in the admin data come from the same population (common support assumption). So for each city, to compare survey responses with the same measures/outcomes in the admin data would be needed. Again, this should be done by separating the street count from emergency sheltered, etc. populations.

To put this in a different way, if the mean ages, sex and other characteristics are different between the surveys and administrative data, is that because one source is better for describing the same population or are the two instruments actually sampling from different populations? By focusing comparison on locations where enumeration and survey administration occur, we gain greater confidence in knowing who is being enumerated and surveyed then you can reduce the uncertainty over the validity of the description.

The use of administrative can help address the issue of non-consent to the survey and may be less burdensome on the client using already-consented collection of data via the shelter's administrative data.

## Aligning Standards for Administrative Data Use

Where administration data is used, it should not replace, but rather validate the surveys completed. In either case, the collection of administrative data requires standards to ensure comparability across the 7 Cities.

## Engaging Public Systems at a Provincial Level

To ensure consistent methods, it is advisable to engage health and corrections, as well as income supports partners in the process at a provincial level. Whether surveys are undertaken in facilities, or administrative data is used, this should be done consistently across the province in hospitals, correctional facilities, detox centres, etc.

## Process Improvements

Aside from methodological issues, considerable improvements can be made to smooth out the process across communities. This includes earlier commencement for planning the count to work out emerging issues in a timely fashion. Having a central coordinator brought on earlier to oversee the development of methods is recommended. This was not done formally until the count methods were already determined at the community level – thus there was no central person overseeing the survey instruments and methods until these were already decided upon.

Because data entry occurred differently, it was also impossible to merge data sets for analysis, requiring back and forth with some communities to interpret their data sets. This made the process more time consuming. The data entry and analysis process can be improved if coordinated centrally.

The report release timelines required a longer period for data cleaning than was provided as data was not available to the coordinating researcher in some cases according to the pre-determined timelines. This made analysis difficult to do in a timely fashion, particularly as communities found mistakes and re-submitted data several times. With these changes, the coordinating researcher had to re-run the entire analysis and update the report several times.

## Key Recommendations

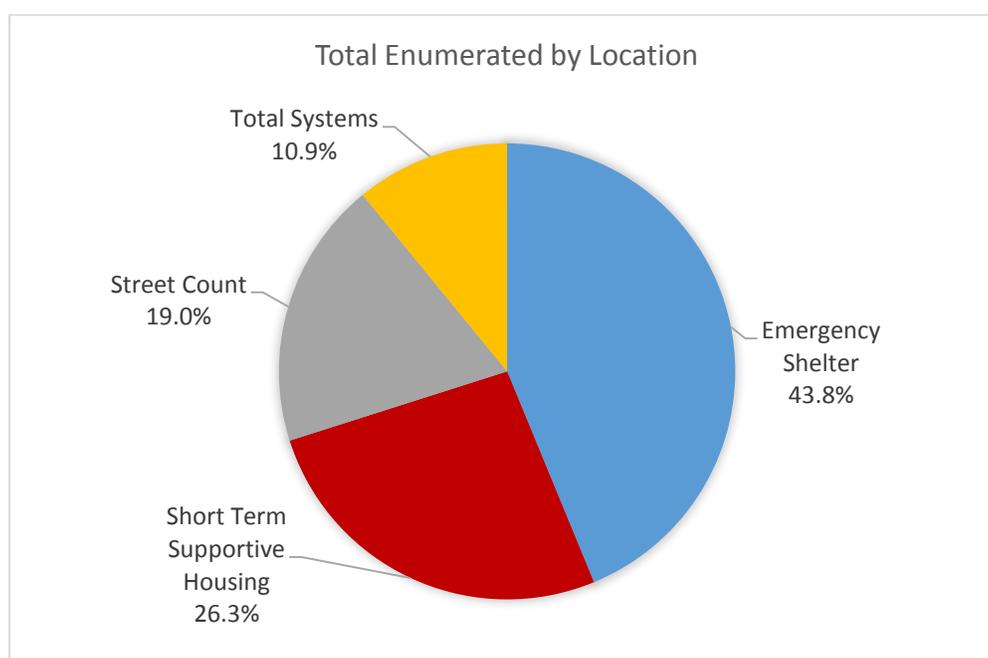
In Summary, the following are key recommendations to improve the comparability and reliability of the provincial count.

- Develop a consistent definition (inclusion and exclusion criteria) for who “counts” as homeless and apply these consistently through standardized methods.
- Use the same set of survey questions without wording changes consistently.
- Develop the survey design using a consistent layout (informed by an expert in survey design) and order of questions for all communities.
- Conduct the counts at the same time (date, hours).
- Use a common data entry and cleaning process coordinated centrally.
- Develop analyses survey comparing results per administration location (emergency shelter, short term supportive housing, street, health, corrections, etc.)
- Engage province-wide systems partners (i.e. health, justice) to utilize centralized existing data sources to access public systems use data for the count, ensuring alignment in methodologies.
- Develop standardized method for collecting and analysing administrative data.
- Validate surveys using administrative data from emergency shelters, short term supportive housing, health, corrections, etc.

- Explore creating consistency in coverage and number of enumerators for the street count.
- Consider adding additional questions to the survey, such as pregnancy status and age first homeless, to enhance the provincial picture.
- Undertake the count on a regular basis going forward: every 2 years is recommended.
- Engage in planning the count earlier: working groups should begin developing protocols at the provincial levels at least 8 months prior to the count date.
- Coordinate methodology design, surveys, data entry and analysis centrally.
- Engage key stakeholders with respect to results and communications earlier in the planning process.
- Work with government (provincial and federal) to assess data from Housing First and other interventions (demographics and presenting needs) in relation to the results of the Count in the future to help inform future directions. This will require an alignment of data definitions to ensure comparability.

## Count Results

The provincial count found 6,663 individuals experiencing homelessness in the 7 Cities<sup>5</sup>. As the table below suggests, most of those enumerated across the province were in emergency shelter (2,917) on the night of the count or in short term supportive housing (1,753). A total of 1,266 were enumerated during the street count, though they were not necessarily sleeping rough. As many of the communities did not include all public systems in enumeration, the number of people enumerated in systems is under-representing the population on the night of the count at 727.



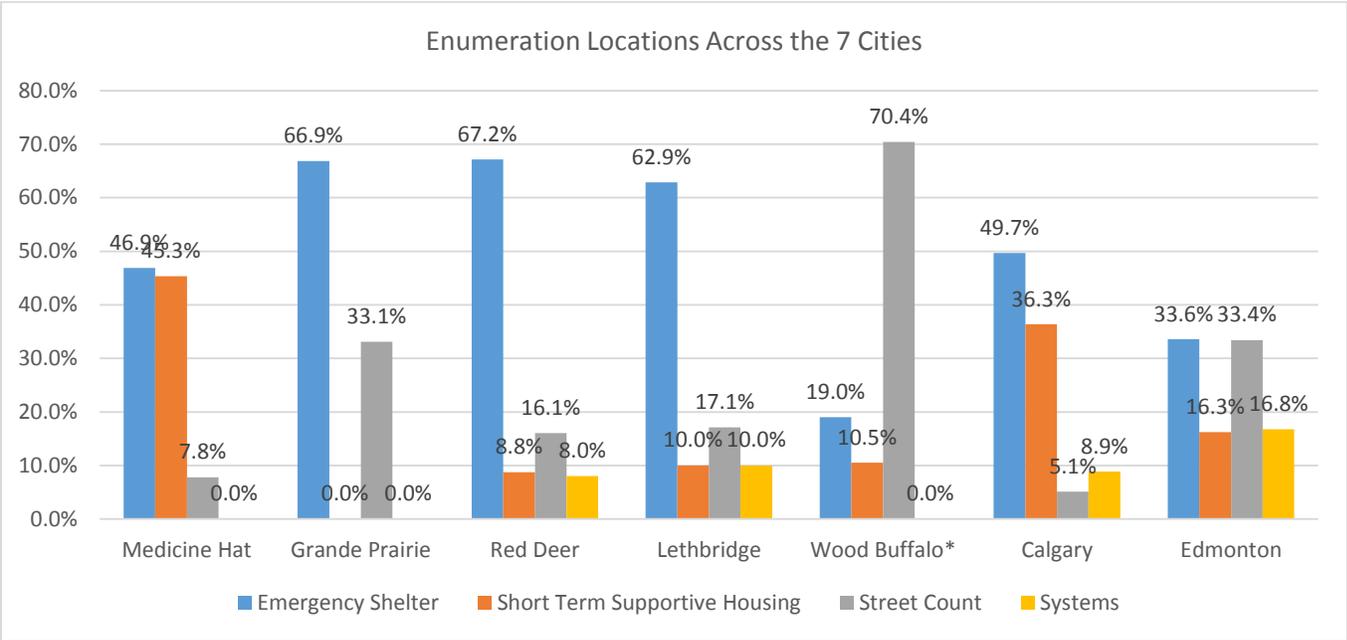
	Emergency Shelter		Short Term Supportive Housing		Street Count		Corrections	Health	AB Works/AISH Hotels	Total Systems		Total Homeless	
Medicine Hat	30	1.0%	29	1.7%	5	0.4%	0			n/a	0.0%	64	1.0%
Grande Prairie	111	3.8%	0	0.0%	55	4.3%	0			n/a	0.0%	166	2.5%
Red Deer	92	3.2%	12	0.7%	22	1.7%	0	8	3	11	1.5%	137	2.1%
Lethbridge	88	3.0%	14	0.8%	24	1.9%	14			14	1.9%	140	2.1%
Wood Buffalo	56	1.9%	31	1.8%	207	16.4%	0	0	0	0	0.0%	294	4.4%
Calgary	1766	60.5%	1292	73.7%	182	14.4%	172	71	72	315	43.3%	3555	53.4%
Edmonton	774	26.5%	375	21.4%	771	60.9%	0	125	262	387	53.2%	2307	34.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2917</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1753</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1266</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>727</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>6663</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Looking at the proportion of those enumerated in emergency shelter across the 7 Cities, the enumeration location varies considerably. While emergency shelters are the primary location in Grande Prairie, Red Deer, Lethbridge and Calgary, this is not the case in Wood Buffalo, whose street count

<sup>5</sup> Note that the Preliminary Report total homeless figure is different from this total. A total of 6,600 was reported initially. The difference of 63 is the result of 16 people being double counted in the street and in emergency shelter counts in Grande Prairie, an additional 24 people who were initially missed in data entry in Calgary's street count, and an additional 23 people counted in Edmonton as result of reports from Alberta Works hotels, which arrived after the initial release.

accounts for the majority of those enumerated. Edmonton too has a fairly even split between shelters and the street count.

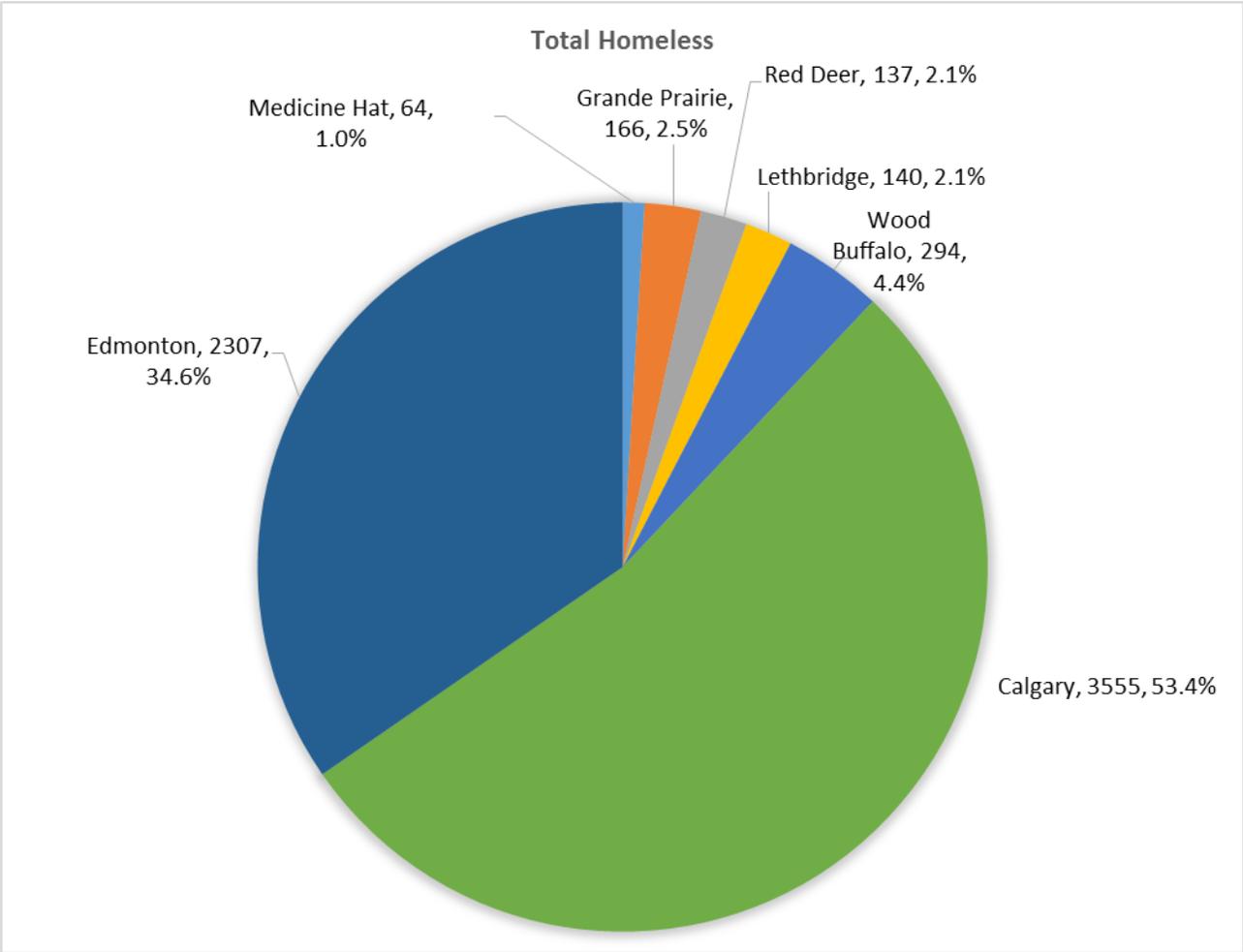
Note that Wood Buffalo did not report actual occupancy rates on the night of the count; rather, only those surveyed. This likely under-represents the total number in emergency shelters and short term facilities compared to other communities. Edmonton’s daytime street count also likely accounts for the higher proportion enumerated on the street.



### Regional Distribution & Changes

The provincial count found 6,663 individuals experiencing homelessness in the province. Most of the homeless enumerated were in the two major urban centres: Calgary had about half of the total population and Edmonton over a third.

The remaining 12% were distributed between the 5 smaller centres of Medicine Hat (1.0%), Grande Prairie (2.5%), Red Deer (2.1%), Lethbridge (2.1%) and Wood Buffalo (4.4%).



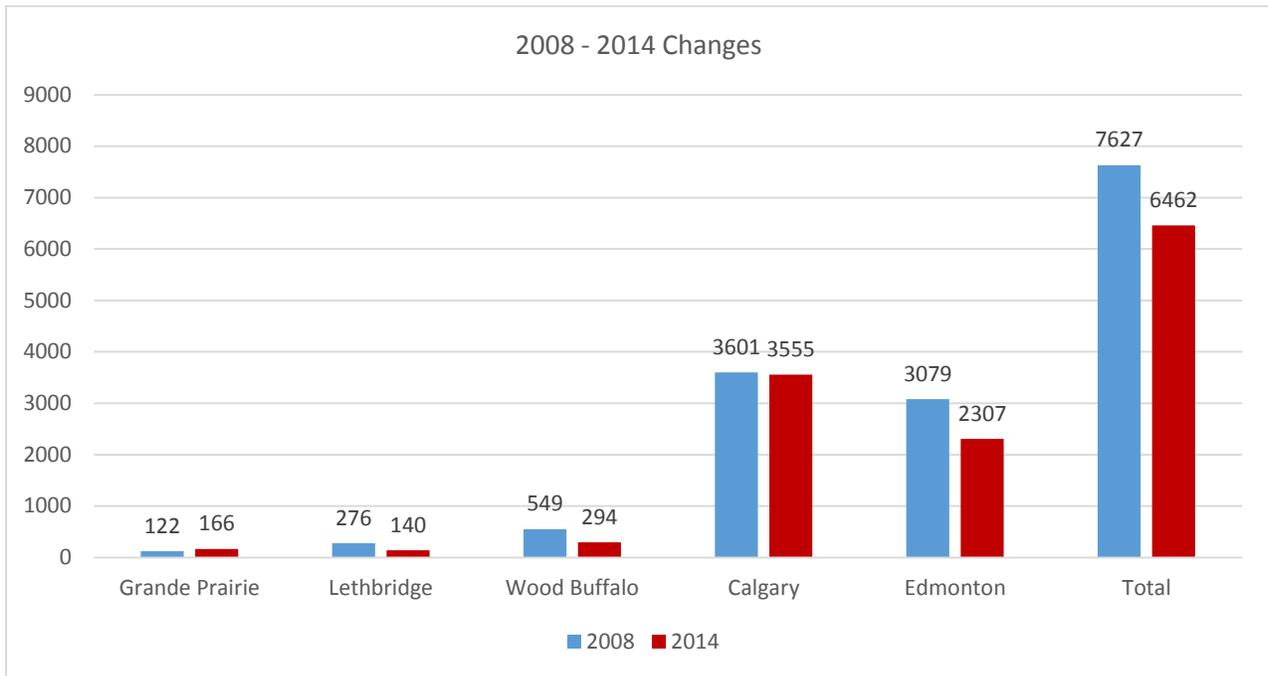
### Contextualising the Findings

#### Changes over Time

The most important use of the count is to track how the homeless population changes over time. However, comparing the October 2014 count with previous counts should be done with caution as the methodology used changed; each community level report will delve into the impact and extent of these methodological changes compared to previous approaches. This will enable our community efforts to end homelessness be increasingly evidence-driven as we gain a new source of information on the level of need in our community.

Comparing communities who conducted counts at various times of the year in 2008 to the 2014 count is problematic as major methodological changes occurred; however, the overall trend shows a decrease in homelessness from 2008-2014 of about 15.3%. Comparing results from the most recent 2012-2013 counts in communities (without Medicine Hat) show an overall stabilization trend with a decrease of 3.7% despite considerable economic growth during this period.

Each community is preparing individual reports which more fully examines methodological changes comparatively to previous local counts (see Appendix 5 for further discussion).



*\*Note the comparison only includes cities with counts in 2008 only.*

### Population Growth

It is important that results of the counts are contextualized in the broader economic trends impacting Alberta. All 7 Cities are experiencing population growth at various levels. Medicine Hat remains relatively stable, while the rest of the cities grew significantly between 2008 and 2013 – an average of 10% across the 7 Cities.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Municipals Affairs (2013) Municipal Census and Population Lists 2008, 2013. Retrieved from: [http://municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/mc\\_official\\_populations.cfm](http://municipalaffairs.gov.ab.ca/mc_official_populations.cfm)

Municipality	Municipal Census Date	Municipal Census Date	2008 Population	2013 Population	Change
Medicine Hat	01-Jun-12	01-May-08	60,426	61,180	1.2%
Grande Prairie	10-May-11* Federal Census	01-Apr-07	50,227	55,032	9.6%
Red Deer	01-Apr-13	04-Apr-08	87,816	97,109	10.6%
Lethbridge	01-Apr-13	01-Apr-08	83,960	90,417	7.7%
Wood Buffalo	09-May-12	01-Apr-07	88,131	116,407	32.1%
Calgary	01-Apr-13	01-Apr-08	1,042,892	1,149,552	10.2%
Edmonton	01-Apr-12	01-Apr-08	752,412	817,498	8.7%
Total			2,165,864	2,387,195	10.2%

This growth is in part related to the economic opportunities presented in Alberta, as indicated by low unemployment rates. Though the recent decreases in oil prices is already beginning to have an impact on the ground, the overall growth experienced across the province has created an environment of high rents and low vacancies at the time of the count.

	Unemployment <sup>7</sup>		
	Unemployment Oct. 2013	Unemployment Oct. 2014	Change in Unemployment
Medicine Hat	2.7%	3.2%	0.5%
Grande Prairie	4.1%	5.0%	0.9%
Red Deer	4.9%	3.9%	-1.0%
Lethbridge	2.7%	3.2%	0.5%
Wood Buffalo*	3.9%	4.9%	1.0%
Calgary	4.7%	4.5%	-0.2%
Edmonton	5.2%	5.4%	0.2%

<sup>7</sup> Statistics Canada (2014) Labour force characteristics, unadjusted, by economic region (3 month moving average) (Alberta, British Columbia). Retrieved from: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/l01/cst01/lfs05f-eng.htm>

## Housing Affordability

Though vacancy rates increased marginally in some communities in the Fall of 2014, the average rental costs across all units grew across the province, with the exception of Wood Buffalo, according to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. With average rents being ranging from \$761 in Medicine Hat to \$2,013 in Wood Buffalo, they are beyond the means of low income Albertans.

	Rental Vacancy Rate in Private <sup>8</sup> Apartments			Rental Costs		
	Vacancy Rate Oct. 2013	Vacancy Rate Oct. 2014	Change Vacancy Rate	Average Rental Cost Oct 2013	Average Rental Cost Oct 2014	Change in Rental Costs
Medicine Hat	3.9%	4.1%	0.2%	\$ 695	\$ 761	\$ 66
Grande Prairie	1.3%	1.2%	-0.1%	\$ 1,063	\$ 1,094	\$ 31
Red Deer	1.9%	2.2%	0.3%	\$ 876	\$ 906	\$ 30
Lethbridge	4.8%	4.8%	0.0%	\$ 815	\$ 847	\$ 32
Wood Buffalo	5.4%	11.8%	6.4%	\$ 2,046	\$ 2,013	\$ -33
Calgary	1.0%	1.4%	0.4%	\$ 1,118	\$ 1,213	\$ 95
Edmonton	1.4%	1.7%	0.3%	\$ 1,028	\$ 1,103	\$ 75

In fact, about one-quarter of Albertans are experiencing housing affordability challenges (Statistics Canada, 2011), thereby impacting their housing stability and risk for homelessness. Further, more than 1 out of 10 people were reported to be in low income across Alberta cities.

	Low Income (NHS 2011) LIM-AT <sup>9</sup>	Housing Affordability Households spending >30% income on shelter (NHS 2011)
Medicine Hat	13.1%	21.9%
Grande Prairie	n/a	22.6%
Red Deer	11.6%	26.5%
Lethbridge	11.5%	24.5%
Wood Buffalo	4.5%	18.5%
Calgary	10.6%	25.0%
Edmonton	10.8%	24.6%

<sup>8</sup> CMHC (2014) CMHC Rental Market Statistics Fall 2014. Retrieved from: <https://www03.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/catalog/productDetail.cfm?lang=en&cat=59&itm=17&fr=1415816805835>.

<sup>9</sup> See References under Statistics Canada for data sources.

## Housing First Efforts

Working with the Government of Canada, the Government of Alberta, and with support from civic leadership, the seven cities have collectively housed nearly 10,000 people since 2009. The impact of these efforts have played a part in stemming the growth in homelessness despite the pressures added by a growing economy and housing crunch.

In 2014/15, the Government of Alberta has committed more than \$82.6 million to support Housing First programs in the province's seven major centres as part of *A Plan for Alberta: Ending Homelessness in 10 years*. Data collected by the Alberta Human Services Ministry was provided for inclusion in this report from Housing First initiatives in the seven cities.

Key results of the efforts include the following:

- **9,865** homeless Albertans have been provided housing and the supports that will help them remain housed.
- **3,250** people have 'graduated' from Housing First programs, meaning they have achieved housing stability.
- In 2013-14, use of Government of Alberta-funded temporary shelter spaces decreased provincially by **1.9%**, compared to the year before the Plan came into effect (2008-09).
- At any given reporting period, **73%** of the people housed will still be permanently housed.
- Reported changes in utilization of public systems among housing first clients<sup>10</sup>:

**Health:** Interactions with EMS: reduced by **59.1%**  
Emergency Room visits: reduced by **54.3%**  
Days in hospital: reduced by **66.7%**

**Justice:** Interactions with police: reduced by **59.0%**  
Days in jail: reduced by **85.2%**  
Court appearances: reduced by **51.1%**

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<sup>10</sup> As self-reported by Housing First clients in the Homeless Management Information System from April 1, 2009 – June 30, 2014.

Further demographics on the client group are presented below. It is recommended that these demographics and presenting needs be compared with the results of the homeless count in the future to help inform future directions. This will require an alignment of data definitions to ensure comparability.

<b>Housing First</b>	<b>April 1, 2009 – June 30, 2014</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
All information is self-reported by clients at program intake		
<b>Total clients housed</b>	9,865	
<b>Gender</b>		
Men	5,640	57.17%
Women	4,199	42.56%
Other	26	0.26%
<b>Age</b>		
Under 18	63	0.64%
18-24 years old	1,267	12.84%
25-35 years old	2,620	26.56%
36-50 years old	3,897	39.50%
51-64 years old	1,910	19.36%
65 + years old	108	1.09%
<b>Composition</b>		
Families	1,988	
<b>Homelessness Pattern</b>		
Chronic	4,642	47.06%
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
Caucasian	4,761	48.26%
Aboriginal	3,265	33.10%
Other	1,839	18.64%

<b>Housing First</b>	<b>April 1, 2009 – June 30, 2014</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
All information is self-reported by clients at program intake		
<b>Presenting Issues</b>		
Mental health issues	4,293	43.52%
Substance abuse issues	4,693	47.57%
Physical health issues	4,412	44.72%
<b>Income Source</b>		
Clients on AISH	1,299	14.83%
Clients on Alberta Works	4,154	47.57%
Clients on Employment Insurance	270	3.08%
Full Time Employment	886	10.11%
Part Time Employment	565	6.45%
No Income	1,588	18.12%
Note: Income numbers and presenting numbers are not mutually exclusive. Clients may have more than one source of income or presenting issue.		

## Survey Analysis

### Survey Samples

Looking at the valid surveys completed across the various categories of enumeration gives a better sense of the sample size available for analysis. Overall, there were 2,495 valid surveys available for analysis – or 37.4% of those enumerated. The overall lowest valid sample size relative to number enumerated was in Calgary at 12.3%. The rest range from about 45% to as high as 63% in Edmonton.

Across the 7 communities, survey administrators were asked to approach all people in emergency shelter or short term supportive housing to participate, and apply the screening criteria to qualify their inclusion. The aim was to survey as many people as possible. If they had accompanying minor dependents with them, the survey was only administered to the parent though the minors are included in the breakdown of age as under 18 in the survey analysis.

Calgary only included a portion of their emergency shelters in this process however. With respect to the street count, administrators were asked to approach anyone they saw on the street to invite participation.

In the case of public systems, for health and corrections facilities, the staff reported the total number considered to be without fixed address (NFA). Lethbridge actually provided surveys which were only used to track total numbers in their systems count. Edmonton's count captured those specifically being discharged to no fixed address. Edmonton included Alberta Works- and AISH-funded hotels for emergency housing purposes, whereas the other communities who included hotels only captured information from Alberta Works. Red Deer administered the survey in health and corrections facilities; this was done by trained systems staff who used the same screening criteria used for the street and facilities count.

Note that the street count figures cannot be used to deduce a reliable sample size analysis as we do not have accurate information of the total population that could have been included in the enumeration. The figures below only summarise the percentage of surveys done on the street in relation to the number enumerated on the street.

To calculate response rates, one would need to have a sense of the total available sample of eligible respondents in the sample. Unfortunately, this is not fully possible given the population targeted for this survey. In the case of emergency shelter and short term supportive housing, we have counts of those who were in the facilities, though inconsistent information about whether they qualify as homeless according to the definitions in the methods. For those who were surveyed, there were numbers who were ineligible because they had a permanent residence to return to. There were also interviewees who declined to give consent, which had to be removed from the sample.

Across the enumeration locations, there is variance from community to community. Notably, because Wood Buffalo did not provide occupancy numbers in their facilities, it is not possible to assess their proportion of surveyed against those enumerated.

Valid Surveys in Relation to Total Enumerated										
	Emergency Shelter		Short Term Supportive Housing		Street Count		Other	Total Valid Surveys	Percent of Enumerated	Without Accompanying Minors
Medicine Hat	19	63.3%	5	17.2%	5	100.0%	0	29	45.3%	48.3%
Grande Prairie	56	50.5%	0	0.0%	55	100.0%	0	111	66.9%	71.6%
Red Deer	64	69.6%	8	66.7%	21	95.5%	6	99	72.3%	79.2%
Lethbridge	40	45.5%	5	35.7%	19	79.2%	0	64	45.7%	46.7%
Wood Buffalo	56	n/a	31	n/a	207	n/a	0	294	n/a	n/a
Calgary	376	21.3%	0	0.0%	61	33.5%	0	437	12.3%	12.7%
Edmonton	353	45.6%	182	48.5%	694	90.0%	232	1461	63.3%	67.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>964</b>	<b>33.0%</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>13.2%</b>	<b>1062</b>	<b>83.9%</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>2495</b>	<b>37.4%</b>	<b>39.1%</b>

If we remove minors accompanying parents, who would technically be ineligible from participating in the survey, then the rates of valid surveys as percentage of those enumerated increase across the board.

With respect to the street count, some communities did provide the following information from their tally sheets collected during administration, which recorded the numbers of people approached, who were ineligible, refused to participate or already participated in the survey.

Street Count Tally						
	Total Enumerated in Street Count	Total Valid Surveys from Street Count	Total Individuals Approached	Ineligible	Already Participated	Refused
Medicine Hat	5	5	41	26	1	9
Grande Prairie	55	55	237	66	56	60
Red Deer	22	21	29	0	0	7
Lethbridge	24	19	50	17	9	27
Wood Buffalo	207	207	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Calgary	182	61	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Edmonton	771	694	3774	1764	220	880

## Complementing the Survey with Administrative Data

A main challenge for Calgary was due to this being the first time they conducted surveys in facilities. Short term supportive housing facilities and youth shelters did not do any surveys, likely impacting results. As a result, Calgary is providing administrative data on key demographics from its facilities to complement the survey information.

Calgary is including survey and administrative data in their gender, age, and Aboriginal ethnicity categories to provide a more comprehensive picture. It is important to note that even the 12% response is relatively high, given the type of population being surveyed. Nevertheless, the additional administrative data from facilities in Calgary adds more breadth on key data elements.

Calgary historically relies on administrative data from shelters (100% coverage) for count while the rest of the cities have higher survey coverage. The Calgary administrative data covers the entire emergency shelter and short term supportive housing population. Administrative data is data that is recorded upon a person’s entry into shelter, at which point the individual is asked about their gender identify etc. It is important to note however that the survey data is more extensive in scope and includes variables not captured by administrative data (i.e. migration patterns).

A limitation of the survey method is the reliance on self-reporting – however, giving people the change to self-identify as a particular ethnicity, gender identity, etc. as well as the ability to obtain data that could not be observed - such as time homeless or migration – outweighs the limitations of self-reporting. From an ethical perspective, making assumptions about someone’s housing status, ethno-cultural identity, gender and age is problematic as well.

Notably, Red Deer also provided additional administrative data on youth up to 24 in the age analysis. Further, gender and Aboriginal status using information provided by staff regarding 14 people enumerated in correctional centre in Lethbridge is also included.

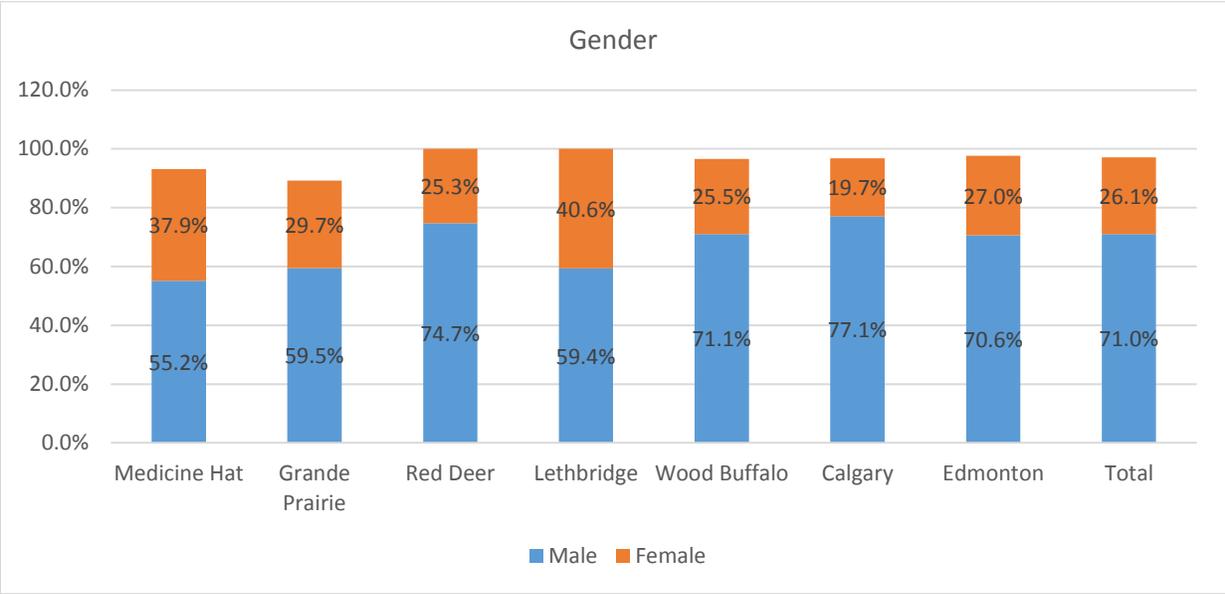
The analysis using these additional data was completed in a separate section in the report and discusses the differences in results compared to using the survey data only.

## Gender

Most survey respondents were male consistently across the 7 Cities at about 71.0% of the total sample. However, Medicine Hat and Lethbridge had a notably higher proportion of women compared to other communities at 37.9% and 40.6% respectively. In both instances, facilities for women fleeing violence accounted for majority of women enumerated. Overall, Calgary had the highest male over-representation amongst respondents compared at 77.1%.

A total of 15 people self-identified as transgender/transsexual/ other across (0.8%) the province. To ensure privacy and anonymity given the small number, we will not break this further down by community.

Gender	Male		Female		Transgender/ Transsexual/ Other		No Data	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Medicine Hat	16	55.2%	11	37.9%	n/a	n/a	2	6.9%
Grande Prairie	66	59.5%	33	29.7%	n/a	n/a	11	9.9%
Red Deer	74	74.7%	25	25.3%	n/a	n/a	0	0.0%
Lethbridge	38	59.4%	26	40.6%	n/a	n/a	0	0.0%
Wood Buffalo	209	71.1%	75	25.5%	n/a	n/a	9	3.1%
Calgary	337	77.1%	86	19.7%	n/a	n/a	8	1.8%
Edmonton	1032	70.6%	395	27.0%	n/a	n/a	27	1.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1772</b>	<b>71.0%</b>	<b>651</b>	<b>26.1%</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>2.3%</b>



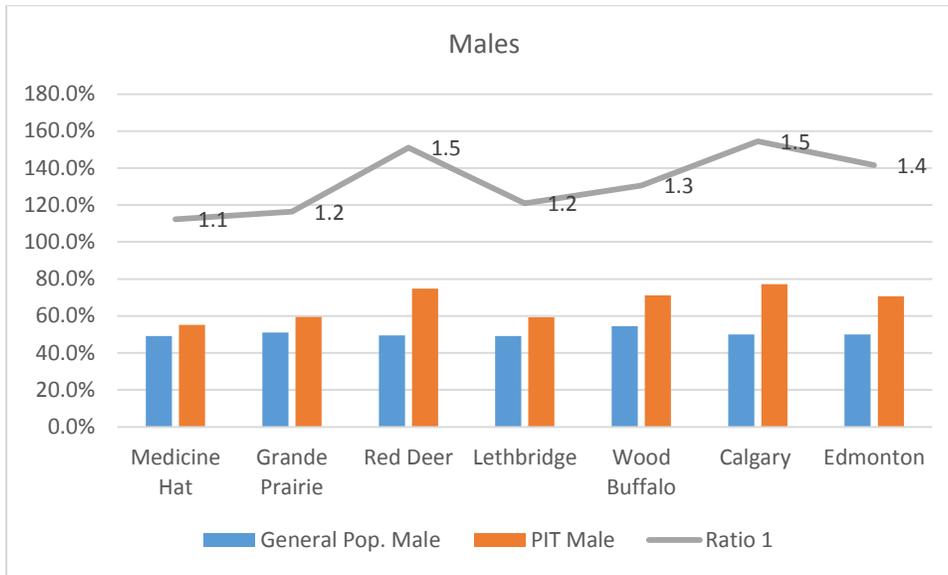
Given that the gender breakdown is on average even amongst the general population, it is important to contextualize the under-representation of women in amongst those surveyed. In many instances, women are likelier to be less visible amongst those surveyed experiencing homelessness – they are consistently under-represented in homeless counts. It is important to highlight their experience of housing instability and hidden homelessness– be it couch surfing, living in unaffordable or inappropriate housing, or unsafe situations.

As can be seen in the chart below, the number of times the proportion of male respondents amongst the surveyed population is consistently higher than the overall prevalence reported for the general population (National Household Survey, 2011).

Males			
	Population General Pop. (NHS 2011)	Homeless Population (2014 PIT)	Ratio among PIT Survey Sample vs. General Population
Medicine Hat	49.1%	55.2%	1.1
Grande Prairie	51.1%	59.5%	1.2
Red Deer	49.5%	74.7%	1.5
Lethbridge	49.1%	59.4%	1.2
Wood Buffalo	54.4%	71.1%	1.3
Calgary	50.0%	77.1%	1.5
Edmonton	49.9%	70.6%	1.4

The proportion of males in the general population was generally lower compared to the survey sample. In fact, this group seems to be over-represented to an extent across the 7 Cities. The highest ratio was in Red Deer and Calgary, with the lower being in Medicine Hat.

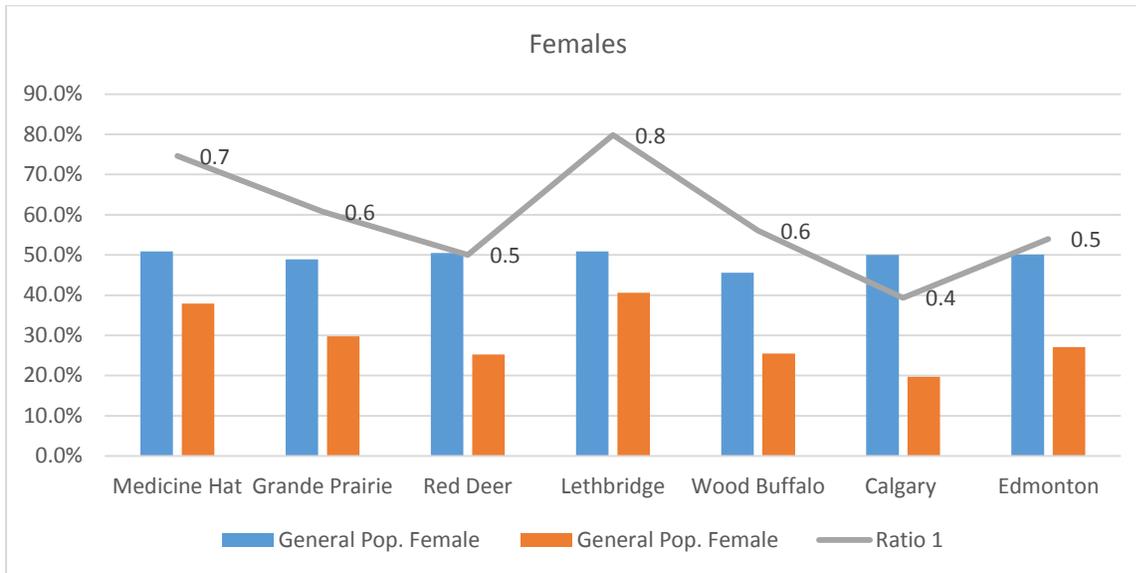
**Note that Appendix 4 provides the sources for the NHS data used throughout this report.**



Looking at women in the general population compared to the survey sample, they are consistently under-represented. The reasons for this under-representation are discussed in other research which relate the higher likelihood for women to be among the hidden homeless.<sup>11</sup> Ongoing and systematic gender effects that lead to a higher likelihood of experiencing poverty and low income, impact housing instability and the experience of hidden and visible homelessness.

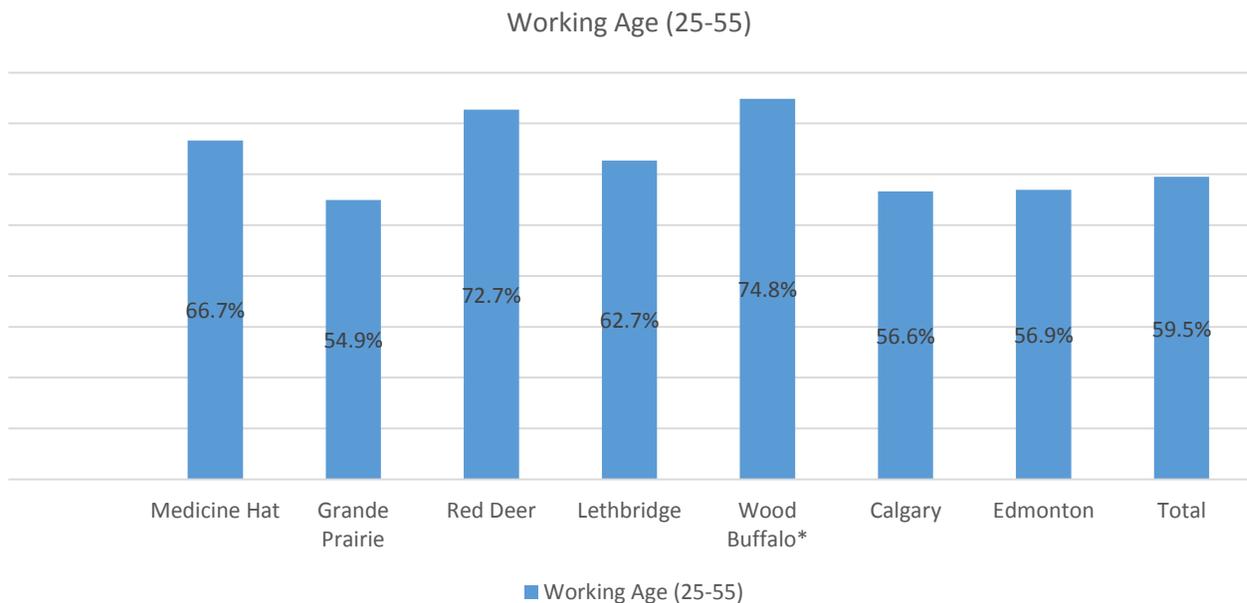
Females			
	Population General Pop. (NHS 2011)	Homeless Population (2014 PIT)	Ratio among Survey Sample vs. General Population
Medicine Hat	50.9%	37.9%	0.7
Grande Prairie	48.9%	29.7%	0.6
Red Deer	50.5%	25.3%	0.5
Lethbridge	50.9%	40.6%	0.8
Wood Buffalo	45.6%	25.5%	0.6
Calgary	50.0%	19.7%	0.4
Edmonton	50.1%	27.0%	0.5

<sup>11</sup> See the Homeless Hub for further research on women’s homelessness issues:  
<http://www.homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/homelessness-101/who-homeless>  
<http://www.homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/population-specific/single-women>



### Age Trends

Overall, the majority of respondents were in the 25-55 working age range –59.5% across the sample, with a high of almost three quarters of the surveyed population in Wood Buffalo and a low of 54.9% in Grande Prairie. Red Deer, Medicine Hat and Lethbridge had higher than average figures at 72.7%, 66.7% and 62.7% respectively. The two major urban centres had the lowest reported proportion at 56.6% in Calgary and 56.9% in Edmonton.



\*Wood Buffalo reported results in age categories, which were categorized as follows: 0-16 years; 17-30 years; 31-54 years; 55-64 years; 65 years and over. Data in these categories were included in the table above in as 12-18 years; 24-35; 45-55; 55-65; 65-75, and 75+.

with parents was not collected, it is likely the figure underrepresent the proportion of children and youth.

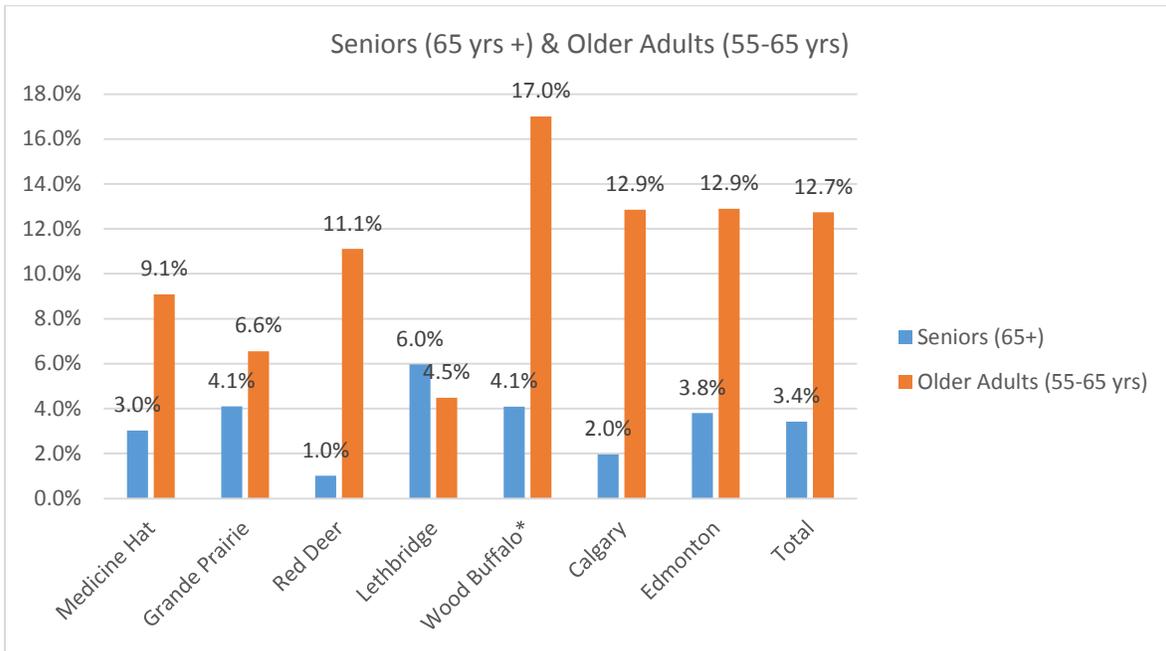
The basic pattern is for the 18 to 21 category, for example, is that someone exactly 18 would not be in the category, but someone exactly 21 would be. In terms of the age categories, someone 12.5 years of age would fall into the 12 to 18 category. To be 100% accurate, the category would be called 'Over 18 and Up to and Including 21'. The next category would start at Over 21 and up to and Including 24, etc.

Age	Medicine Hat		Grande Prairie		Red Deer		Lethbridge		Wood Buffalo*		Calgary		Edmonton		Total	
Under 12	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
12 to 18	1	3.0%	8	6.6%	6	6.1%	6	9.0%	4	1.4%	0	0.0%	26	1.6%	51	1.8%
18 to 21	0	0.0%	6	4.9%	3	3.0%	5	7.5%		0.0%	10	1.8%	111	6.9%	135	4.8%
21 to 24	1	3.0%	5	4.1%	6	6.1%	4	6.0%		0.0%	15	2.7%	95	5.9%	126	4.5%
24 to 35	9	27.3%	18	14.8%	30	30.3%	19	28.4%	59	20.1%	97	17.3%	217	13.5%	449	16.1%
35 to 45	7	21.2%	23	18.9%	22	22.2%	11	16.4%		0.0%	93	16.6%	292	18.2%	448	16.1%
45 to 55	6	18.2%	26	21.3%	20	20.2%	12	17.9%	161	54.8%	127	22.7%	405	25.2%	757	27.2%
55 to 65	3	9.1%	8	6.6%	11	11.1%	3	4.5%	50	17.0%	72	12.9%	207	12.9%	354	12.7%
65 to 75	1	3.0%	4	3.3%	1	1.0%	4	6.0%	12	4.1%	11	2.0%	52	3.2%	85	3.1%
75 to 85	0	0.0%	1	0.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		0.0%	0	0.0%	9	0.6%	10	0.4%
Greater than 85	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
No Data	1	3.0%	12	9.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	8	2.7%	12	2.1%	47	2.9%	80	2.9%
Accompanying Minors	4	12.1%	11	9.0%	6	6.1%	3	4.5%	0	0.0%	123	22.0%	144	9.0%	291	10.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1605</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2786</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Total Youth	6	18.2%	30	24.6%	15	15.2%	18	26.9%	4	1.4%	148	26.4%	376	23.4%	603	21.7%

## Seniors

Looking closer at the ranges, it is notable that a relatively low number of seniors were reported – around 3.4% of the sample. Across the province, the prevalence rate for seniors was significantly higher in Lethbridge at 6%. Red Deer and Calgary were notably lower at 1% and 2% respectively, whereas Grande Prairie, Wood Buffalo and Edmonton all came in at around 4%.

However, if we look at the population that is close to seniority between 55 to 65 years of age, the proportion averages about 12.7%. Given the health issues experienced by this vulnerable population, the likelihood of reaching 'physical' seniority in terms of accessibility and supports needs must be accounted for when it comes to this younger cohort 'on the cusp' of becoming seniors.

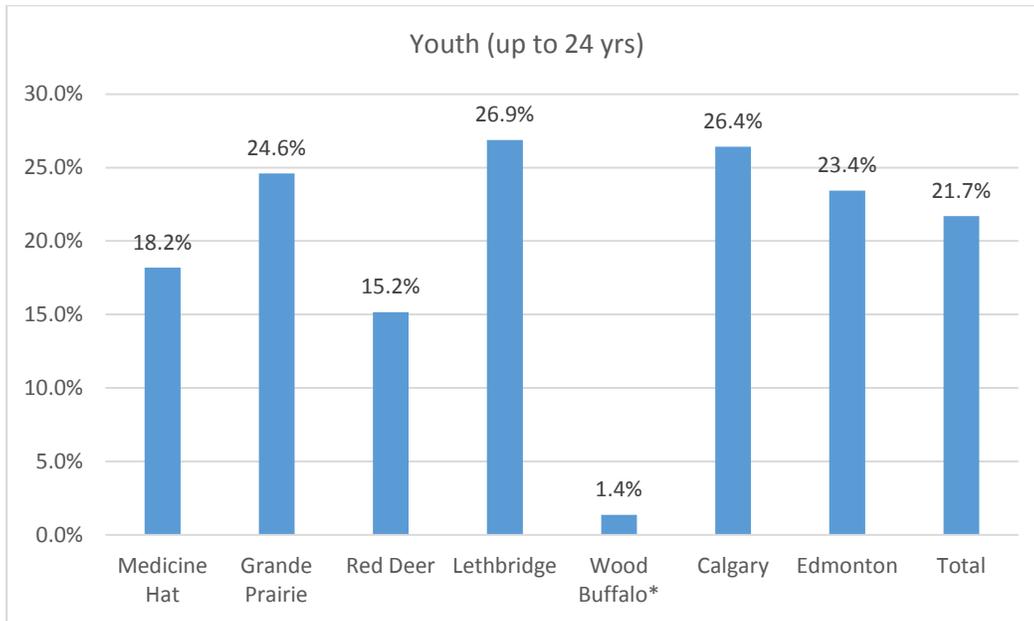


Looking closer at the rate of ‘pre-seniors,’ ages 55 to 65, we see significant variance across the province as well. The highest prevalence rate for this group was in Wood Buffalo at 17%, followed by the two major urban centres Calgary and Edmonton at 12.9% and Red Deer at 11.1%. Lethbridge had the lowest rate at 4.5%, followed by Grande Prairie at 6.6% and Medicine Hat at 9.1%.

## Youth

The number of youth up to the age of 24 represented about a fifth of the surveyed population. This varied across the 7 Cities, which a low of 1% reported in Wood Buffalo resulting from the use of pre-determined answer categories for those 0-16 years of age. The highest rate was reported in Lethbridge and Calgary at 26.9% and 26.4% respectively.

Red Deer had the next lowest rate at 15.2%. If we look at the enumerated number of youth in Red Deer however, the percentage is 21.9% (30 out of 137 total enumerated), which is outlined in the section outlining survey and administrative data.



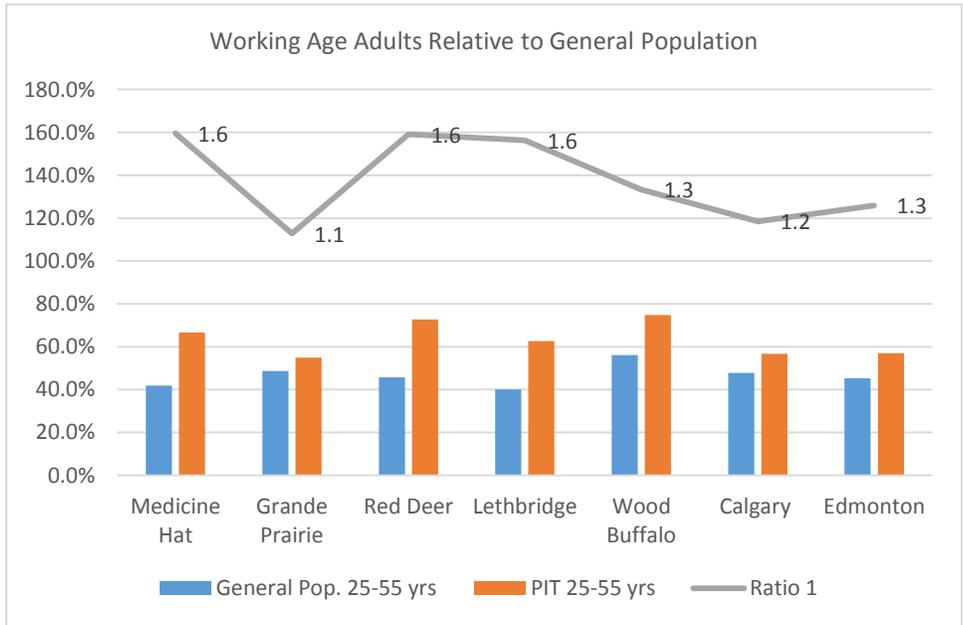
Notably, Wood Buffalo’s age ranges for responses allowed us to only categorize survey respondents under 16 years of age as youth. As no information was available on accompanying minors, this is also missing from their total. These factors result in the under-representation of youth in their results.

### Age Trends Relative to General Population

As can be seen in the chart below, the number of times the proportion of respondents aged 25-55 amongst the surveyed population is significantly and consistently higher than the overall prevalence reported for the general population (National Household Survey, 2011).

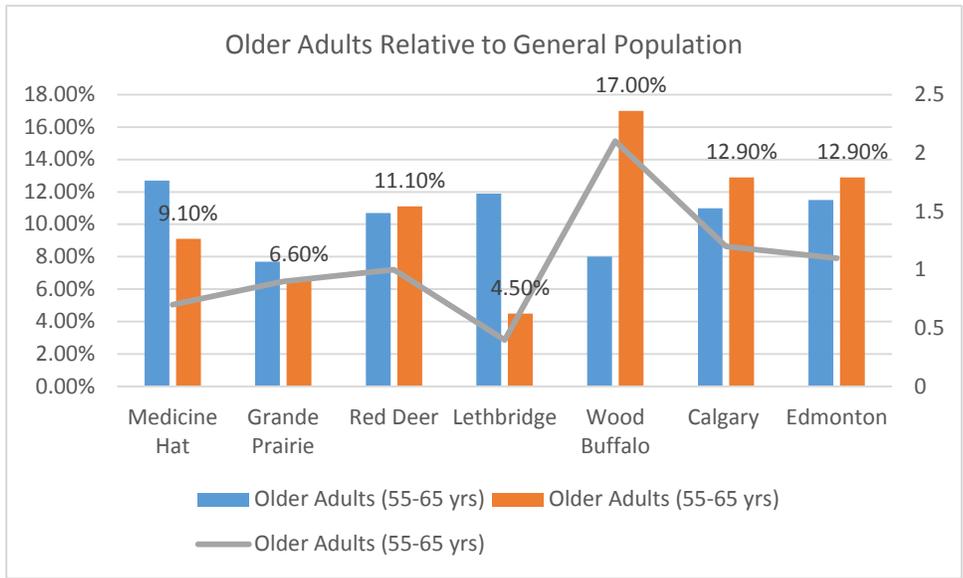
The proportion of working age adults 25-55 in the general population was generally lower compared to the survey sample. In fact, this group seems to be over-represented to an extent across the 7 Cities. The highest ratio was in Medicine Hat, Red Deer and Lethbridge, with the lower being in Grande Prairie.

Working Age (25-55 yrs)			
	25-55 yrs Population General Pop. (NHS 2011)	25-55 yrs Homeless Population (2014 PIT)	Ratio among Survey Sample vs. General Population
Medicine Hat	41.8%	66.7%	1.6:1
Grande Prairie	48.7%	54.9%	1.1:1
Red Deer	45.7%	72.7%	1.6:1
Lethbridge	40.1%	62.7%	1.6:1
Wood Buffalo	56.1%	74.8%	1.3:1
Calgary	47.8%	56.6%	1.2:1
Edmonton	45.2%	56.9%	1.3:1



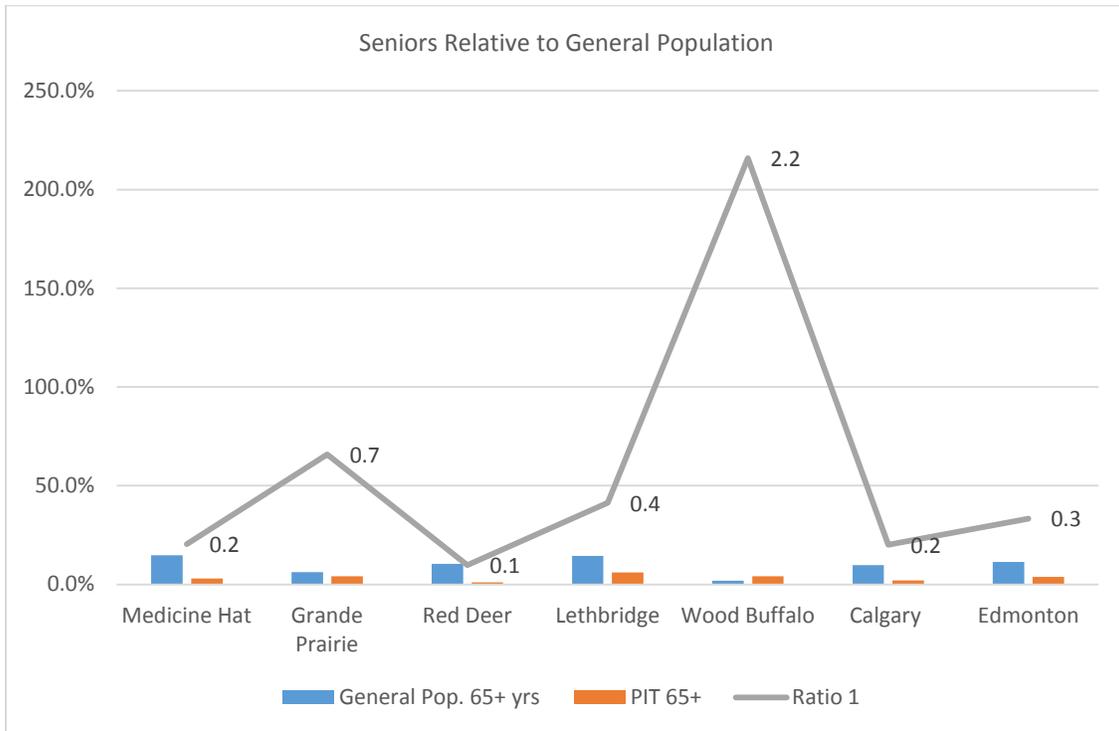
Looking at older adults 55 to 65, they are over-represented in Wood Buffalo and about 2.1:1. Lethbridge had the lowest over-representation at 0.3 to 1.

Older Adults (55-65 yrs)			
	Population General Pop. (NHS 2011)	Homeless Population (2014 PIT)	Ratio among Survey Sample vs. General Population
Medicine Hat	12.7%	9.1%	0.7:1
Grande Prairie	7.7%	6.6%	0.9:1
Red Deer	10.7%	11.1%	1.0:1
Lethbridge	11.9%	4.5%	0.4:1
Wood Buffalo	8.0%	17.0%	2.1:1
Calgary	11.0%	12.9%	1.2:1
Edmonton	11.5%	12.9%	1.1:1



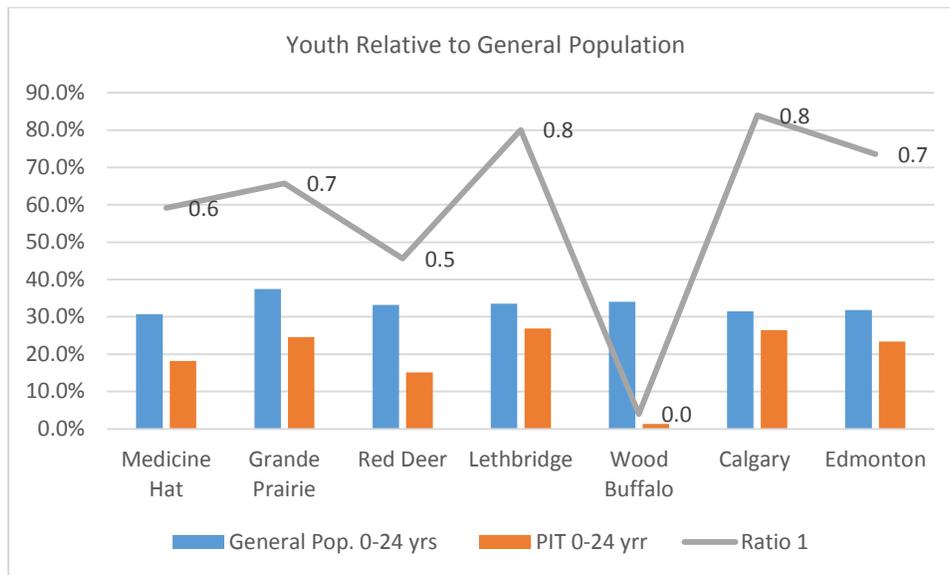
Seniors 65 and older were generally under-represented in the homeless population. Wood Buffalo is the exception, though this may be as result of the data collection issues aforementioned that would under-represent youth.

Seniors 65+			
	Population General Pop. (NHS 2011)	Homeless Population (2014 PIT)	Ratio among Survey Sample vs. General Population
Medicine Hat	14.8%	3.0%	0.2:1
Grande Prairie	6.2%	4.1%	0.7:1
Red Deer	10.4%	1.0%	0.1:1
Lethbridge	14.4%	6.0%	0.4:1
Wood Buffalo	1.9%	4.1%	2.2:1
Calgary	9.8%	2.0%	0.2:1
Edmonton	11.4%	3.8%	0.3:1



Looking at general demographics in the population with respect to age, it is apparent that youth are generally underrepresented in the survey sample. Notably, Wood Buffalo has a very low proportion likely due to data collection not including accompanying minors. Otherwise, Red Deer stands out with a lower ratio compared to the rest, whereas Lethbridge is the highest, though below the proportion in the general population.

Youth (up to 24 yrs)			
	Population General Pop. (NHS 2011)	Homeless Population (2014 PIT)	Ratio among Survey Sample vs. General Population
Medicine Hat	30.7%	18.2%	0.6:1
Grande Prairie	37.4%	24.6%	0.7:1
Red Deer	33.2%	15.2%	0.5:1
Lethbridge	33.5%	26.9%	0.8:1
Wood Buffalo	34.0%	1.4%	0.0:1
Calgary	31.5%	26.4%	0.8:1
Edmonton	31.8%	23.4%	0.7:1



## Children & Families

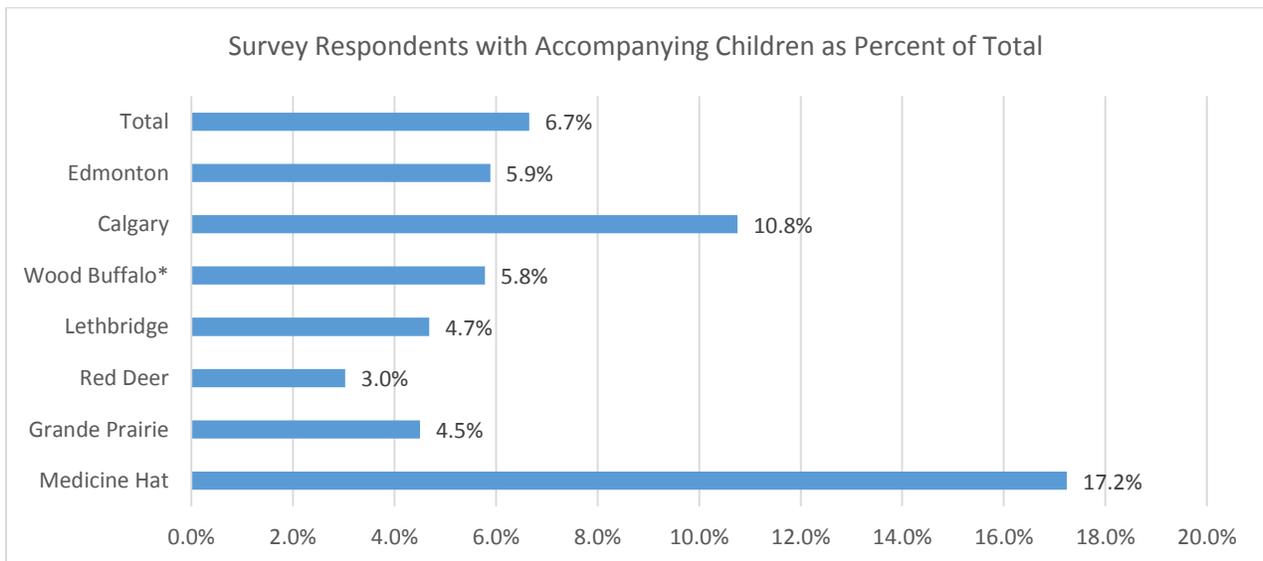
There were about 6.7% of survey respondents who reported being accompanied by children under 18 years of age. This varied considerably from a low of 3.0% in Red Deer to as high as 17.2% in Medicine Hat. A total of 288 children were counted through the survey – note that this does not represent the total number of children enumerated – rather those who accompanied survey respondents in the sample.

Accomp. Dependents	Medicine Hat		Grande Prairie		Red Deer		Lethbridge		Wood Buffalo*		Calgary		Edmonton		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Yes	5	17.2%	5	4.5%	3	3.0%	3	4.7%	17	5.8%	47	10.8%	86	5.9%	166	6.7%
No	22	75.9%	92	82.9%	93	93.9%	47	73.4%	274	93.2%	2	0.5%	1251	85.6%	1781	71.4%
Don't Know	1	3.4%	1	0.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		0.0%	2	0.1%
Declined to Answer	1	3.4%	13	11.7%	3	3.0%	14	21.9%	3	1.0%	388	88.8%	124	8.5%	546	21.9%
No Data	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1461</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2495</b>	<b>100%</b>

\* Notably, Wood Buffalo did not capture any information about the number of accompanying dependents. Also, only those up to 16 years of age were included as youth.

	Total Homeless	Total Valid Surveys	Calculating Age w/ Children	Children
Medicine Hat	64	29	33	4
Grande Prairie	166	111	122	11
Red Deer*	137	99	99	6
Lethbridge	140	64	67	3
Wood Buffalo	294	294	294	0
Calgary	3555	3555	3555	0
Edmonton	2307	1461	1605	144
<b>Total</b>	<b>6663</b>	<b>5613</b>	<b>5778</b>	<b>165</b>

\*Red Deer included all children in their survey information, thus no additional children were accounted for as accompanying minors.

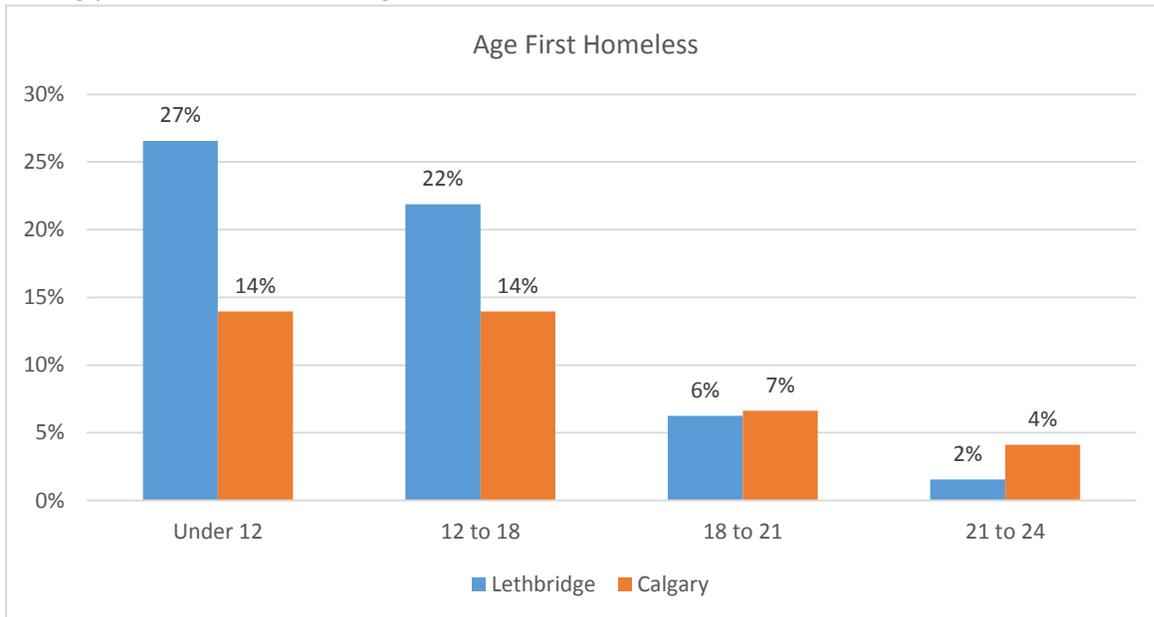


\* Wood Buffalo did not capture any information about the number of accompanying dependents, though they do enumerated 4 people that responded to being 0-16 years in the age category.

## Age of First Homelessness Experience

Lethbridge and Calgary asked survey respondents about the age at which they experienced their first episode of homelessness. Though not a requirement from the national methodology, this question can provide key insights to inform prevention work. Analysis on this question may show value for including it in future counts across the province.

About 48% of survey participants in Lethbridge and 28% in Calgary reported being homeless before the age of 18; 56% and 39% respectively reported this to be the case before the age of 24. This is an important question to help understand preventative measures and confirms the need to prioritize ending youth homelessness long-term.



Age of first homelessness	Lethbridge		Calgary	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Under 12	17	27%	61	14%
12 to 18	14	22%	61	14%
18 to 21	4	6%	29	7%
21 to 24	1	2%	18	4%
24 to 35	10	16%	81	19%
35 to 45	5	8%	86	20%
45 to 55	6	9%	70	16%
55 to 65	3	5%	27	6%
65 to 75	3	5%	3	1%
75 to 85	0	0%	0	0%
Greater than 85	0	0%	0	0%
No Data	1	2%	1	0%
Total	64	100%	437	100%

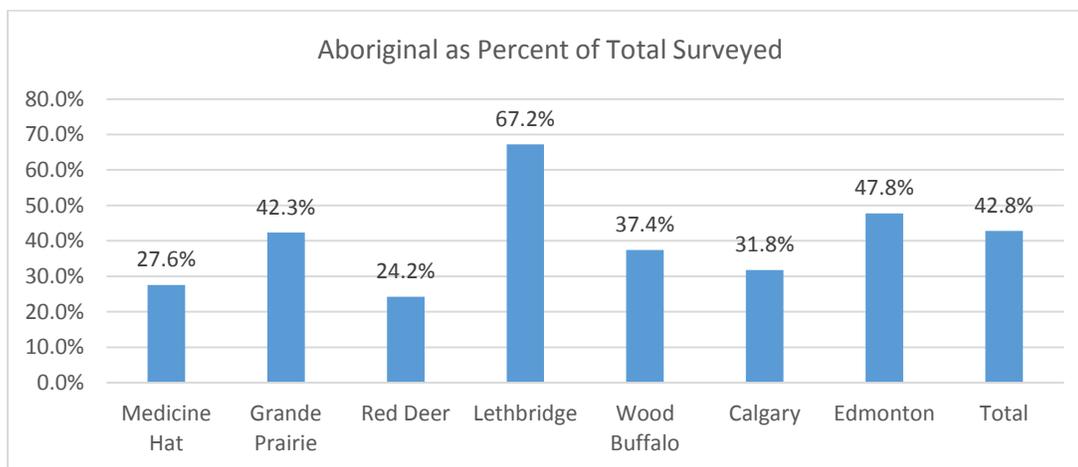
## Pregnancy Status

Pregnancy status was captured from Lethbridge and Calgary, though not a mandatory question in the national survey. Including this item in the analysis aims to present opportunities where future survey expansion across Alberta can access better information regarding pregnancy status.

There were 14 women in total who reported being pregnant during the count – 3% of the total surveyed, or 13% of all women surveyed in these two communities. Looking closer at the women of child-bearing age (12 – 50 years old) however, the rate is notably higher at about 15.8%.

## Aboriginal People

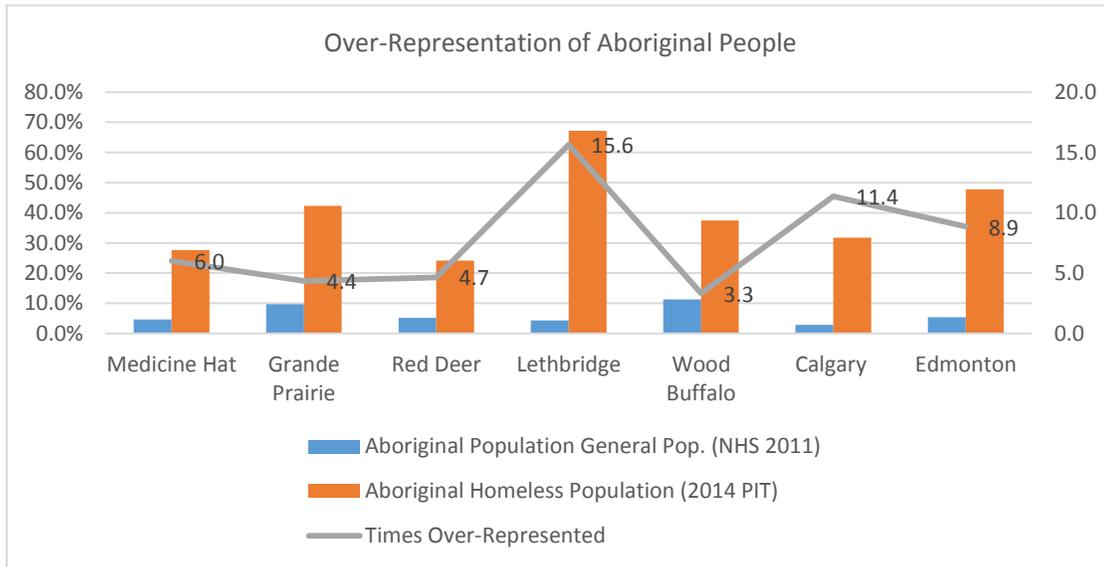
The over-representation of Aboriginal people in the homeless population remains an ongoing concern across the province. An average of 42.8% of respondents self-identified as Aboriginal. The highest reported rate was in Lethbridge at 67.2% of those surveyed, and consistently over a quarter of the surveyed population in the other communities. The lowest reported rate was found in Red Deer at 24.2%. Importantly, Wood Buffalo observed ethnicity on Aboriginal status.



It is important to contextualize the over-representation of Aboriginal people looking at the general population. In doing so, the over-representation of Aboriginal people amongst those surveyed becomes even more pronounced.

Aboriginal People			
	Aboriginal Population General Pop. (NHS 2011)	Aboriginal Homeless Population (2014 PIT)	Ratio among Survey Sample vs. General Population
Medicine Hat	4.6%	27.6%	6.0:1
Grande Prairie	9.7%	42.3%	4.4:1
Red Deer	5.2%	24.2%	4.7:1
Lethbridge	4.3%	67.2%	15.6:1
Wood Buffalo	11.3%	37.4%	3.3:1
Calgary	2.8%	31.8%	11.4:1
Edmonton	5.4%	47.8%	8.9:1

As can be seen in the chart below, the number of times the proportion of self-reported Aboriginal people amongst the surveyed population is significantly and consistently higher than the overall prevalence of Aboriginal self-identification reported for the general population (National Household Survey, 2011). Lethbridge had the highest rate of over-representation at a ratio of 15.6 to 1, followed by Calgary at 11.4 to 1. The lowest rate was seen in Wood Buffalo at 3.3 to 1.



Aboriginal Status	Medicine Hat		Grande Prairie		Red Deer		Lethbridge		Wood Buffalo		Calgary		Edmonton		Total	
Yes	8	27.6%	47	42.3%	24	24.2%	43	67.2%	110	37.4%	139	31.8%	698	47.8%	1069	42.8%
No	18	62.1%	49	44.1%	75	75.8%	21	32.8%	168	57.1%	262	60.0%	715	48.9%	1308	52.4%
Don't Know	1	3.4%	1	0.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	9	2.1%	48	3.3%	59	2.4%
Declined	1	3.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	16	5.4%	27	6.2%	0	0.0%	44	1.8%
No Data	1	3.4%	14	12.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	15	0.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1461</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2495</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## Administrative Data on Gender, Age, & Aboriginal Status

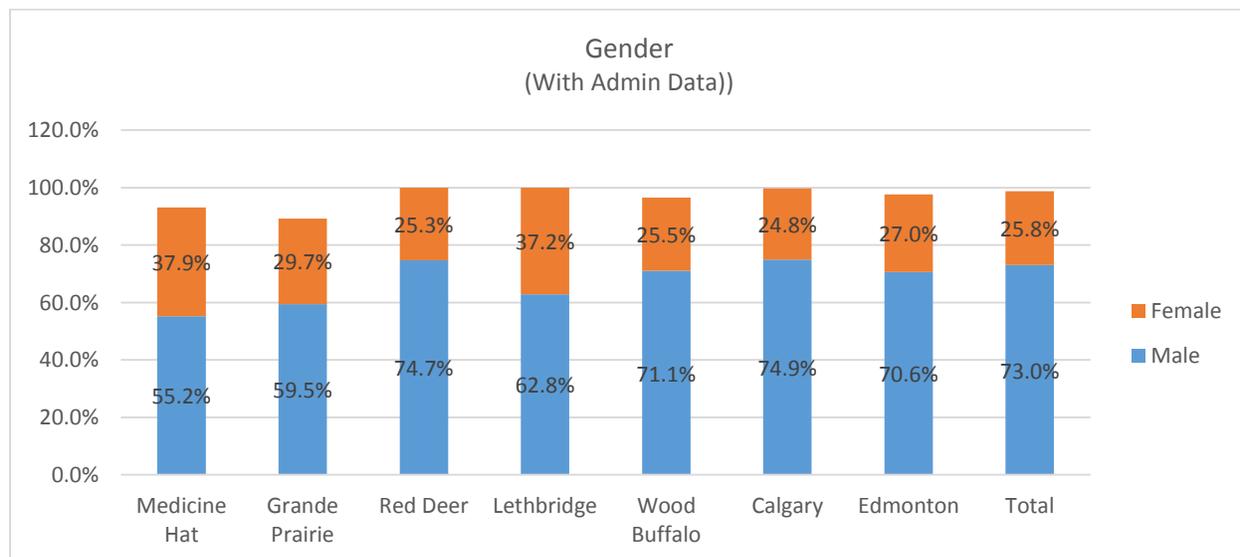
As aforementioned, Calgary collected administrative data from all emergency and short term supportive housing facilities. At their request, age, gender and Aboriginal status were re-run using this data instead of the survey to compare results. As the survey sample was low (12% of the enumerated population), the complete coverage of the administrative data was considered to be more reliable. However, in keeping with the provincial effort's intent to align analysis across the 7 Cities, the Working Group decided to present both versions of the results. Future counts will examine this issue further to enhance alignment.

Red Deer is also reporting administrative data for youth up to 24 in this section. Further, gender and Aboriginal status using information provided by staff regarding 14 people enumerated in correctional centre in Lethbridge is also included.

It is recommended that future counts consider including both administrative and survey data as a means of verifying surveys in facilities, where possible.

### Gender

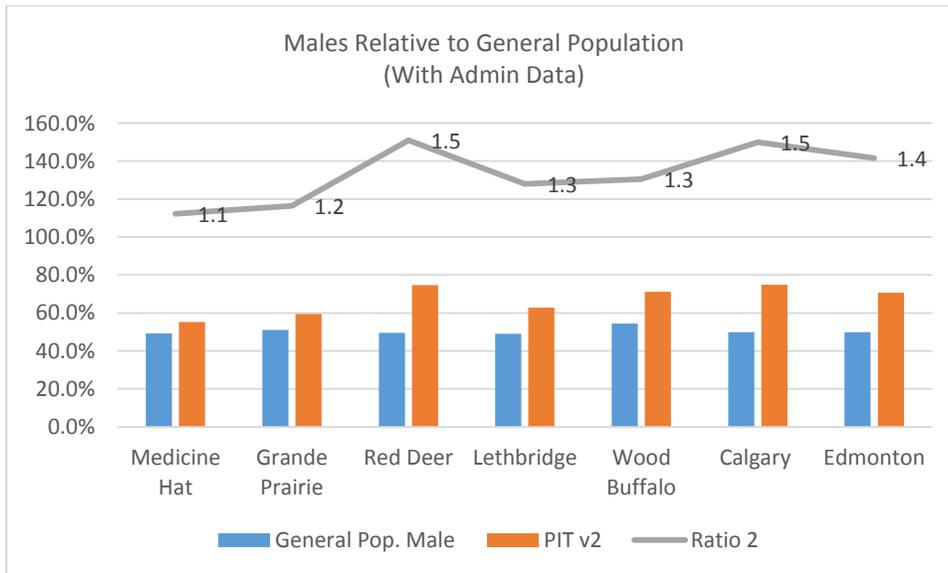
Regarding gender, the distribution for Calgary between females is higher in the administrative data than the survey data (24.8% versus 19.7%), placing Calgary close to the average provincially. With respect to Lethbridge, the proportion of women is down from 40.6% in the survey data to 37.2% when the 14 records were added.



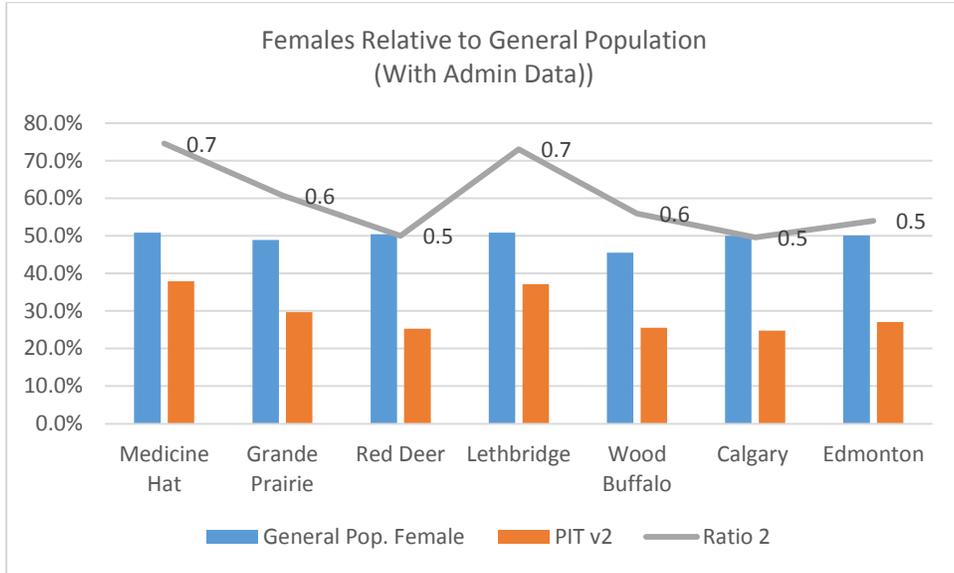
Gender	Male		Female		Transgender/ Transsexual		Other		Declined		No Data	
Medicine Hat	16	55.2%	11	37.9%	n/a	n/a	0	0.0%	2	6.9%	0	0.0%
Grande Prairie	66	59.5%	33	29.7%	n/a	n/a	0	0.0%	11	9.9%	0	0.0%
Red Deer	74	74.7%	25	25.3%	n/a	n/a	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Lethbridge*	49	62.8%	29	37.2%	n/a	n/a	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Wood Buffalo	209	71.1%	75	25.5%	n/a	n/a	1	0.3%	9	3.1%	0	0.0%
Calgary*	2663	74.9%	882	24.8%	n/a	n/a	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	0.1%
Edmonton	1032	70.6%	395	27.0%	n/a	n/a	0	0.0%	27	1.8%	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4109</b>	<b>73.0%</b>	<b>1450</b>	<b>25.8%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0.1%</b>

\* Calgary Admin Data; Lethbridge reported data from correctional facility.

Comparing the results with the gender in the general population, the Calgary and Lethbridge administrative data make a slight increase in ratios for Lethbridge from 1.2:1 to 1.3:1), but leave Calgary unchanged with respect to males (1.5). In both cases, males are over-represented.

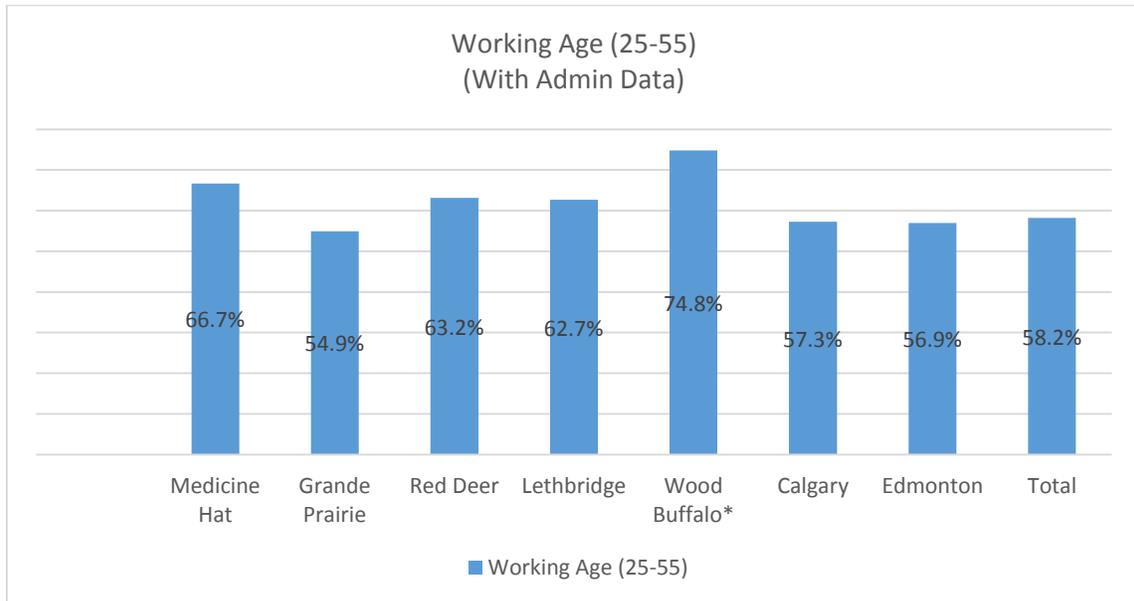


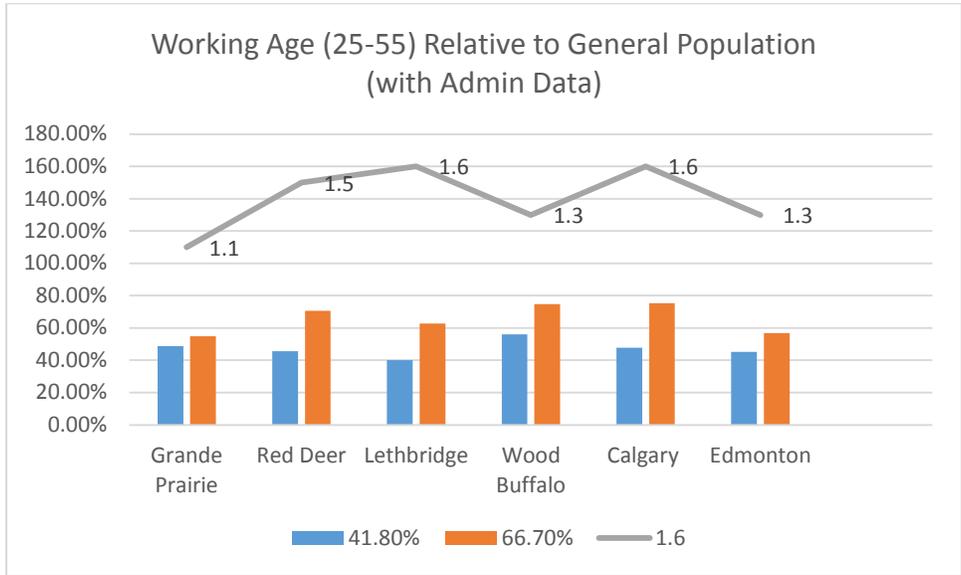
In the case of females, there are slight changes for both from 0.8 to 0.7 for Lethbridge, and 0.4 to 0.5 for Calgary. Females are under-represented in both scenarios.



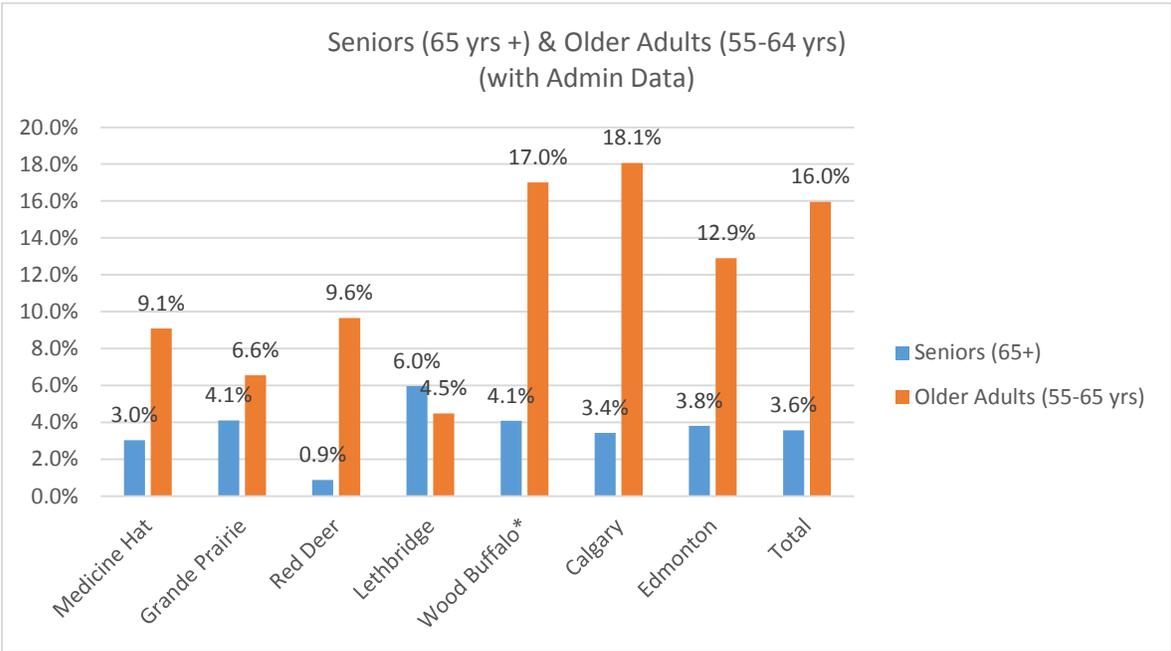
Age

Calgary’s administrative data on ages shows that the population reported to be in the 25-55 year bracket was lower in the survey (56.6%) than in the administrative data (57.3%), though comparable.

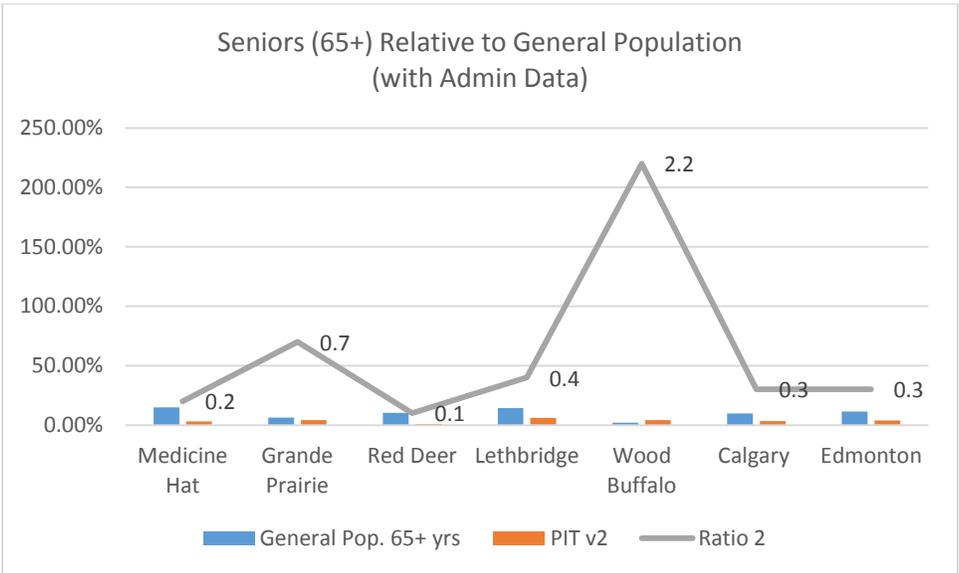
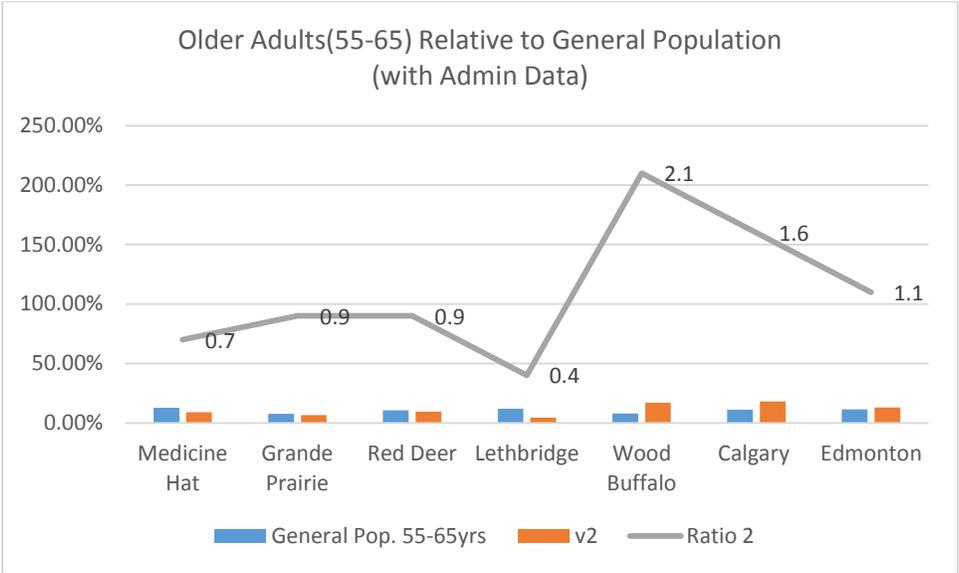




With respect to seniors and older adults, the proportion of those over 65 is higher in the Calgary administrative data than in the survey (3.4% versus 2.0%). This is still slightly lower than the provincial average.

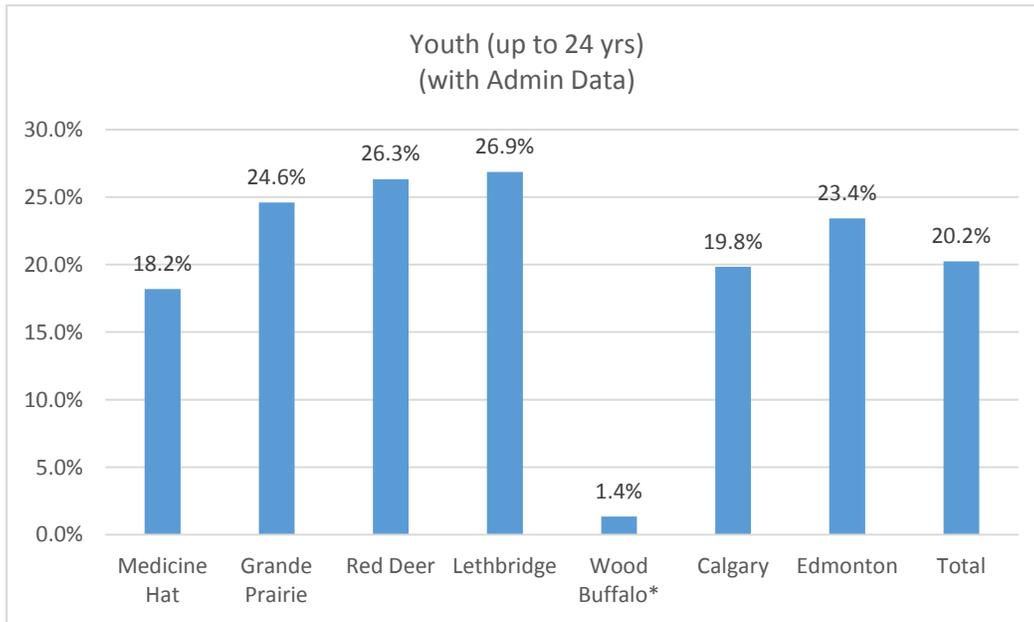


Because the data categorized 45 to 64 year olds, it was not possible to break out the 55-65 year olds from the administrative sample – however, the broader range includes about 36% of the sample, or 1,284 people. This was divided into the 55-64 and 44 to 55 categories equally.

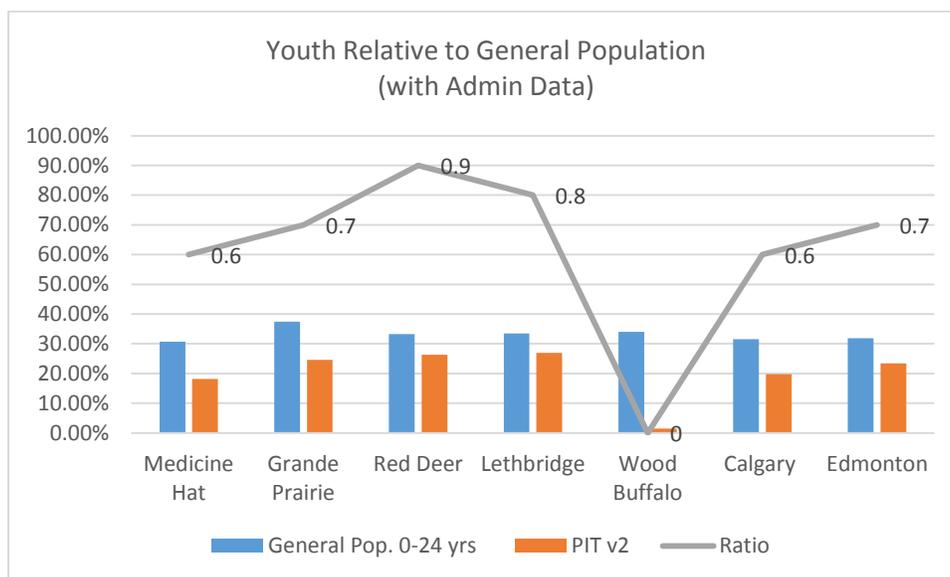


With respect to youth, the Calgary administrative data reduces their proportion of those under 24 to 19.8% from 26.4%. Whereas in the survey analysis Calgary was higher than the provincial average of 21.7%, they are now slightly under.

Alternatively, Red Deer’s administrative data brings their total youth proportion to 26.3% - the highest in the province. This is up from 15.2% in the survey analysis, which was well below the 20.2% provincial average using administrative data. Red Deer’s figure includes children in systems and emergency shelter.



By re-running the analysis including Calgary’s and Red Deer administrative data for youth under 24, it is apparent that in both instances, the proportions are coming closer to the average in the general population – though they remain underrepresented.



The table below summarizes the re-categorization of Calgary’s administrative data. All of Red Deer’s administrative data was added to their survey responses under the 12 to 18 years category. Calgary’s 45 to 64 category was divided equally into 45 to 55 and 55 to 65.

Calgary Administrative Data Categories	Total Number	Re-Categorized As
0 to 5	198	Under 12
6 to 12	124	Under 12
13 to 17	112	12 to 18
18 to 24	271	18 to 21
25 to 44	1395	24 to 35
45 to 64	1284	45 to 55; 55 to 65
65+	122	65 to 75
Unknown	49	No Data
<b>Total</b>	<b>3555</b>	

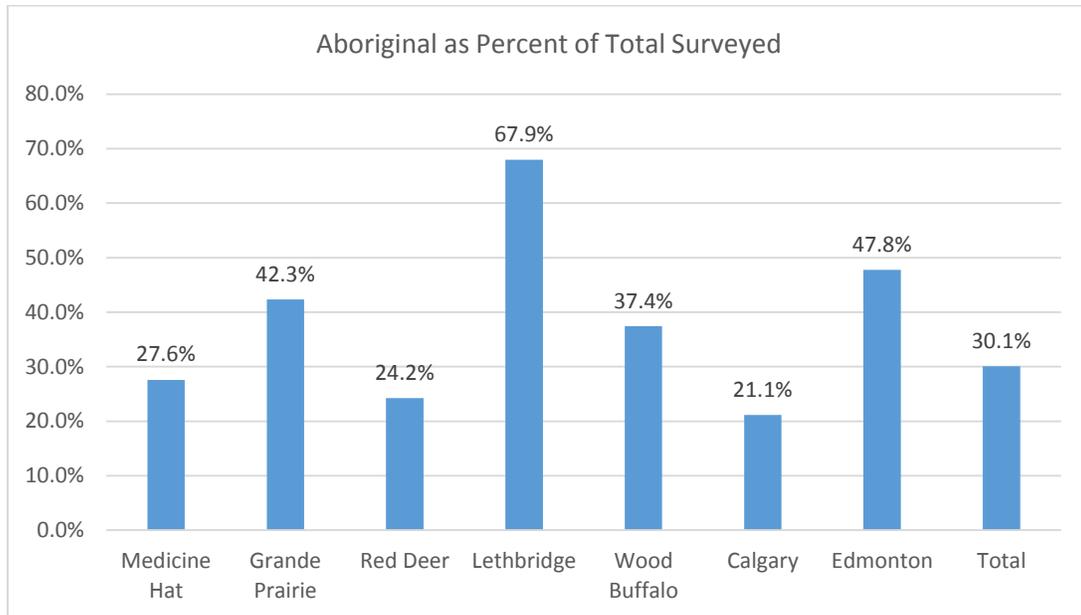
Age	Medicine Hat		Grande Prairie		Red Deer		Lethbridge		Wood Buffalo		Calgary		Edmonton		Total	
Under 12	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		0.0%	322	9.1%	0	0.0%	322	5.6%
12 to 18	1	3.0%	8	6.6%	21	18.4%	6	9.0%	4	1.4%	112	3.2%	26	1.6%	178	3.1%
18 to 21	0	0.0%	6	4.9%	3	2.6%	5	7.5%		0.0%	271	7.6%	111	6.9%	396	6.8%
21 to 24	1	3.0%	5	4.1%	6	5.3%	4	6.0%		0.0%		0.0%	95	5.9%	111	1.9%
24 to 35	9	27.3%	18	14.8%	30	26.3%	19	28.4%	59	20.1%	1395	39.2%	217	13.5%	1747	30.2%
35 to 45	7	21.2%	23	18.9%	22	19.3%	11	16.4%		0.0%		0.0%	292	18.2%	355	6.1%
45 to 55	6	18.2%	26	21.3%	20	17.5%	12	17.9%	161	54.8%	642	18.1%	405	25.2%	1272	22.0%
55 to 65	3	9.1%	8	6.6%	11	9.6%	3	4.5%	50	17.0%	642	18.1%	207	12.9%	924	16.0%
65 to 75	1	3.0%	4	3.3%	1	0.9%	4	6.0%	12	4.1%	122	3.4%	52	3.2%	196	3.4%
75 to 85	0	0.0%	1	0.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	9	0.6%	10	0.2%
Greater than 85	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
No Data	1	3.0%	12	9.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	8	2.7%	49	1.4%	47	2.9%	117	2.0%
Accompanying Minors	4	12.1%	11	9.0%	3	2.6%	3	4.5%	0	0.0%		0.0%	144	9.0%	165	2.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>3555</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1605</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>5793</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Total Youth	6	18.2%	30	24.6%	30	26.3%	18	26.9%	4	1.4%	705	19.8%	376	23.4%	1172	20.2%

\*Calgary and Red Deer Admin Data.

## Aboriginal Status

With respect to Aboriginal status, the Calgary proportion is notably lower at 21.1% compared to 31.8% in the survey. The Calgary proportion in the survey was still lower than the provincial average of 42.8% in the survey.

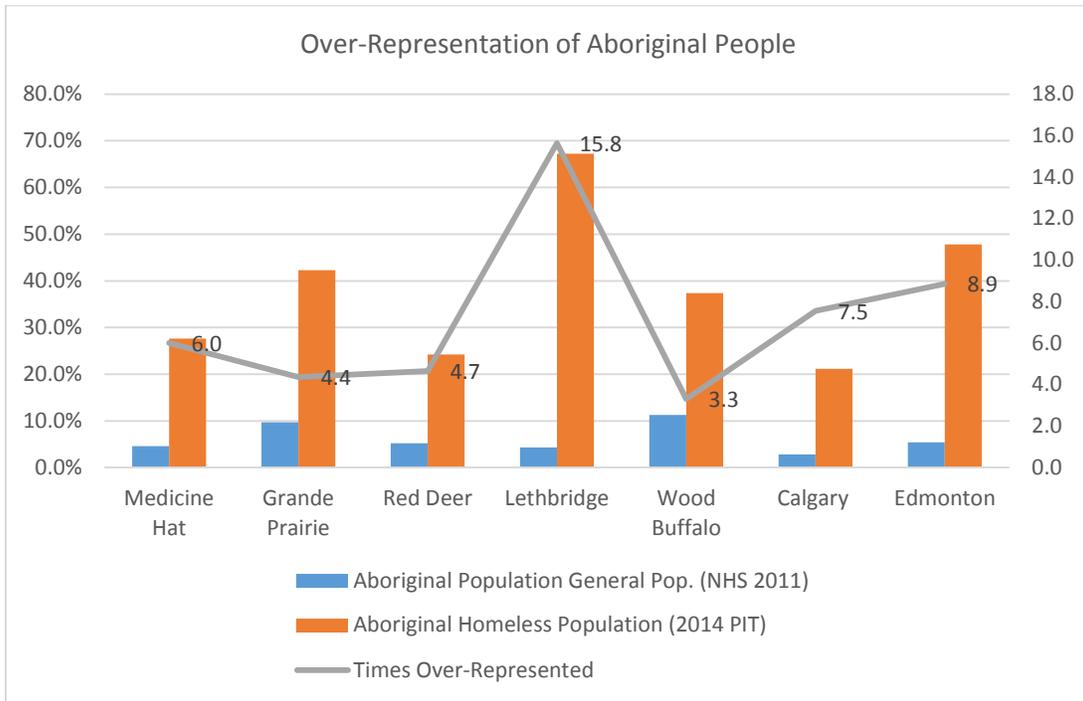
Lethbridge's 14 records from the correctional facility were included, which included Aboriginal status reported by facility staff. Despite the added figures, the proportion of Aboriginal people remains relatively the same as with the survey data (67.9% compared to 67.2%).



With respect to the over-representative of Aboriginal people amongst those experiencing homelessness, this is still a challenge for Calgary though using the administrative data brings the ratio down from 11.4:1 to 7.5:1. Calgary remains the third highest after Lethbridge and Edmonton in both instances.

Despite the added numbers from correctional facility, Lethbridge's ration of 15.6:1 remains similar to with the survey data only (15.6:1 compared to 15.8:1).

<b>Aboriginal People (Admin Data)</b>			
	<b>Aboriginal Population General Pop. (NHS 2011)</b>	<b>Aboriginal Homeless Population (2014 PIT)</b>	<b>Ratio among Survey Sample vs. General Population</b>
Medicine Hat	4.6%	27.6%	6.0
Grande Prairie	9.7%	42.3%	4.4
Red Deer	5.2%	24.2%	4.7
Lethbridge	4.3%	67.9%	15.8
Wood Buffalo	11.3%	37.4%	3.3
Calgary	2.8%	21.1%	7.5
Edmonton	5.4%	47.8%	8.9



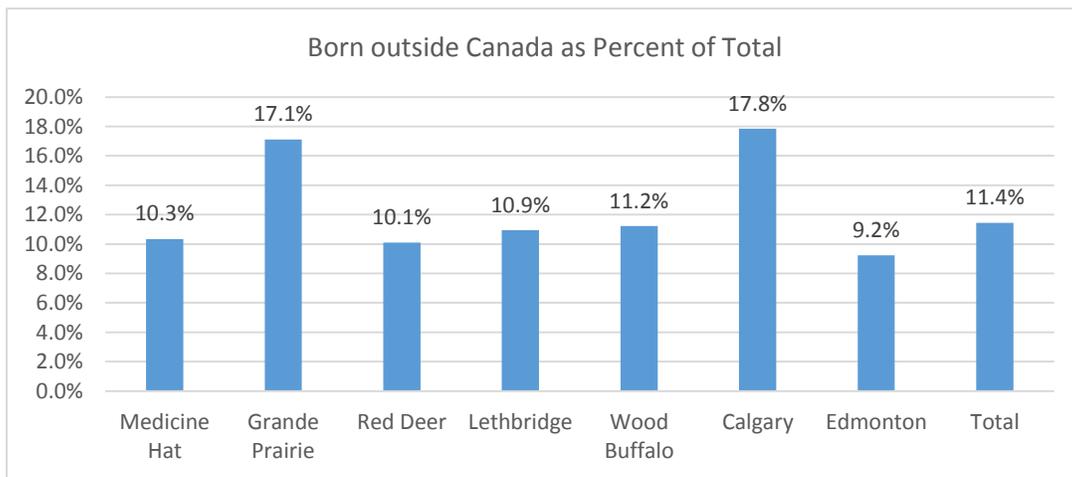
Aboriginal Status	Medicine Hat		Grande Prairie		Red Deer		Lethbridge*		Wood Buffalo		Calgary*		Edmonton		Total	
Yes	8	27.6%	47	42.3%	24	24.2%	53	67.9%	110	37.4%	751	21.1%	698	47.8%	1691	30.1%
No	18	62.1%	49	44.1%	75	75.8%	25	32.1%	168	57.1%	2651	74.6%	715	48.9%	3701	65.8%
Don't Know	1	3.4%	1	0.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	48	3.3%	50	0.9%
Declined	1	3.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	16	5.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	17	0.3%
No Data	1	3.4%	14	12.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	153	4.3%	0	0.0%	168	3.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>3555</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1461</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>5627</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

\*Calgary Admin Data; Lethbridge data includes 14 surveys from correctional center.

## Immigrants

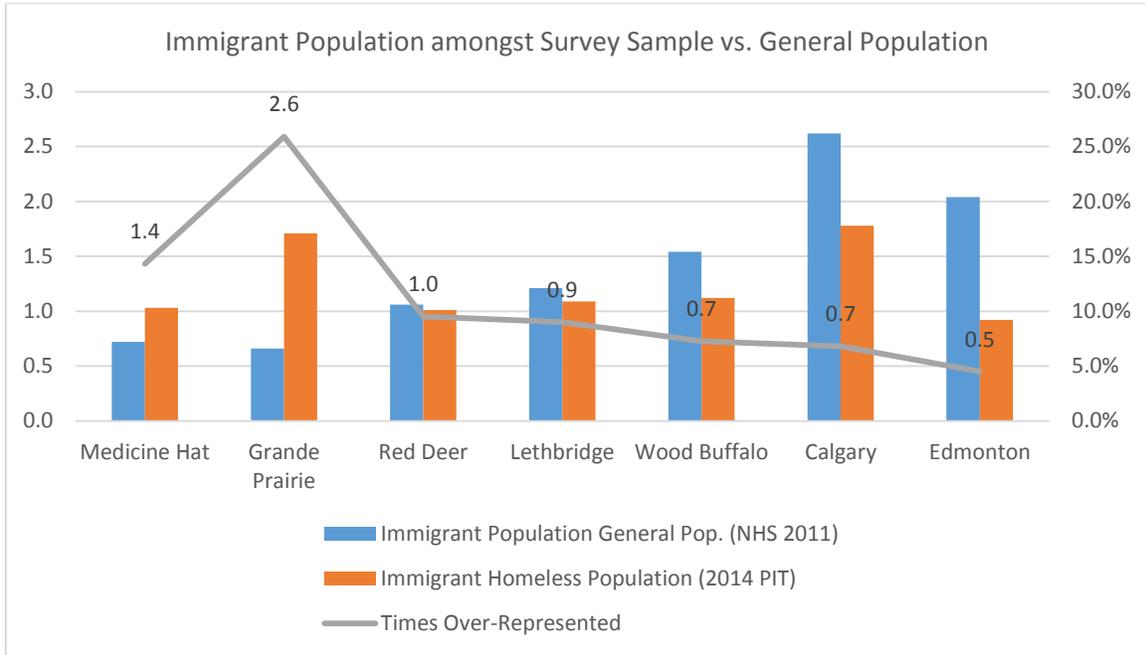
Notable proportions of the surveyed population self-identified as having been born outside Canada. On average, 11.4% of the surveyed population reported being born outside Canada. The highest rate was reported in Calgary (17.8%) and Grande Prairie (17.1%). The remainder hovered around the overall average.

Wood Buffalo asked how long someone had lived in Canada using the following response categories: 0 to 6 months, 6 months to 2 years, 2 years to 5 years, and 5 years or over. Those new to Canada under 5 years were reported as immigrants in the analysis. However, there are likely other who were in Canada for longer that were missed as result of the pre-determined categories.

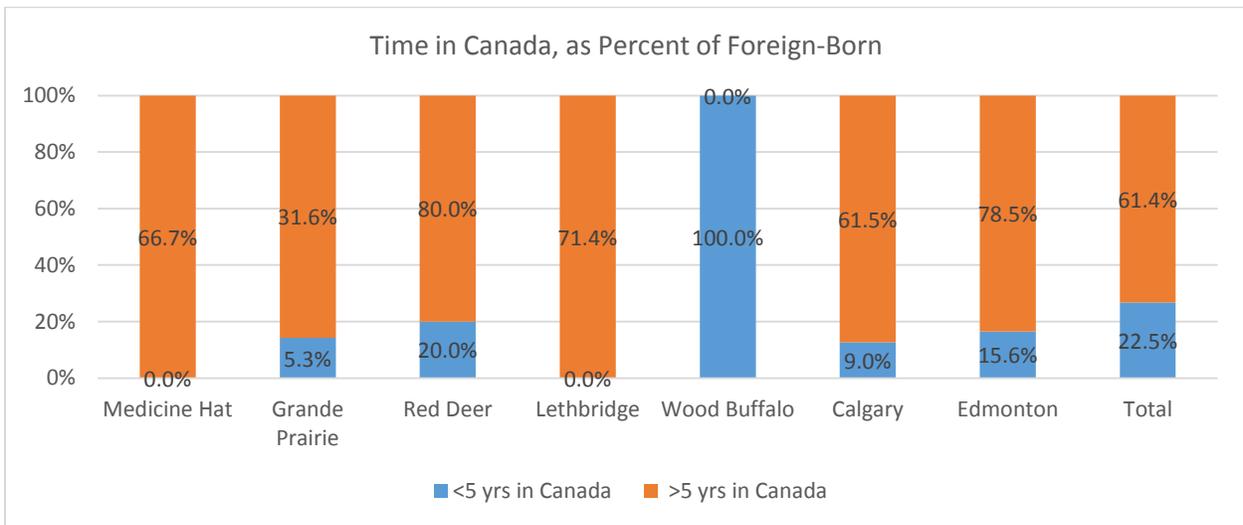


In Medicine Hat and Grande Prairie, immigrants were even over-represented compared to the general population. Grande Prairie in particular had a ratio of 2.6 foreign-born survey respondents to 1 in the general population. The rates were consistently lower amongst the sample in other communities compared to the general population prevalence. Edmonton had the lowest ratio of foreign-born respondents compared to general population at 0.5 to 1.

<b>Immigration</b>			
	<b>Immigrant Population General Pop. (NHS 2011)</b>	<b>Immigrant Homeless Population (2014 PIT)</b>	<b>Ratio among Survey Sample vs. General Population</b>
Medicine Hat	7.2%	10.3%	1.4:1
Grande Prairie	6.6%	17.1%	2.6:1
Red Deer	10.6%	10.1%	1.0:1
Lethbridge	12.1%	10.9%	0.9:1
Wood Buffalo	15.4%	11.2%	0.7:1
Calgary	26.2%	17.8%	0.7:1
Edmonton	20.4%	9.2%	0.5:1



In terms of time in Canada, most immigrants surveyed (68.7%) reported being in Canada for 5 years or longer and about 12.2% reported being in Canada for less than 5 years.



Born in Canada	Medicine Hat		Grande Prairie		Red Deer		Lethbridge		Wood Buffalo		Calgary		Edmonton		Total 2201	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Yes	26	89.7%	92	82.9%	89	89.9%	57	89.1%	N/A		359	82.2%	1254	85.8%	1877	85.3%
No	3	10.3%	19	17.1%	10	10.1%	7	10.9%	33	11.2%	78	17.8%	135	9.2%	252	11.4%
No Data	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%			0	0.0%	72	4.9%	72	3.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			<b>437</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1461</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2201</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Time in Canada	Medicine Hat		Grande Prairie		Red Deer		Lethbridge		Wood Buffalo		Calgary		Edmonton		Total	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
<1 Year	0	0.0%	1	5.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	15.2%	2	3.4%	6	4.4%	14	4.9%
1 to 3 Years	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	10.0%	0	0.0%	15	45.5%	0	0.0%	7	5.2%	23	8.1%
3 to 5 Years	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	10.0%	0	0.0%	13	39.4%	5	5.7%	8	5.9%	27	9.5%
5 to 10 Years	1	33.3%	3	15.8%	2	20.0%	2	28.6%	n/a	0.0%	11	12.6%	22	16.3%	41	14.4%
10 to 20 Years	0	0.0%	2	10.5%	2	20.0%	0	0.0%	n/a	0.0%	13	16.1%	26	19.3%	43	15.1%
20+ Years	1	33.3%	1	5.3%	4	40.0%	3	42.9%	n/a	n/a	24	27.6%	58	43.0%	91	31.9%
Don't Know	0	0.0%	11	57.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	n/a	n/a	3	3.4%	0	0.0%	14	4.9%
Declined	1	33.3%	1	5.3%	0	0.0%	2	28.6%	n/a	n/a	20	31.0%	8	5.9%	32	11.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

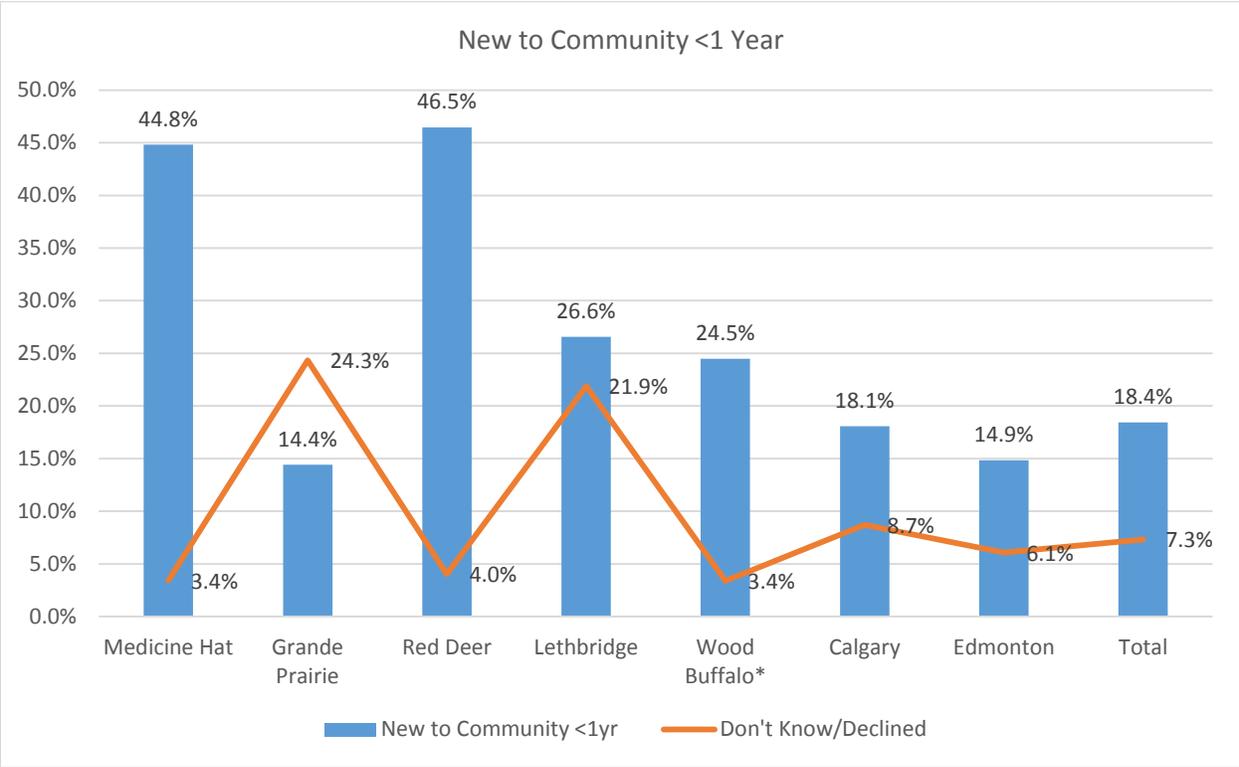
\*Wood Buffalo asked how long someone had lived in Canada using the following response categories: 0 to 6 months, 6 months to 2 years, 2 years to 5 years, and 5 years or over. Those new to Canada under 5 years were reported as immigrants in the analysis and categorized as follows: under 1 year (0-6 months), 1-3 years (6 months – 2 years), and 3-5 years (2-5 years). Notably, there are likely other immigrants who were in Canada for longer that were missed as result of the pre-determined categories.

## Migration

We see a considerable level of migration among the homeless population surveyed – as many as 46.5% reported being new to the city within the past year. On average, about 18.4% respondents were new to the community (under 1 year); however, looking across various communities shows great variance on this issue. For example, Medicine Hat and Red Deer report a considerably higher percentage compared to the larger communities.

Among the two major urban centres, a notable difference is evident: Grande Prairie and Edmonton's rates are lower at 14.4% and 14.9% compared to the average. It is important to note however, that Edmonton's response rate for this question was much lower than those of other communities, thus it is unclear what the impact of this would be. Grande Prairie's rate of Don't Know or Declined response to this question was high compared to other communities at 24.3%, and Lethbridge's was 21.9%.

Another methodological challenge comes from the Wood Buffalo survey, which only reported those new to the community under 6 months – thus, under-representing the prevalence of mobility amongst this group.

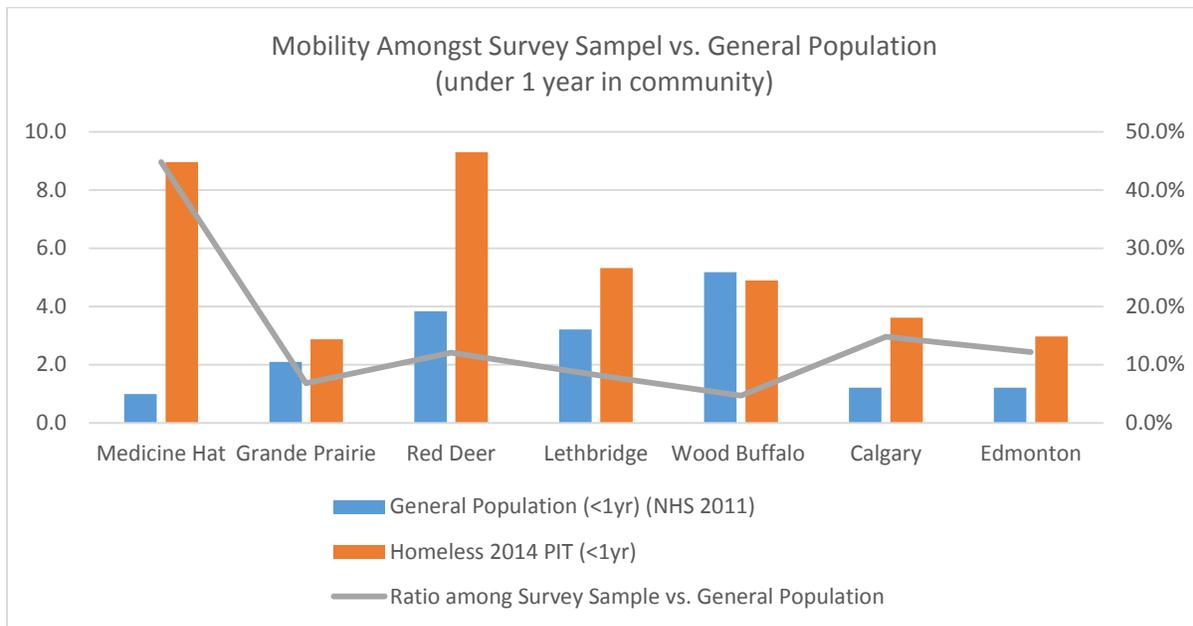


To contextualize the findings, it is important to examine the self-reported mobility trends in relation to the general population. Overall, the average of newcomers under 1 year to the communities is notably higher than the general population reported in the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) amongst the 7 Cities.

As evident in the chart and table below, Medicine Hat had the highest ratio (9 to 1) of new migrants to the community under 1 year compared to the general population amongst the 7 Cities, followed by Red Deer at 2.4 to 1.

One suggested explanation for the higher proportion of newcomers to some communities is the reduced backlog of long-term homeless. When the long term homeless group is removed from the population surveyed, the proportion of those new to the community increases. Thus, it does not necessarily represent a higher mobility in these communities; rather, this may reflect overall rehousing trends in relation to the snapshot methodology used in the count.

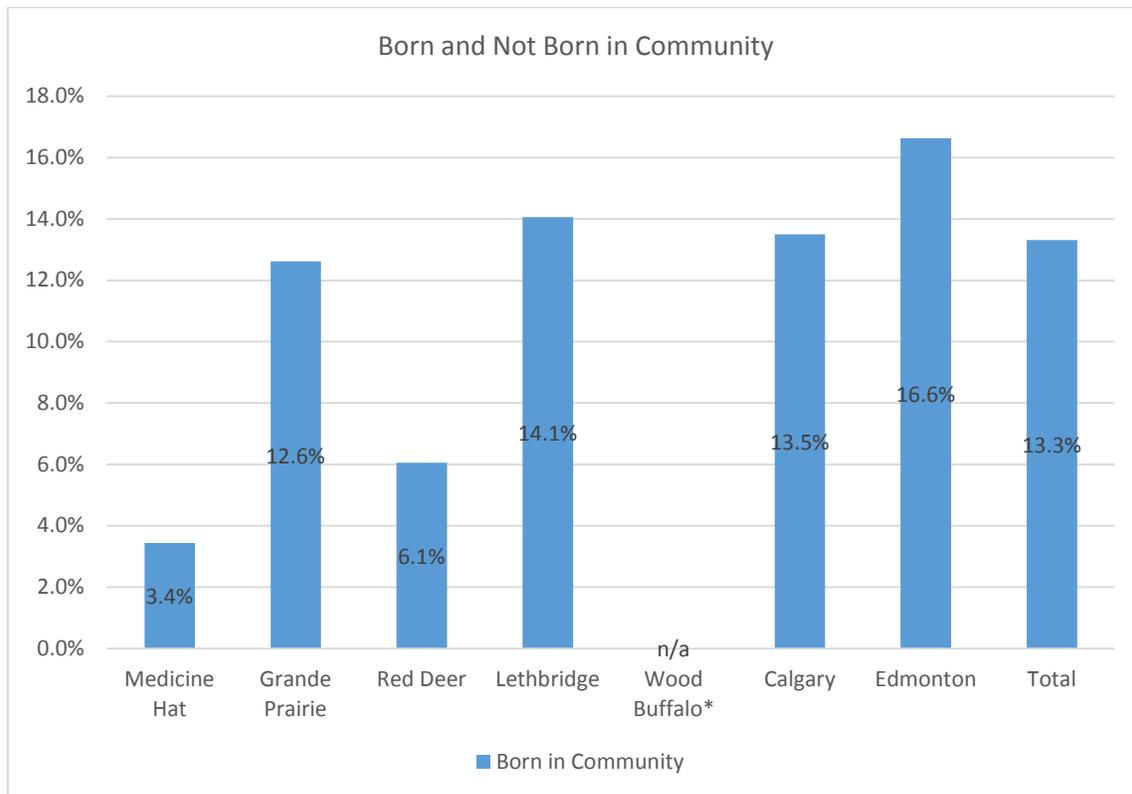
	Migration		
	General Population (<1yr) (NHS 2011)	Homeless 2014 PIT (<1yr)	Ratio among Survey Sample vs. General Population
Medicine Hat	5.0%	44.8%	9.0:1
Grande Prairie	10.5%	14.4%	1.4:1
Red Deer	19.2%	46.5%	2.4:1
Lethbridge	16.1%	26.6%	1.7:1
Wood Buffalo	25.9%	24.5%	0.9:1
		(0-6mns only)	
Calgary	6.1%	18.1%	3.0:1
Edmonton	6.1%	14.9%	2.4:1



Time in Community	Medicine Hat		Grande Prairie		Red Deer		Lethbridge		Wood Buffalo		Calgary		Edmonton		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
<1 Year	13	44.8%	16	14.4%	46	46.5%	17	26.6%	72	24.5%	79	18.1%	217	14.9%	460	18.4%
1 to 3 Years	4	13.8%	18	16.2%	5	5.1%	1	1.6%	47	16.0%	46	10.5%	115	7.9%	236	9.5%
3 to 5 Years	1	3.4%	5	4.5%	8	8.1%	3	4.7%	36	12.2%	21	4.8%	81	5.5%	155	6.2%
5 to 10 Years	6	20.7%	13	11.7%	9	9.1%	4	6.3%	129	43.9%	53	12.1%	158	10.8%	372	14.9%
10 to 20 Years	1	3.4%	10	9.0%	11	11.1%	9	14.1%		0.0%	72	16.5%	221	15.1%	324	13.0%
20+ Years	2	6.9%	8	7.2%	10	10.1%	7	10.9%		0.0%	69	15.8%	337	23.1%	433	17.4%
Don't Know	0	0.0%	27	24.3%	1	1.0%	5	7.8%		0.0%	9	2.1%	0	0.0%	42	1.7%
Declined	1	3.4%	0	0.0%	3	3.0%	9	14.1%	10	3.4%	29	6.6%	89	6.1%	141	5.7%
Born in Community	1	3.4%	14	12.6%	6	6.1%	9	14.1%		0.0%	59	13.5%			332	13.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1461</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2495</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

\*Wood Buffalo asked how long someone had lived in the community using the following response categories: 0 to 6 months, 6 months to 2 years, 2 years to 5 years, and 5 years or over. Those new to Wood Buffalo under 5 years were reported as migrants in the analysis and categorized as follows: under 1 year (0-6 months), 1-3 years (6 months – 2 years), and 3-5 years (2-5 years). Notably, there are likely other migrants who were in Wood Buffalo for longer that were missed as result of the pre-determined categories. No data was available on those born in the community.

Another key element to understanding local dynamics is also the rate of those born in the community. Keeping in mind the same limitations resulting from response rates, when we look across the 7 Cities, it is apparent that the rate of those born in the community is low across the board, put particularly low in Medicine Hat (3.4%) and Red Deer (6.1%). Notably, we do not have a breakdown for those born in Wood Buffalo, and this skews their data to appear that everyone was born elsewhere. Note that the balance of responses is reported as Don't Know, Declined, or No Data.



\*Wood Buffalo did not capture data on whether people were born in the community or not.

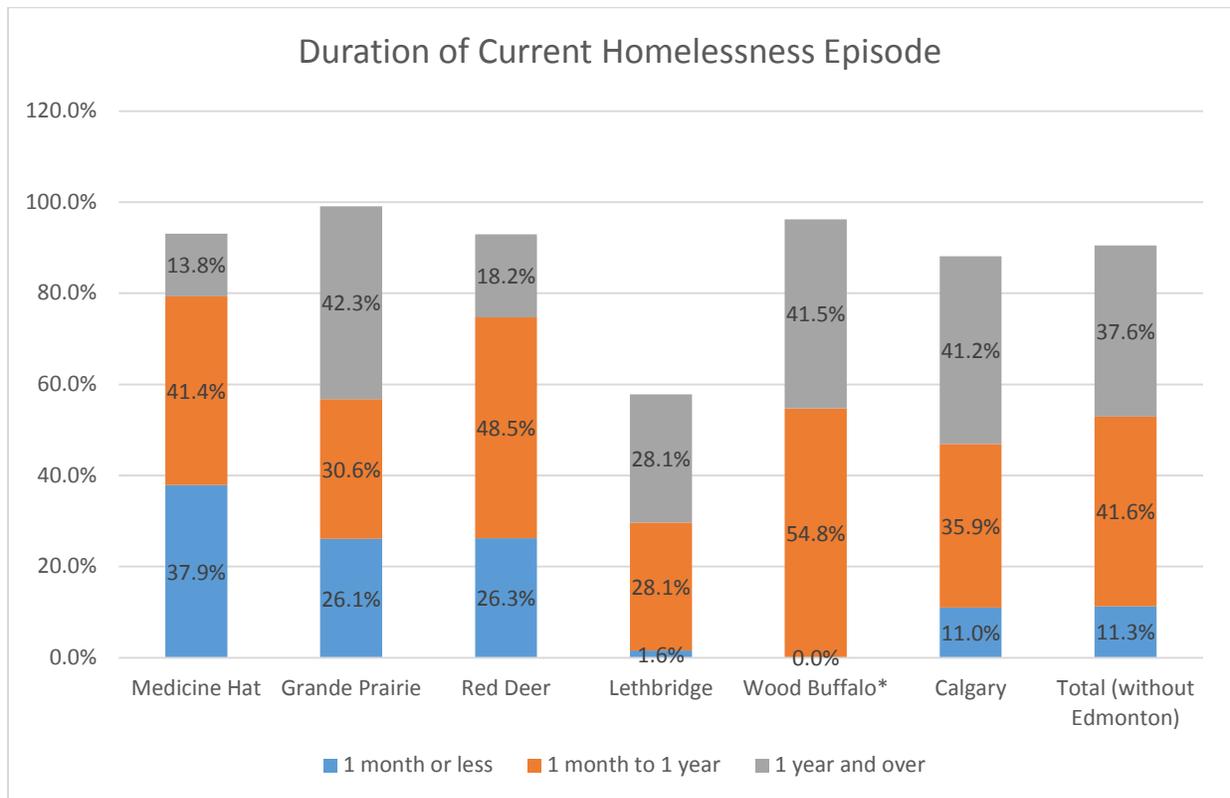
## Duration of Most Recent Homelessness Episode

Data on the duration of the latest homelessness episode was available from all cities except Edmonton, where data was not available. The overall length of time varied from community to community considerably. Note that data quality was good overall, with the exception of Lethbridge where 15.6% of their data was missing for this question.

The highest number of those with homelessness episodes a year or longer were surveyed in Grande Prairie (42.3%), Wood Buffalo (41.5%), Calgary (41.2%). Medicine Hat had the lowest rate at 13.8%, followed by Red Deer (18.2%) and Lethbridge at 28.1%.

If we look at episodes less than 1 month, Medicine Hat has the highest rate (37.9%) followed by Red Deer (26.3%) and Grande Prairie (26.1%). Calgary was at 11.0% and Lethbridge was the lowest at 1.6%.

For episodes between 1 month and 1 year, the highest rate is reported in Wood Buffalo (54.8%) and Red Deer (48.5%), followed by Medicine Hat (41.4%).



Duration of Current Homelessness Episode	Medicine Hat		Grande Prairie		Red Deer		Lethbridge		Wood Buffalo*		Calgary		Total without Edmonton	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Up to 1 Week	5	17.2%	13	11.7%	10	10.1%	1	1.6%		0.0%	9	1.6%	38	3.7%
1 Week up to 1 Month	6	20.7%	16	14.4%	16	16.2%	0	0.0%		0.0%	41	9.4%	79	7.6%
1 Month up to 3 Months	3	10.3%	11	9.9%	18	18.2%	4	6.3%		0.0%	47	10.8%	83	8.0%
3 Months up to 6 Months	5	17.2%	6	5.4%	14	14.1%	3	4.7%	109	37.1%	42	9.6%	179	17.3%
6 Months to 1 Year	4	13.8%	17	15.3%	16	16.2%	11	17.2%	52	17.7%	68	15.6%	168	16.2%
1 Year to 3 Years	3	10.3%	12	10.8%	8	8.1%	4	6.3%	41	13.9%	88	20.1%	156	15.1%
3 Years to 5 Years	0	0.0%	8	7.2%	5	5.1%	4	6.3%		0.0%	25	5.7%	42	4.1%
5+ Years	1	3.4%	27	24.3%	5	5.1%	10	15.6%	81	27.6%	67	15.3%	191	18.5%
Don't Know	0	0.0%	1	0.9%	3	3.0%	11	17.2%		0.0%	21	4.8%	36	3.5%
Declined/Bad Data	2	6.9%	0	0.0%	1	1.0%	6	9.4%	11	3.7%	29	6.4%	49	4.7%
No Data	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	3.0%	10	15.6%		0.0%	0	0.0%	13	1.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>99.3%</b>	<b>1034</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

\* Up to 1 week - up to exactly 1 week, etc. Each category ends with exactly the upper bound and greater than the lower bound. Duration is converted annually, thus 1 month is 1/12. If someone indicated 31 days in the survey, this would be categorized in the 1 month to 3 months range since 1/12 is less than 31 days. If they indicated 1

month in the survey, they would be categorized in the 1 week to 1 month category as the category ends with exactly the upper bound.

\*\*Wood Buffalo asked how long someone had been homeless most recently using the following response categories: 0 to 6 months, 6 months to 2 years, 2 years to 5 years, and 5 years or over. They were categorized as follows: 3-6 months (0-6 months), 6 months – 1 year (6 months – 2 years), and 3-5 years (2-5 years).

## Homelessness Patterns

Similarly, data was available to assess the pattern of homelessness across four cities. The data on homelessness duration and episodes was analysed using the following conditions to define chronic, episodic and transitional homelessness using available responses. Data was not available for this analysis from Wood Buffalo or Edmonton.

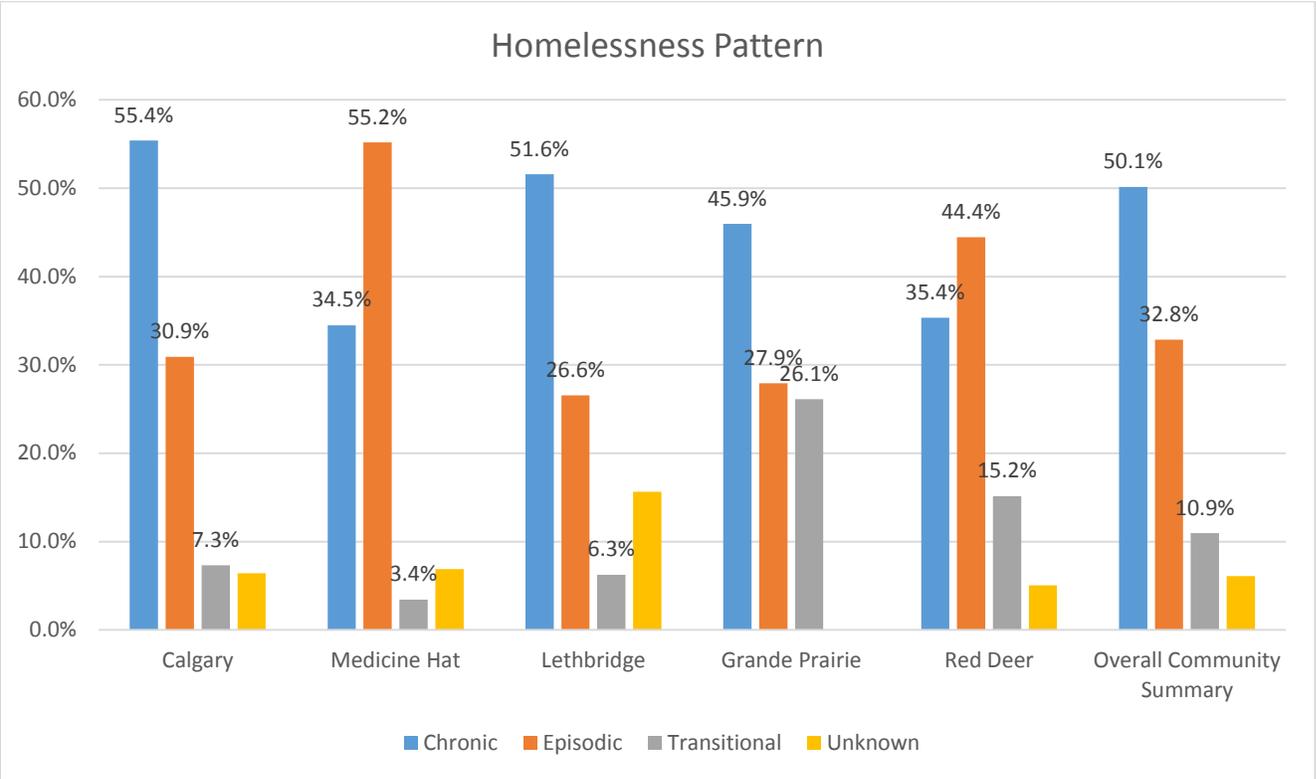
Condition	Categorize
Anyone over 1 year current	Chronic
Anyone more than 4 episodes	Chronic
For estimated count - anything over 1 to 3 category	Chronic
More than 2 episodes	Episodic
For estimated count -1 to 3 is episodic (with or without duration data)	Episodic
1 or 2 instances of homelessness (actual # not estimated)	Transitional
1 month or less homeless	Transitional
If they do not know duration - unknown if there is not enough instances data to categorize	Unknown
Declined to answer duration - unknown if there is not enough instances data to categorize	Unknown

Overall, Medicine Hat had the lowest prevalence of chronic homelessness (34.5%) followed by Red Deer (35.4%). Calgary had the highest (55.4%), followed by Lethbridge (51.6%) and Grande Prairie (45.9%). The average across the available sample was 50.1%.

Medicine Hat had the highest proportion of episodic homelessness at 55.2%, whereas the rest were relatively lower ranging from 26.6% in Lethbridge, to 27.9% in Grande Prairie and 30.9% in Calgary. Red Deer had a higher percentage than the average at 44.4% compared to 32.8% overall.

The overall prevalence of transitional homelessness was very low across the five cities from a low of 3.4% in Medicine Hat to a high of 26.1% in Grande Prairie. In fact, Grande Prairie had a relative even distribution across the three categories. The average was 10.9% across the five cities, with Lethbridge at 6.3%, Calgary at 7.3%, and Red Deer at 15.2%.

The low prevalence of transitional homelessness may at first glance seem somewhat surprising in Medicine Hat, where the focus has been on ending long term homelessness. In light of the high migration rate (44.8% new to community under 1 year), it suggests that a notable proportion of newcomers to the community have pre-existing homelessness histories. This issue is explored further in the next section.



Migration and Homelessness Patterns

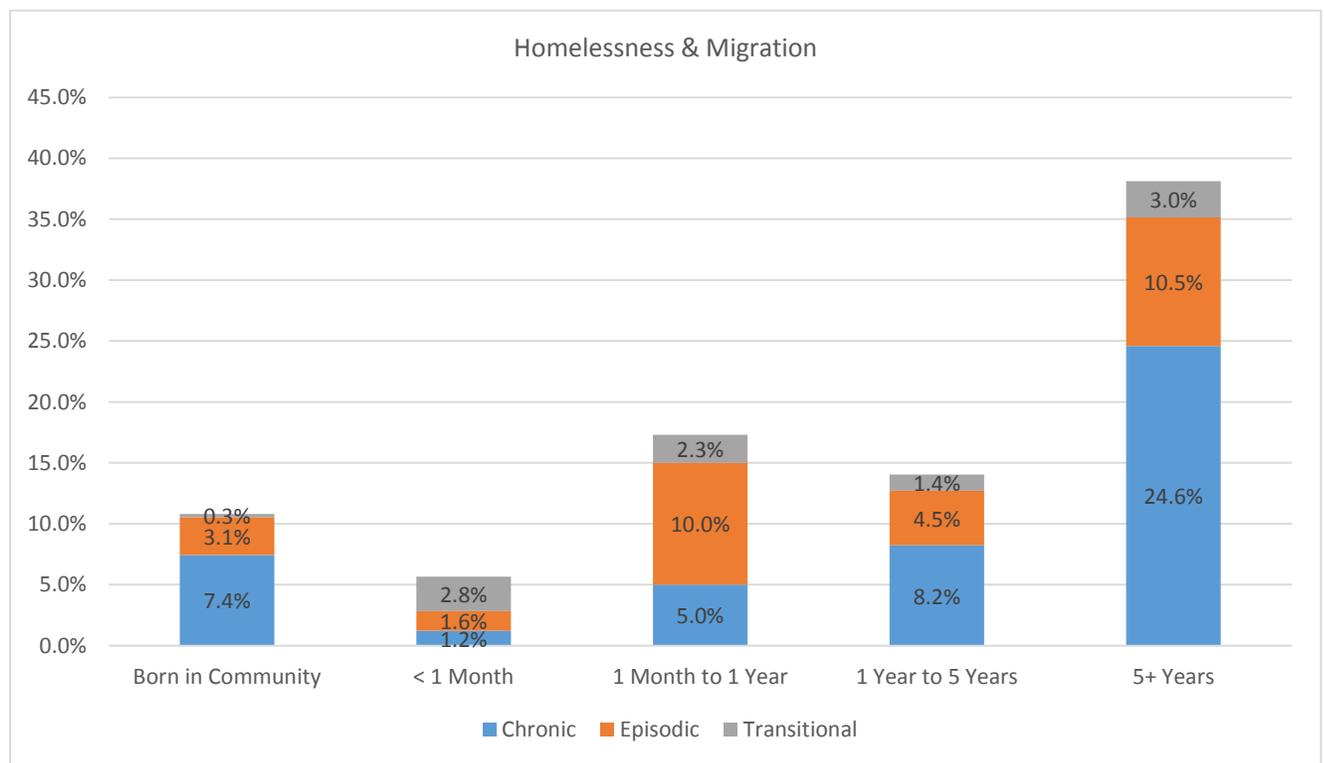
When we examine migration in relation to homelessness pattern, a very interesting picture emerges. For the five communities with available homelessness typology data, a total of 740 surveys were available to cross-tabulate with migration information. It is important to note that the ways in which homelessness was classified could impact these results as well.

Across the sample, the proportion of respondents experiencing chronic homelessness is higher amongst those who have been in the community over 5 years (24.6%). The proportion is lower among those who have been in the community for less time, particularly less than a month (1.2%). This may suggest that one is likelier to experience chronic homelessness if they have been in the community longer versus recent arrivals, and/or that they may increase their likelihood to experience chronic homelessness in the place they have been in for a while.

Looking at episodic homelessness, the pattern is somewhat different: those born in the community have lower rates than those who have been there 5 years of more (3.1% versus 10.5%). For new arrivals under 1 month, the rate is the lowest at 1.6%. Transitional homelessness was the lowest amongst those born in the community (0.3%) and highest for those new to the community (2.8%) or in the community for 5 years of longer (3.0%).

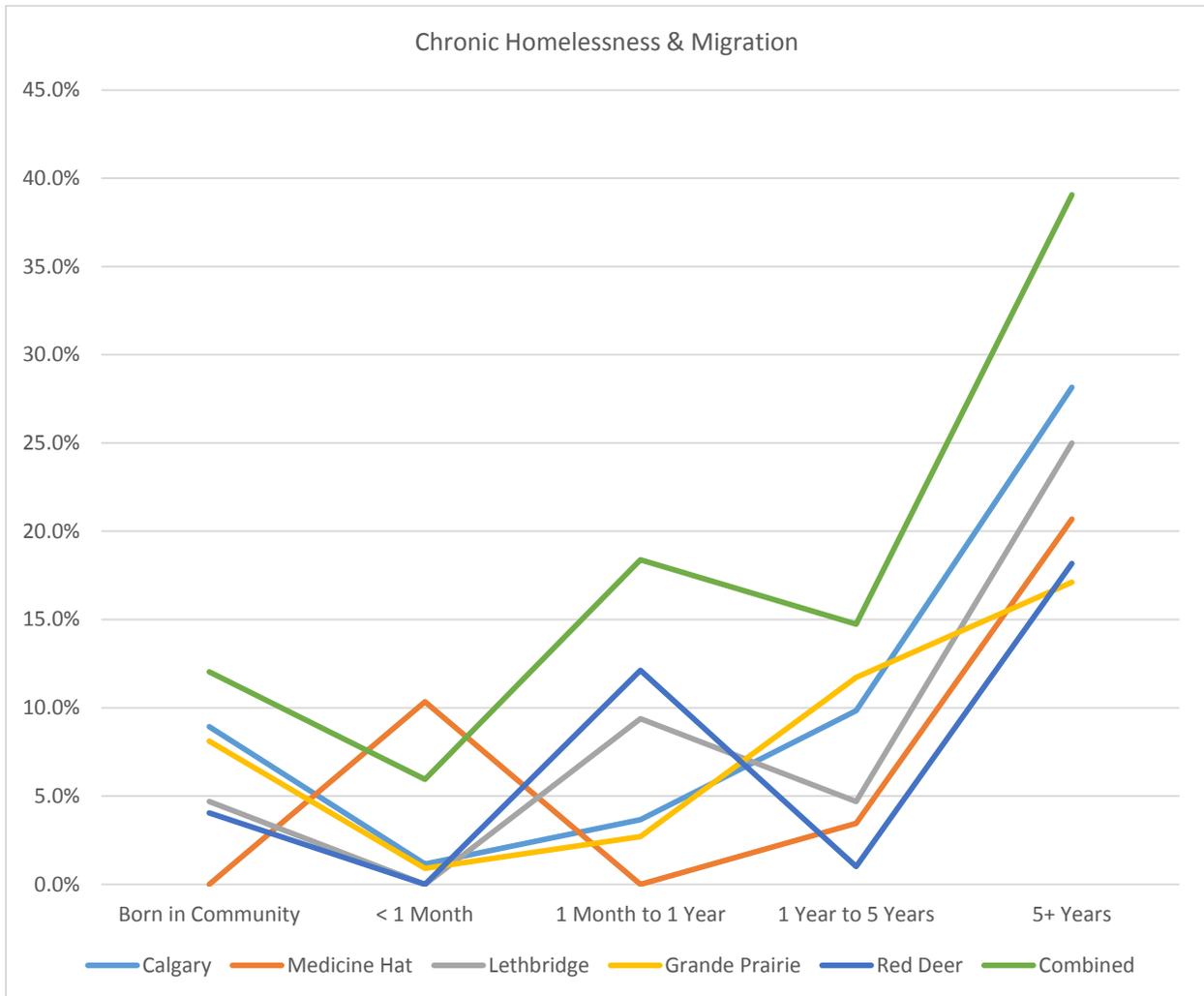
Note that the 13% of surveys where data was unknown could impact this analysis significantly, particularly given the small percentages we see regarding episodic and transitional homelessness. Future homeless counts should have improved data quality to address this limitation.

Community Summary	Born in Community	< 1 Month	1 Month to 1 Year	1 Year to 5 Years	5+ Years	Unknown	Total	Total %
Chronic	7.4%	1.2%	5.0%	8.2%	24.6%	3.6%	371	50.1%
Episodic	3.1%	1.6%	10.0%	4.5%	10.5%	3.1%	243	32.8%
Transitional	0.3%	2.8%	2.3%	1.4%	3.0%	1.2%	81	10.9%
Unknown	1.2%	0.3%	1.1%	0.7%	0.9%	1.9%	45	6.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Total %</b>	12.0%	5.9%	18.4%	14.7%	39.1%	9.9%	100.0%	



This analysis was completed for each of the five communities in the sample. Looking specifically at chronic homelessness, which has a best data across the five cities, the following pattern emerges. Grande Prairie and Calgary seem to have an increasing prevalence of chronic homelessness with time spent in community; however, Medicine Hat's seems to be at a high for most recent arrivals, dropping down for between 1 month and 1 year in the community, and climbing again for longer time in the community.

Medicine Hat has the lowest rate for those born in the community, compared to all the other cities, followed by Red Deer at 4.0%. Another variance comes from Lethbridge which sees a jump compared to other communities for those in the community between 1 month and 1 year. Red Deer sees a notable dip in the 1-5 year range, but generally follows the combined trend.



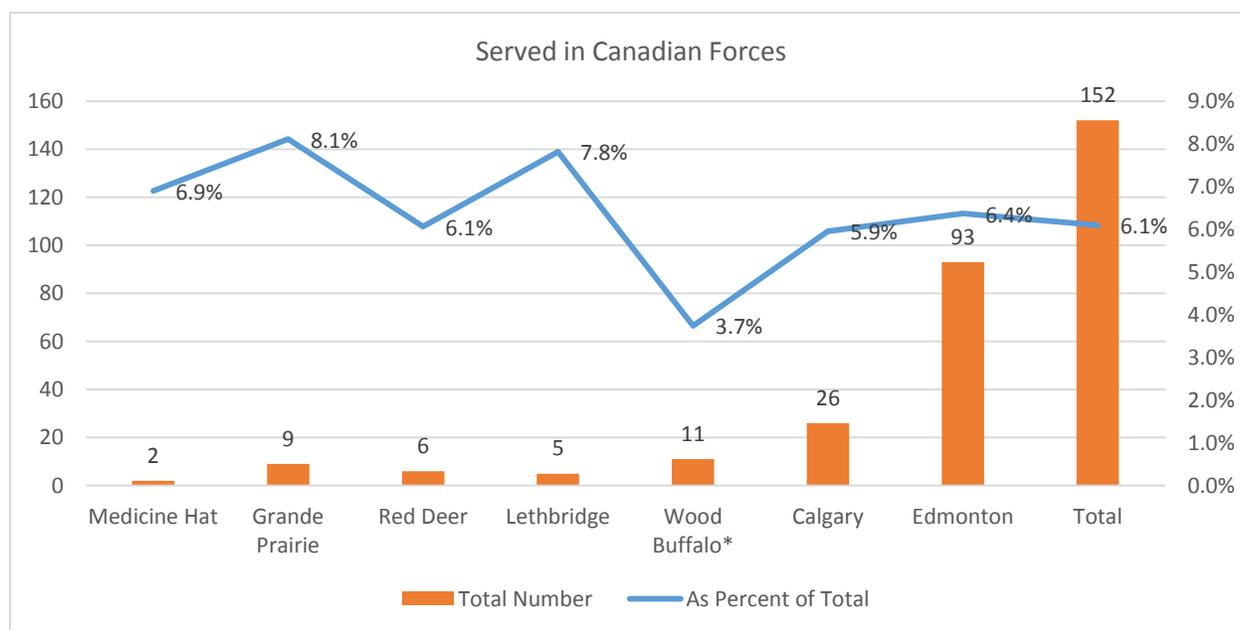
Overall Community Summary								
	Born in Community	< 1 Month	1 Month to 1 Year	1 Year to 5 Years	5+ Years	Unknown	Total	Total %
Chronic	7.4%	1.2%	5.0%	8.2%	24.6%	3.6%	371	50.1%
Episodic	3.1%	1.6%	10.0%	4.5%	10.5%	3.1%	243	32.8%
Transitional	0.3%	2.8%	2.3%	1.4%	3.0%	1.2%	81	10.9%
Unknown	1.2%	0.3%	1.1%	0.7%	0.9%	1.9%	45	6.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Calgary								
	Born in Community	< 1 Month	1 Month to 1 Year	1 Year to 5 Years	5+ Years	Unknown	Total	Total %
Chronic	8.9%	1.1%	3.7%	9.8%	28.1%	3.7%	242	55.4%
Episodic	3.7%	1.4%	7.8%	4.1%	11.7%	2.3%	135	30.9%
Transitional	0.2%	2.1%	0.7%	0.7%	3.2%	0.5%	32	7.3%
Unknown	0.7%	0.5%	0.9%	0.7%	1.4%	2.3%	28	6.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Medicine Hat								
	Born in Community	< 1 Month	1 Month to 1 Year	1 Year to 5 Years	5+ Years	Unknown	Total	Total %
Chronic	0.0%	10.3%	0.0%	3.4%	20.7%	0.0%	10	34.5%
Episodic	3.4%	3.4%	24.1%	10.3%	10.3%	3.4%	16	55.2%
Transitional	0.0%	3.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1	3.4%
Unknown	0.0%	0.0%	3.4%	3.4%	0.0%	0.0%	2	6.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Lethbridge								
	Born in Community	< 1 Month	1 Month to 1 Year	1 Year to 5 Years	5+ Years	Unknown	Total	Total %
Chronic	4.7%	0.0%	9.4%	4.7%	25.0%	7.8%	33	51.6%
Episodic	1.6%	1.6%	9.4%	0.0%	6.3%	7.8%	17	26.6%
Transitional	0.0%	0.0%	4.7%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	4	6.3%
Unknown	7.8%	0.0%	1.6%	1.6%	0.0%	4.7%	10	15.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Grande Prairie								
	Born in Community	< 1 Month	1 Month to 1 Year	1 Year to 5 Years	5+ Years	Unknown	Total	Total %
Chronic	8.1%	0.9%	2.7%	11.7%	17.1%	5.4%	51	45.9%
Episodic	3.6%	2.7%	5.4%	5.4%	7.2%	3.6%	31	27.9%
Transitional	0.9%	9.9%	1.8%	3.6%	4.5%	5.4%	29	26.1%
Unknown	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Red Deer								
	Born in Community	< 1 Month	1 Month to 1 Year	1 Year to 5 Years	5+ Years	Unknown	Total	Total %
Chronic	4.0%	0.0%	12.1%	1.0%	18.2%	0.0%	35	35.4%
Episodic	1.0%	1.0%	21.2%	6.1%	12.1%	3.0%	44	44.4%
Transitional	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	3.0%	3.0%	0.0%	15	15.2%
Unknown	1.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	1.0%	1.0%	5	5.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Service in the Canadian Forces

About 6.1% of the surveyed population reported that they had served in the Canadian Forces: a total of 152 of those surveyed. This suggests an over-representation compared to the 1.7% veteran rate reported for the general population.<sup>12</sup>

Overall, prevalence rate for this question varied from city to city, with a high of 8.1% in Grande Prairie and a low of 3.7% in Wood Buffalo. Though Edmonton had the highest number (93), this is a function of the high response rate they had in comparison to Calgary; overall, Calgary and Edmonton had similar proportions of those who had served in the Canadian Forces.



Service in Canadian Forces	Medicine Hat		Grande Prairie		Red Deer		Lethbridge		Wood Buffalo		Calgary		Edmonton		Total	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Yes	2	6.9%	9	8.1%	6	6.1%	5	7.8%	11	3.7%	26	5.9%	93	6.4%	152	6.1%
No	23	79.3%	89	80.2%	93	93.9%	57	89.1%	266	90.5%	380	87.0%	1304	89.3%	2212	88.7%
Don't Know	0	0.0%	1	0.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	64	4.4%	65	2.6%
Declined	4	13.8%	12	10.8%	0	0.0%	2	3.1%	17	5.8%	31	7.1%	0	0.0%	66	2.6%

<sup>12</sup> Estimated Veteran Population as of March 2014\*599,200 <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/news/general-statistics>

Statistics Canada, 2014: Canada's population was estimated at 35,675,800 on October 1, 2014, up 135,400 (+0.4%) from July 1, 2014, according to preliminary population estimates, which are now available for the third quarter by province and territory. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/141217/dq141217d-eng.pdf>

No Data	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1461</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2495</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## Sleeping Rough

Sleeping rough refers to finding shelter in parks, garages, cars, makeshift shelters or vacant buildings. Given Alberta's severe weather patterns, sleeping outside presents significant health risks.

One of the new levels of information gained from this survey was actual data on those surveyed on the street regarding housing situations. Typically, street counts assume all those enumerated are 'rough sleepers,' however, the data from the survey paints a very different picture from the perspective of participants. Note that Edmonton's reported housing situation asks where the person slept last night, versus tonight in the case of the other cities.

The data suggests that 42.0% of those surveyed on the street were sleeping rough in either vacant building, cars, garages, attics, etc. or makeshift shelter. Across the 7 Cities, this varied however. Red Deer had the highest proportion of confirmed rough sleeping for those enumerated on the street at 100%, whereas Wood Buffalo had the lowest at 29.5%.

Notably, because Edmonton conducted a daytime street count their total of 926 also includes 232 people who reported they had stayed in shelters or short term supportive housing the night prior to the count.

Street Count Reported Housing	Medicine Hat		Grande Prairie		Red Deer		Lethbridge		Wood Buffalo		Calgary*		Edmonton		Total	
Hotel/Motel	0	0.0%	1	1.8%	0	0.0%	1	5.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	44	4.8%	46	3.6%
Public Spaces	1	20.0%	16	29.1%	10	47.6%	6	31.6%	36	17.4%	23	37.7%	157	17.0%	249	19.2%
Vacant buildings	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	4.8%	0	0.0%	13	6.3%	3	4.9%	1	0.1%	18	1.4%
Cars or other vehicles	0	0.0%	1	1.8%	1	4.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	3.3%	39	4.2%	43	3.3%
Garages, attics, etc.	0	0.0%	4	7.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	12	5.8%	0	0.0%	14	1.5%	30	2.3%
Makeshift shelter public	1	20.0%	4	7.3%	5	23.8%	3	15.8%	0	0.0%	9	14.8%	141	15.2%	163	12.6%
Makeshift shelter private	0	0.0%	2	3.6%	4	19.0%	2	10.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	33	3.6%	41	3.2%
Emergency shelter	0	0.0%	16	29.1%	0	0.0%	7	36.8%	87	42.0%	0	0.0%	232	25.1%	342	26.4%
Hospital, jail, etc.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	1.4%	0	0.0%	10	1.1%	13	1.0%
Someone else's place	2	40.0%	1	1.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	54	26.1%	0	0.0%	251	27.1%	308	23.8%
Declined to answer	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	1.0%	21	34.4%	4	0.4%	27	2.1%
No Data	1	20.0%	10	18.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	4.9%	0	0.0%	14	1.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>926</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1294</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

\*Not included here are the 43 rough sleepers observed by Calgary's systems partners, who were not surveyed and 78 observed rough sleepers or people who did not consent to surveys/declined to participate. This total figure for Calgary is therefore 182.

## Conclusion

The count was part of an initiative led by the 7 Cities on Housing & Homelessness (7 Cities) in collaboration with the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness to develop a harmonized approach to homeless counts nationally.

Alberta is the first jurisdiction to implement measures towards a more standardized methodology, leading the way in Canada. Though counts across Alberta are becoming more aligned, this is the first time this effort has been undertaken and future counts will improve from ongoing learnings.

Considerable alignment has been achieved in the first implementation of a provincial count, however, there remain key methodological variances which have been identified as having a high likelihood of impacting the comparability of results across the province. As a result, the report recommends action to improve the Alberta methodology in future counts.

The Count has been compiled for several purposes: 1) to estimate the size of the homeless population in Alberta, 2) to estimate the distribution of the homeless population across the province, 3) to infer changes in the size of the homeless population and 4) to describe and compare the characteristics of the homeless populations. These items are all important for evaluating policy and initiatives aimed at addressing homelessness and to inform decision makers as to the scale of the problem.

## About 7 Cities on Housing & Homelessness

Alberta's 7 Cities on Housing and Homelessness are the lead organizations responsible for the implementation of local Plans to End Homelessness, working together since 2001. The 7 Cities coordinate local plans at a systems level and align funding resources for greater impact and progress towards ending homelessness.

The 7 Cities provides a forum for dialogue with the federal and provincial representatives on housing and homelessness. The 7 Cities have long-standing histories of delivering strategic planning and service delivery in communities, along with administering and aligning funds, with accountabilities to several provincial or federal funders, including Alberta Human Services and the federal Homelessness Partnering Strategy.

Visit [www.7cities.ca](http://www.7cities.ca).

## Canadian Observatory on Homelessness

The Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (formerly the Canadian Homelessness Research Network (CHRN)) brings together top researchers on homelessness in Canada. Working in collaboration with a range of key stakeholders and institutions (in the non-profit sector and in government), the CHRN is committed to enhancing the impact of research on the homelessness crisis. That is, our focus is on establishing effective mechanisms for knowledge exchange and mobilization in the area of homelessness research in Canada.

The Canadian Homelessness Research Network is housed at York University, Toronto. It works nationally, regionally and locally to support research networks that focus on solutions to homelessness. Our activities, focusing on education, research, networking and knowledge mobilization, provide a national and international forum for sharing and collaboration between researchers, service providers, and policy and program developers, in order to explore the links between research and action, and to move towards effective long-term solutions to homelessness. This project raises the profile of homelessness research in Canada, showing that research can and should inform decisions, and contribute to solutions to homelessness.

Visit <http://www.homelesshub.ca/CanadianObservatoryOnHomelessness>.

## Acknowledgements

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## Appendix 1 – Canadian Definition of Homelessness

### TYOLOGY

OPERATIONAL CATEGORY	LIVING SITUATION	GENERIC DEFINITION
<b>1 UNSHELTERED</b> This includes people who lack housing and are not accessing emergency shelters or accommodation, except during extreme weather conditions. In most cases, people are staying in places that are not designed for or fit for human habitation.	<b>1.1 People living in public or private spaces without consent or contract</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public space, such as sidewalks, squares, parks, forests, etc.</li> <li>Private space and vacant buildings (squatting)</li> </ul>
	<b>1.2 People living in places not intended for permanent human habitation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Living in cars or other vehicles</li> <li>Living in garages, attics, closets or buildings not designed for habitation</li> <li>People in makeshift shelters, shacks or tents</li> </ul>
<b>2 EMERGENCY SHELTERED</b> This refers to people who, because they cannot secure permanent housing, are accessing emergency shelter and system supports, generally provided at no cost or minimal cost to the user. Such accommodation represents an institutional response to homelessness provided by government, non-profit, faith based organizations and / or volunteers.	<b>2.1 Emergency overnight shelters for people who are homeless</b>	These facilities are designed to meet the immediate needs of people who are homeless. Such short-term emergency shelters may target specific sub-populations, including women, families, youth or Aboriginal persons, for instance. These shelters typically have minimal eligibility criteria, offer shared sleeping facilities and amenities, and often expect clients to leave in the morning. They may or may not offer food, clothing or other services. Some emergency shelters allow people to stay on an ongoing basis while others are short term and are set up to respond to special circumstances, such as extreme weather.
	<b>2.2 Shelters for individuals/families impacted by family violence</b>	
	<b>2.3 Emergency shelter for people fleeing a natural disaster or destruction of accommodation due to fires, floods, etc.</b>	
<b>3 PROVISIONALLY ACCOMMODATED</b> This describes situations in which people, who are technically homeless and without permanent shelter, access accommodation that offers no prospect of permanence. Those who are provisionally accommodated may be accessing temporary housing provided by government or the non-profit sector, or may have independently made arrangements for short-term accommodation.	<b>3.1 Interim Housing for people who are homeless</b>	Interim housing is a systems-supported form of housing that is meant to bridge the gap between unsheltered homelessness or emergency accommodation and permanent housing.
	<b>3.2 People living temporarily with others, but without guarantee of continued residency or immediate prospects for accessing permanent housing</b>	Often referred to as 'couch surfers' or the 'hidden homeless', this describes people who stay with friends, family, or even strangers.
	<b>3.3 People accessing short term, temporary rental accommodations without security of tenure</b>	In some cases people who are homeless make temporary rental arrangements, such as staying in motels, hostels, rooming houses, etc.
	<b>3.4 People in institutional care who lack permanent housing arrangements</b>	People who may transition into homelessness upon release from: Penal institutions; Medical / mental health institutions; Residential treatment programs or withdrawal management centers; Children's institutions / group homes.
	<b>3.5 Accommodation / reception centers for recently arrived immigrants and refugees</b>	Prior to securing their own housing, recently arrived immigrants and refugees may be temporarily housed while receiving settlement support and orientation to life in Canada.
<b>4 AT-RISK OF HOMELESSNESS</b> Although not technically homeless, this includes individuals or families whose current housing situations are dangerously lacking security or stability, and so are considered <b>to be at-risk of homelessness</b> . They are living in housing that is intended for permanent human habitation, and could potentially be permanent (as opposed to those who are provisionally accommodated). However, as a result of external hardship, poverty, personal crisis, discrimination, a lack of other available and affordable housing, and / or the inappropriateness of their current housing (which may be overcrowded or does not meet public health and safety standards) residents may be "at risk" of homelessness.	<b>4.1 People at imminent risk of homelessness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Those whose employment is precarious</li> <li>Those experiencing sudden unemployment</li> <li>Households facing eviction</li> <li>Housing with transitional supports about to be discontinued</li> <li>People with severe and persistent mental illness, active addictions, substance use, and / or behavioural issues</li> <li>Breakdown in family relations</li> <li>People facing, or living in direct fear, of violence / abuse</li> </ul>
	<b>4.2 Individuals and families who are precariously housed</b>	Those who face challenges that may or may not leave them homeless in the immediate or near future. CMHC defines a household as being in <b>core housing need</b> if its housing: "falls below at least one of the <b>adequacy, affordability</b> or <b>suitability</b> standards and would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable (meets all three housing standards)."

For a more detailed typology of the Canadian Definition of Homelessness, go to: [www.homelesshub.ca/CHRNhomelessdefinition](http://www.homelesshub.ca/CHRNhomelessdefinition)

## Appendix 2 - 2014 National Count Survey Questions

Sep. 22, 2014

### ***Street & Emergency Shelter Survey Tally Sheet***

Team Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Zone/Shelter: \_\_\_\_\_ Interviewer Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Number Approached	Already participated in Count	Ineligible to participate	Agreed to Participate	Refused to Participate
1.	X			
2.				X
3.	Etc.			

### ***Screening Questions***

1. Have you answered this survey with a person with this yellow button (or other identification)?
  - Yes (end survey and record in tally sheet)
  - No (go to Script and next question)
  
2. Do you have a permanent residence that you can return to tonight?
  - Yes (end survey and record in tally sheet)
  - No (go to next question)
  
3. Option A: Street Survey Only

Where are you staying tonight?

- Hotel
- Public spaces such as sidewalks or bus shelters
- Vacant buildings
- Cars or other vehicles
- Garages, attics, closets or buildings not designed for habitation
- Makeshift shelter or tent in a park, parkland, forest or other public land
- Makeshift shelter or tent on private property
- Emergency Shelter, Domestic violence shelter, Transitional Housing (end survey and record in tally sheet)
- Hospital, jail, prison, remand centre (end survey and record in tally sheet)
- Own apartment/house (end survey and record in tally sheet)
- Someone else's place (end survey and record in tally sheet)
- Declined to answer (end survey and record in tally sheet)

#### Option B: Emergency Shelter Survey Only

Are you staying in this emergency shelter tonight?

- Yes (go to next question)
- No (end survey and record in tally sheet)

4. Do you give consent to participate in this survey?
- Yes (go to next question)
  - No (end survey and record in tally sheet)

**Mandatory Data Set**

**Gender**

5. Which of the following do you identify with? (select all that apply)
- Female
  - Male
  - Transgender/Transsexual
  - Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
  - No answer

**Age**

6. How old are you/what is your year of birth?
- \_\_\_\_\_ years **OR** \_\_\_\_\_ year of birth
  - Don't know
  - Declined to answer

**Aboriginal**

7. Would you identify as being Aboriginal, including First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit?
- Yes
  - No
  - Don't know
  - Declined to answer

**Migration**

- 8.1. How long have you been in Canada?
- Born in Canada
  - \_\_\_\_\_ # years or \_\_\_\_\_ # months
  - Don't know
  - Declined to answer
- 8.2. How long have you been in \_\_\_\_\_ (community name)?
- Born here
  - \_\_\_\_\_ # months or \_\_\_\_\_ # years
  - Don't know
  - Declined to answer

**Homelessness History**

- 9.1. How long have you been homeless most recently?
- \_\_\_\_\_ # years or \_\_\_\_\_ # months or \_\_\_\_\_ # days

- Don't know
- Declined to answer

9.2. How many different times have you been homeless in the past 3 years?

- First time homeless
- If more than one, how many times? \_\_\_\_\_ # times
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

If more than one time homeless, but can't recall probe for:

- 1-3 times
- 4-10 times
- 10+ times
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

### **Veteran Status**

10. Have you ever had any military service in the Canadian Forces?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

### ***Optional Data Set***

#### **Aboriginal**

7.2. If you self-identify as Aboriginal, which group do you belong to?

- First Nations (Status)
- First Nations (Non-Status)
- Métis
- Inuit
- Other (specify)
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

7.3. What Aboriginal community are you from?

- \_\_\_\_\_ (community/reserve name)
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

#### **Migration**

8.3. If you are new to the community, where were you living prior to coming here?

- \_\_\_\_\_ (community name, province/territory) or \_\_\_\_\_ (country)
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

8.4. What is your country of origin/birth?

- \_\_\_\_\_ (country name)
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

8.5. If not born in Canada - are you a:

- Canadian Citizen
- Permanent Resident
- Refugee Claimant
- Temporary Foreign Worker
- International student
- Other – please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

8.6. If you are a Permanent Resident, did you come as a refugee?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

### **Homelessness History**

9.3. How old were you when you first became homeless in your life?

- \_\_\_\_ (age)
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

### **Veteran Status**

10.2. How long ago did you serve?

- \_\_\_\_\_ (months) \_\_\_\_\_ (years)
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

### ***Additional Questions***

### **Family**

11.1. What family members are with you today?

- None
- Parent(s)
- Spouse/partner
- Sibling(s)
- Child(ren)
- Other (Specify)
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

11.2. Do you have dependents (children) who are staying in the same place as you tonight?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

11.3. If yes, how many are under 18?

- \_\_\_\_\_ (# of children under 18)
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

11.4. If number of dependents questions was answered, clarify: have these dependents have been counted in this survey already?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

### **Income**

12. Where do you get your money from?

- Welfare/income assistance
- Disability benefit
- Employment Insurance
- OAS/GIS
- Full time employment
- Part time or casual employment
- Panhandling
- Binning/bottle collecting
- Money from family/friends
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- No income
- Declined to answer

### **Education**

13. What is the highest level of education you completed?

- Primary school
- Secondary school
- Postsecondary
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

### **Sexual Orientation**

14. Do you identify as part of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Two-Spirited or Queer, community?

- Yes

- No
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

### Health Conditions

15. Do you have any of the following :

15.1. Medical condition

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

15.2. Physical disability

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

15.3. Addiction

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

15.4. Mental illness

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

15.5. Brain Injury

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

15.6. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

15.7. Pregnant

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

- Declined to answer

### System Interactions

16.1. In the past year (12 months), how many:

- \_\_\_\_\_times have you been hospitalized
- \_\_\_\_\_days in total have you spent hospitalized
  
- \_\_\_\_\_times have you utilized Emergency Medical Service
- \_\_\_\_\_times have you been to a hospital Emergency Room
  
- \_\_\_\_\_times have you had interactions with the police
  
- \_\_\_\_\_times have you been to jail
- \_\_\_\_\_days in total have you spent in jail
  
- \_\_\_\_\_times have you been to prison
- \_\_\_\_\_days in total have you spent in prison

16.2. Have you ever been in foster care and/or group home?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

16.3. Do you have child intervention status?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

### Barriers

17. What do you think is keeping you from finding a place of your own?

- Low income
- No income assistance
- Rents too high
- Poor housing conditions
- Family breakdown/conflict
- Domestic violence
- Health/disability issues
- Mental health issues
- Addiction
- Criminal history
- Pets
- Children
- Discrimination
- Don't want housing

- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

**Rehousing**

18.1. Do you want to get into permanent housing?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

18.2. What would help you find permanent, stable housing?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- Don't know
- Declined to answer

## Appendix 3 – Survey Differences

The following chart summarizes key survey differences. Most were wording changes, with moderate impact. High impact is attributed to changes that would impact the population being included or

	Medicine Hat	Grande Prairie	Red Deer	Lethbridge	Wood Buffalo	Calgary	Edmonton
<b>Mandatory Data Elements</b>	Screening	None	Screening Veterans	None	Screening Age Ethnicity Children Migration Immigration Homelessness patterns	None	Screening Gender Veteran Status
<b>Impact on Comparability</b>	3	n/a	1	n/a	3	n/a	3
1-low; 2- moderate; 3-high							

excluded in the survey. Questions which were changed are listed per community.

### Medicine Hat

Do you have a permanent residence that you stayed at last night where you can return to (including rent or own residence, roommate, college residence, have a residence in another community but temporarily in Medicine Hat)? Yes (end survey now) ; no

### Edmonton

Do you have a permanent residence that you stayed at or could have stayed at last night?

Which of the following do you identify with? Male Female Transgender/Transsexual – No Other category

Have you ever had any military services in Canadian Forces?

### Red Deer

Do you have a permanent place to live? yes; no

Are you a former member of the Canadian Armed Forces? Yes; No; Declined to answer

### Wood Buffalo

Do you have a permanent residence to return to tonight or does your employer provide you with permanent housing? If yes, end interview. If no, complete questionnaire.

Where are you staying tonight? 1- Public space/park/forests; 2- Vacant buildings; 3- Buildings not for habitation; 4- Emergency shelters; 5- Hospital/jail; 6- someone else's place or temporary accommodation

Age reported in Ranges: 0-16 yrs; 17-30 yrs; 31-54 yrs; 55-64 yrs; 65+ yrs

Ethnicity was observed: Aboriginal, Caucasian, Other, No Response

Do you have any children age 16 or younger who will be staying with you tonight? How many?

How long have you lived in Fort McMurray? 0-6 mns 6 mns- 2 yrs; 2+ yrs; 5+ yrs; No response

How long have you lived in Canada? 0-6 mns 6 mns- 2 yrs; 2+ yrs; 5+ yrs; No response

How long have you been homeless recently? 0-6 mns 6 mns- 2 yrs; 2+ yrs; 5+ yrs; No response

## Appendix 4 – Data Sources for Demographic Comparisons with General Population

### Statistics Canada

Statistics Canada (2013) NHS Focus on Geography Series – Red Deer, CA. Retrieved from:  
<http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/fogs-spg/Pages/FOG.cfm?lang=E&level=3&GeoCode=830>

Statistics Canada (2014) NHS Profile, Red Deer, CA, 2011. Retrieved from: <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CMA&Code1=830&Data=Count&SearchText=Red%20Deer&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&A1=Mobility&B1=All&Custom=&TABID=1>

Statistics Canada (2014) NHS Profile, Grande Prairie, CA, 2011. Retrieved from: <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CMA&Code1=850&Data=Count&SearchText=Grande%20Prairie&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&A1=All&B1=All&TABID=1>

Statistics Canada (2013) NHS Focus on Geography Series – Grande Prairie, CA. Retrieved from:  
<http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/fogs-spg/Pages/FOG.cfm?lang=E&level=4&GeoCode=4819012>

Statistics Canada (2014) NHS Profile, Lethbridge, CA, 2011. Retrieved from: <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CMA&Code1=810&Data=Count&SearchText=Lethbridge&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&A1=Mobility&B1=All&Custom=&TABID=1>

Statistics Canada (2013) NHS Focus on Geography Series - Medicine Hat, CA. Retrieved from:  
<http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/fogs-spg/Pages/FOG.cfm?lang=E&level=3&GeoCode=805>

Statistics Canada (2014) NHS Profile, Medicine Hat, CA, 2011. Retrieved from: <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CMA&Code1=805&Data=Count&SearchText=Medicine%20Hat&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&A1=All&B1=All&TABID=1>

Statistics Canada (2014) NHS Profile, Edmonton, CMA, 2011. Retrieved from: <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CMA&Code1=835&Data=Count&SearchText=Edmonton&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&A1=Mobility&B1=All&Custom=&TABID=1>

Statistics Canada (2013) NHS Focus on Geography Series – Edmonton CMA. Retrieved from:  
<http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/fogs-spg/Pages/FOG.cfm?lang=E&level=3&GeoCode=835>

Statistics Canada (2014) NHS Profile, Calgary, CMA, 2011. Retrieved from: <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CMA&Code1=825&Data=Count&SearchText=Calgary&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&A1=All&B1=All&GeoLevel=PR&GeoCode=825&TABID=1>

Statistics Canada (2013) NHS Focus on Geography Series – Calgary. Retrieved from:  
<http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/fogs-spg/Pages/FOG.cfm?lang=E&level=3&GeoCode=825>

## Appendix 5 – Changes in Local Counts

The following table outlines the changes shown in the 2014 count compared to previous counts. It is important to note that considerable changes in methodology occurred at the community level, which challenges comparability over time.

At the time of the writing of this report, there was inadequate information from participating communities to provide a complete assessment of comparability to previous local counts. Each community is encouraged to thoroughly assess comparability of the 2014 count to previous counts in their local reports with respect to issues including, but not limited to:

- Timing (date/time of day)
- Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria
- Survey/Admin/Observed methods
- New facilities/systems included/excluded

<b>Community</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Summary</b>
Lethbridge	Decrease	Decrease of 37% compared to the 2013 count. Decrease of 74% compared to the 2008 count.
Medicine Hat	N/A	As this was the first ever Point-in-Time survey for Medicine Hat, ongoing data collection will enable comparisons year over year moving forward.
Grande Prairie	Increase	Increase of 36% compared to the 2008 count.
Red Deer	Decrease	Decrease of 51% compared to the 2012 count.
Wood Buffalo	Decrease	Decrease of 10% compared to the 2012 count.
Calgary	Stable	Increase of 0.6% compared to the January 2014 count. Decrease of 1.3% compared to the 2008 count.
Edmonton	Recent Increase; Overall Decrease	Increase of 6% compared to the 2012 count. Decrease of 25% compared to the 2008 count