



Middlesex County CoC Homeless Assessment Report

2014

I. Introduction

In 2012, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development released the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Interim rules. These interim regulations require a high level of planning and coordination among all Continuums of Care (CoCs) throughout the Country. As with any planning process, data analysis of the needs and outcomes of the current system is essential to facilitate meaningful planning.

In order to assist the Continuums of Care throughout New Jersey with this data analysis, this report uses information from the New Jersey Homeless Information System (HMIS) to provide a snapshot of the characteristics of homeless households in the Middlesex County CoC. This report can serve as the foundation of a more in depth review of the population and its needs. Communities in New Jersey are well positioned to move towards data driven planning with the wealth of information available through HMIS.

II. Data Source

This Homeless Assessment Report for Middlesex County CoC analyzed data from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) administered by Middlesex County. Middlesex County utilizes Bowman Systems to manage their HMIS system. The projects included in this report were all Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing and Safe Haven projects (if available in the community) that were classified as “Homeless Only”.

The Homeless Assessment Report is based on information about unduplicated homeless families and individuals who used available emergency shelter, transitional housing and safe haven projects during the yearlong reporting period January 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014, as reported in HMIS.

For purposes of this report, families included any households that presented together at the HMIS participating project and would choose to be permanently housed together if that was an option. This can include, households with adults and children under the age of 18, households made of all adults, or unaccompanied youth (under age 18) that present together.

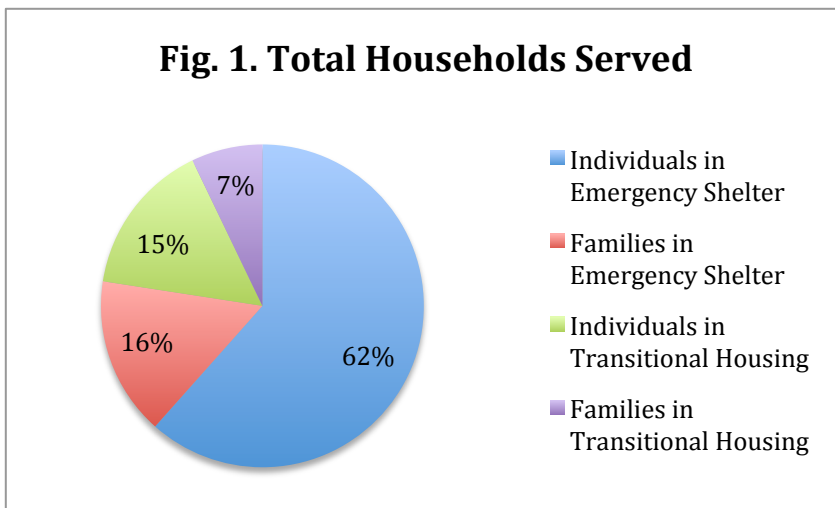
III. Findings for Total Population Served

Key Findings:

- A total of 687 households were served in HMIS participating emergency shelters and transitional housing projects during the January 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014 period
- There were 76 households identified as chronically homeless during this reporting period
- 31% of all adults served either as individuals or as part of a family identified having a disabling condition
- 49% of the total population served was under age 30
- 35% of households moved on to permanent destinations after discharge from the projects

Total Homeless

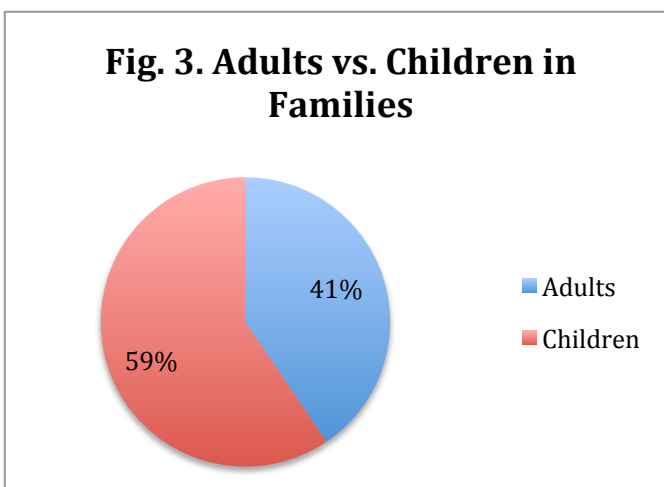
Population. A total of 687 households composed of 999 persons were housed in Middlesex County CoC HMIS participating emergency shelters or transitional housing projects during the January 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014 reporting period. This is a 4% increase in total households, but a 2% decrease in total persons served from 2013. Out of the households served in 2014, the majority,



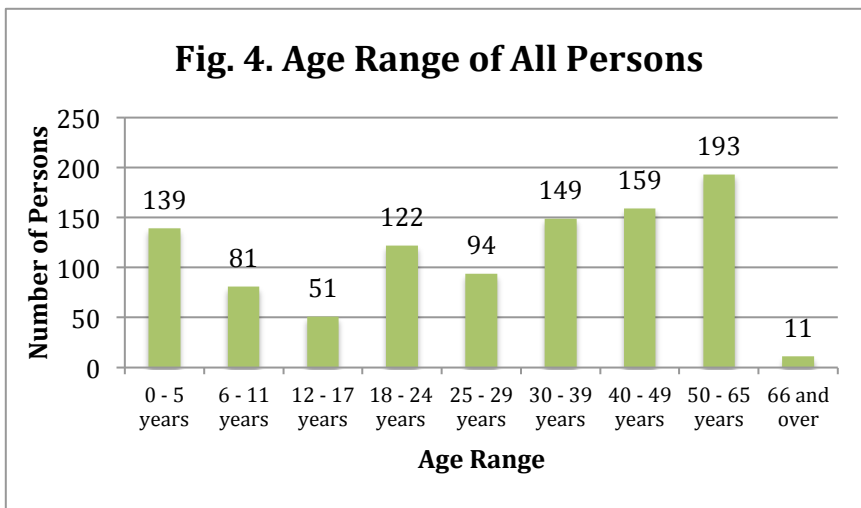
77% (529) were individuals, while the remaining 23% (158 households) were families. As shown in Figure 1, the most served population was individuals in emergency shelter, which made up 62% of the total population served. The 999 persons served throughout Middlesex County HMIS projects made up 4% of New Jersey’s total homeless population served in HMIS projects in 2014.

	Middlesex County	New Jersey
Total Persons Served	999	25,327
Emergency Shelter	753	20,800
Individuals	423	14,143
Families	327	6,657
Transitional Housing	249	4,343
Individuals	106	2,256
Families	143	2,087

Family Composition. Of the 158 family households served throughout Middlesex County in 2014, 150 (95%) were households with adults and children under 18, the remaining 8 were adult only households. As shown in Figure 3, children represented 59% of the persons included in adult and children families. The average size of a homeless family in 2014 was 3 and the average age of a child served between the two project types was 6 years old.



Demographics. Of the total homeless population that was served in the Middlesex CoC during 2014, the largest percent, 27%, of persons were children under age 18, with 271 aged between 0 and 17. As Figure 4 shows, the next highest age range served was persons between 18 and 29 (22%), showing that nearly 50% of the population served was under the age of 30.

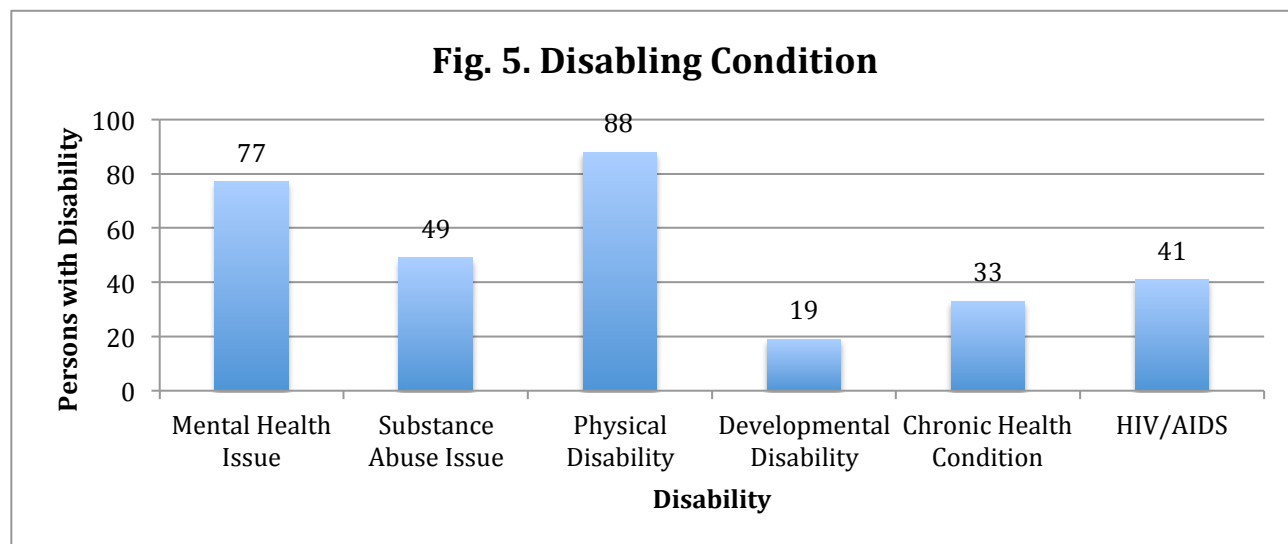


Similar to the 2013 numbers, more than half (60%) of the homeless persons served in Middlesex CoC HMIS participating projects were male, with women representing 40% of the population.

In addition, 48% of the homeless persons served during 2014 identified their race as Black or African American, making that the largest racial subgroup. The next largest was White (46%), followed by Multi-Racial with 4%. With regards to ethnicity, 28% identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino.

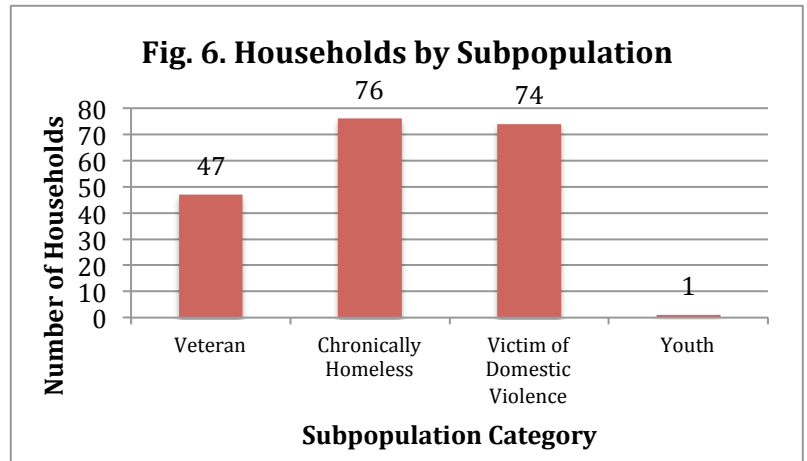
Disabling Conditions. Among all persons served throughout Middlesex County’s HMIS emergency shelter and transitional housing projects, 24% identified having a disabling condition, this number includes 31% of adults and 6% of children.

Among disabled adults, 37% reported a physical disability this the most prevalent disability; representing 12% of the total adult homeless population. 34% of disabled adults also reported a mental health issue. Among disabled children, 63% reported a developmental disability. 25% of disabled children also reported a physical disability.



Subpopulation Characteristics.

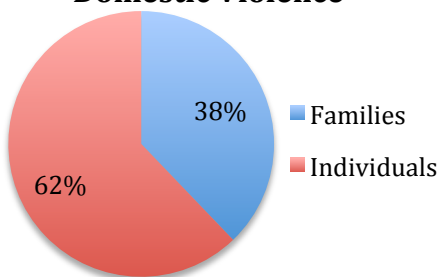
In its plan, *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) has prioritized ending youth, veteran and chronic homelessness across the Country. In 2014, Middlesex CoC served 76 households that were identified as chronically homeless households, a decrease of 13 chronically homeless households from 2013. 55% of the chronic households served were served in emergency shelters (4 were families). The remaining 45% were individuals and families (5) in transitional housing projects.



Youth only households, households without someone over age 18, represented less than 1% of the total households served throughout Middlesex HMIS projects. The one individual youth that was served was served in an emergency shelter project.

As far as veterans served, Middlesex CoC served a total of 47 veterans throughout 2014. 91% of the veterans served were individuals and only 6% were female. 60% of the veterans served were served in emergency shelter projects. 21% of veterans reported having some kind of disability, with the most common disability reported being physical disability with 60% of veterans.

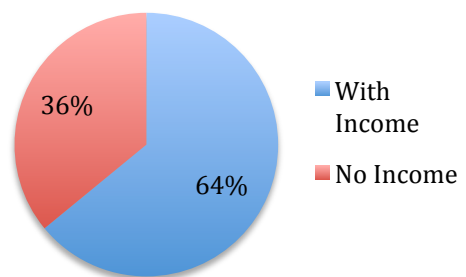
Fig. 7. Household Type Among Victims of Domestic Violence



In addition to the chronic, youth and veteran populations, there were 74 homeless households that reported having a victim of domestic violence. 62% of these households were individuals, while the remaining 28 were families. The majority of the domestic violence victims (54%) were served in emergency shelters. As a note, while there are victims of domestic violence being served in HMIS participating agencies, due to federal regulations, Domestic Violence specific projects are not able to enter data into HMIS, so the number of victims served in those projects are not included in this report.

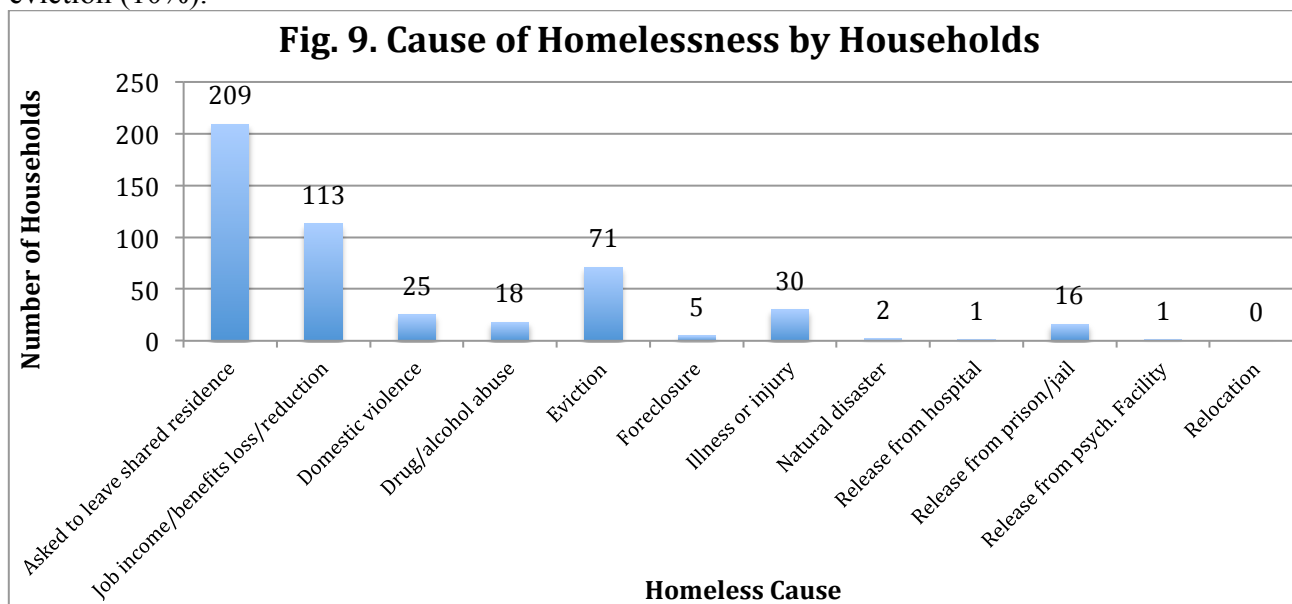
Income and Benefits. Among all homeless households served in emergency shelter or transitional housing projects during 2014, 36% had no source of income, while 27% reported receiving some form of earned income. The most common sources of cash income among households after earned income were SSI (21%) and general assistance (11%). The average monthly income for households in emergency shelter was \$433, while it was \$763 for households served in transitional housing projects.

Fig. 8. Percentage of Households with Income



While 36% of households had no source of income, 48% of households were not receiving some kind of non-cash benefit. Food Stamps was the top reported non-cash benefit, which was reported by 41% of the households. Another 31% of households were connected to Medicaid benefits.

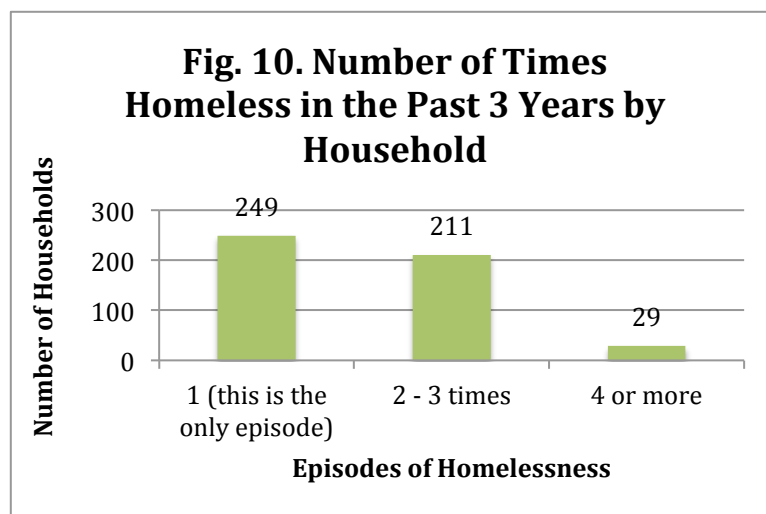
Cause of Homelessness and Residence Prior to Project Entry. When asked what the primary factor was that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more households attributed their homelessness to being asked to leave a shared residence (30%) than any other cause. As Figure 9 shows, the next most common factors were job income or benefits loss or reduction (16%) and eviction (10%).



These causes of homelessness coincide with the common responses for residence prior to project entry with 42% of households staying or living with family or friends prior to project entry. The next most common response was rental by client (17%) followed by emergency shelter (13%).

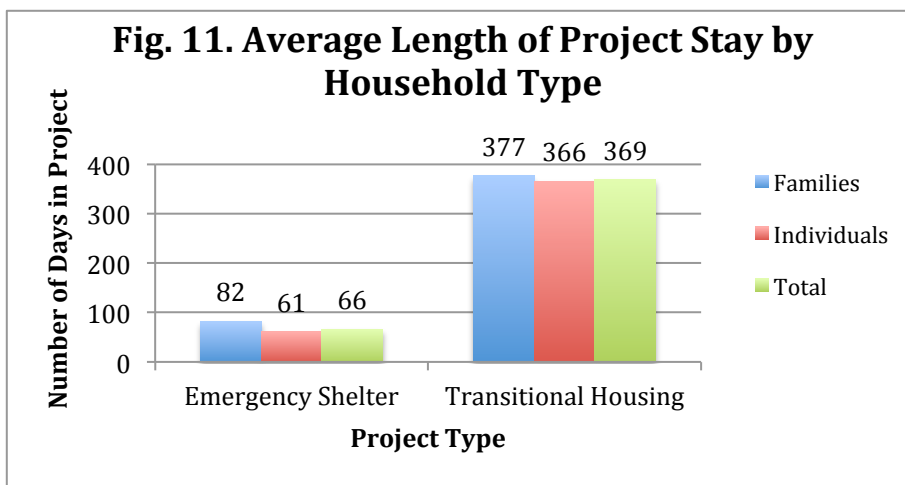
Length of Stay at Prior Residence and Episodes of Homelessness.

42% of households served during 2014 had resided in their last residence for one year or longer before entering the emergency shelter or transitional housing project. Another 25% were in their prior residence for more than 3 months but less than one year. In addition, only 4% of households experienced 4 or more episodes of homelessness in the last 3 years, while most households (36%) were experiencing their first episode of homelessness, as seen in Figure 10.

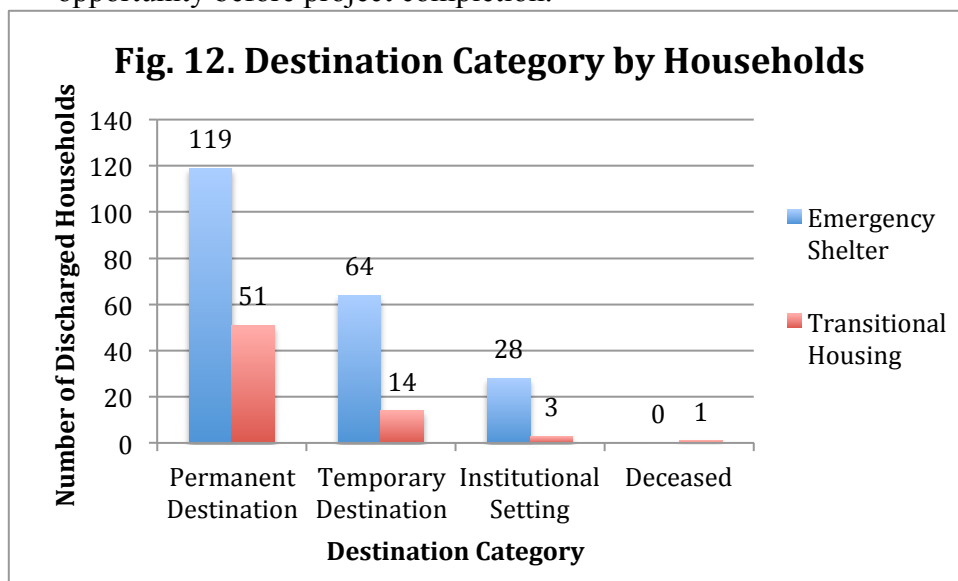


Average Length of Project Stay.

When looking at total length of project stay, individuals seemed to have shorter project stays than families in both emergency shelter and transitional housing projects. When comparing the average lengths of stay in 2014 to those of 2013, it was found that the average length of stay for emergency shelter stayed the same at 66 days for both 2013 and 2014, but increased by 29 days for transitional housing projects from 2013.



Reason and Destination at Discharge. A total of 492 households were discharged from emergency shelter and transitional housing projects during the 2014 reporting period. 31% of households were discharged upon project completion while another 16% left projects for a housing opportunity before project completion.



35% of households discharged in 2014 moved on to permanent destinations upon discharge from the project. A permanent destination includes a unit owned or rented by a client, permanent housing project, living with a family member or friend permanently, foster care, a long-term care facility or a hotel or motel the household pays for. The

most common permanent destination was rental by client with 26% of total households moving into a rental upon discharge. This rental could be with or without a subsidy. 16% of households moved on to a temporary destination at discharge, which could include an emergency shelter, hotel or motel paid for by an agency, place not meant for habitation, staying with a family member or friend temporarily, safe haven, or transitional housing for homeless persons. The most common form of temporary housing as a destination was staying with family or friends temporarily, which involved 8% of the total households. An institutional destination, which was the destination of 6% of households, includes hospitals (psychiatric or non-psychiatric), a halfway house, jail or prison, or a substance abuse treatment facility. Jail or prison was the most common institutional destination reported with 3% of the total discharges.

Appendix A: HMIS Projects Included in Report

I. Emergency Shelter Projects

Agency	Project Name
Catholic Charities	CCDOM – Overflow Rotating Shelter
	CCDOM – Ozanam Family Shelter
	CCDOM Ozanam Inn
FISH	FISH – Hospitality Program
Salvation Army	SAPA – Emergency Winter Shelter for Men

II. Transitional Housing Projects

Agency	Project Name
Catholic Charities	CCDOM – Naomi’s Way
	CCDOM – State Street THP
MIPH	MIPH – Amandla Crossing
	MIPH – Imani Park
	MIPH – Powers
Salvation Army	Care House