Greater Minnesota Project Homeless Connect

Summary of guests served in 2007

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Introduction

This brief report summarizes information about the guests served at eight different Project Homeless Connect events held in Minnesota between August and November 2007. Overall, the events served:

- 527 households
- 930 individuals
- 226 children age 17 or younger
- 32 unaccompanied youth age 16-21

The events were held at the following locations and dates and served the following number of guests:

CoC	County	City	Date of Event	# of Households Served	# of Individuals Served
Northeast	Aitkin	Aitkin	10/11/2007	130	179
Central	Kanabec	Mora	10/25/2007	68	122
Central	Isanti	Cambridge	10/25/2007	64	104
Central	Mille Lacs	Milaca	10/25/2007	72	151
Central	Pine	Hinckley	10/25/2007	83	172
Central	Chisago	Lindstrom	10/30/2007	9	15
Southeast	Rice	Faribault	11/14/2007	38	79
West Central	Clay	Moorhead	8/1/2007	63	108
				527	930

1. Number of guests served by event

After a discussion of data collection methods this report includes a series of tables summarizing characteristics of guests served at Project Homeless Connect, including: basic demographics, living situation, income and sources of assistance, services sought, and a de-duplication of guests served at Project Homeless Connect with records of persons known to be previously served by agencies in Minnesota who serve those experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness.

Methods

The data reported below were collected on paper by volunteer intake workers on the day of the event, using the form found in the Appendix. The data were later entered into Minnesota's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) by a team of trained data entry volunteers. Minnesota's HMIS is a statewide database that includes client-level data from many agencies that serve people experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homelessness.¹

Project Homeless Connect guests received consent forms and were recorded as "anonymous" if they preferred to not have personally identifiable information entered into the HMIS. As a result, 23 of the 527 households served (4%) were entered without the ability to run matches in the HMIS database to see whether they have prior service records, or to see whether they will be served elsewhere in the near future. The clients who agreed to be entered with identifiable information were entered as "unnamed clients." That is, their names were only held temporarily by the database. Upon entering the client name in the initial data entry screen, the database automatically generated a unique identifier comprised of parts of the name, date of birth, and gender. The database then discarded the name. The creation of the unique identifier, however, enabled Wilder Research to match Project Homeless Connect guests with those served by other programs participating in Minnesota's HMIS.

For more information, see <u>www.hmismn.org</u>

Comparisons between Project Homeless Connect events in Greater Minnesota

The Greater Minnesota Project Homeless Connect events held in 2007 served 930 individuals. Two groups worthy of some comparison are those served in the more rural Central and Southeast Continuum of Care regions with those served in the more urban event in Moorhead in the West Central Continuum of Care. The two groups attracted somewhat different guests demographically. The average guest served at the events held in Central and Southeast Minnesota was a white female at 37 years of age who was a single parent, and not homeless. At the event held in Moorhead in West Central Minnesota, the average guest was a white male at 39 years of age. The typical Moorhead guest did not have any children and reported experiencing multiple episodes of homelessness but not meeting the definition of long-term homelessness.²

The proportion of guests who identified as not homeless differed between the events held in Central and Southeast Minnesota and the event held in Moorhead. In Moorhead, a third of guests identified as not currently homeless, with the other two-thirds identifying as longterm homeless or multiple times homeless. In Central and Southeast Minnesota, threefourths of guests identified as not currently homeless, while the other fourth identified as homeless. No guests at the Central and Southeast Minnesota reported experiencing their first episode of homelessness; the quarter of guests identifying as homelessness reported experiencing either multiple episodes of homelessness or long-term homelessness.

More guests in Central and Southeast Minnesota reported being employed in the last month (23% in Moorhead compared to 37% in Central and Southeast Minnesota), but overall, the populations were similar in terms of income sources and use of public assistance.

The remainder of this report presents information on the guests served at the 2007 Greater Minnesota Project Homeless Connect events, including demographic characteristics, living situation, income and sources of assistance, and services sought by the guests of the event. The report concludes with a section showing how many guests of the event had been served at previous events or had prior contact with agencies participating in Minnesota's HMIS.

² The state of Minnesota defines an individual, unaccompanied youth or family as "Long-Term Homeless" if they are without a home for a year or more OR have had at least four (4) episodes of homelessness in the past three (3) years. Any period of institutionalization or incarceration (including transitional housing, prison/jail, treatment, hospitals, foster care, or refugee camps) is excluded when determining the length of time the household has been homeless).

Demographic characteristics

2. Households served, as presenting at event, by head of household – All Sites

	Male	Female	Total
In households without children			
Adults	84	98	182
Unaccompanied Youth (18-22)	6	1	7
Sub-total	90	99	189
In families with children			
Adults	55	258	313
Unaccompanied Youth (18-22)	5	20	25
Sub-total	60	278	338
TOTAL			527

3. Households served, as presenting at event, by head of household – Moorhead

	Male	Female	Total
In households without children			
Adults	19	13	32
Unaccompanied Youth (18-22)	3	0	3
Sub-total	22	13	35
In families with children			
Adults	7	21	28
Unaccompanied Youth (18-22)	0	0	0
Sub-total	7	21	28
TOTAL			63

3. Households served, as presenting at event, by head of household – Aitkin, Cambridge, Milaca, Mora, Faribault, Lindstrom, and Hinckley

	Male	Female	Total
In households without children			
Adults	65	85	150
Unaccompanied Youth (18-22)	3	1	4
Sub-total	68	86	154
In families with children			
Adults	48	258	285
Unaccompanied Youth (18-22)	5	20	25
Sub-total	53	278	310
TOTAL			464

4. Individuals served at event, by household type

	Number	Percentage
In households without children		
Adult singles	157	76%
Adults in couples (no dependent children)	31	15%
Unaccompanied youth, age 14-17	19	9%
Sub-total	207	100%
In families with children		
Parents or guardians	320	44%
Other adults or adult children present in household	177	24%
Children, age 13-17	41	6%
Children, age 5-12	100	14%
Children, age 0-4	85	12%
Sub-total	723	100%
TOTAL	930	

5. Age of household head

	Male	Female	Total
14-17	1 (<1%)	0	1 (<1%)
18-21	10 (7%)	21 (6%)	31 (6%)
22-24	11 (7%)	28 (7%)	39 (7%)
25-34	25 (17%)	95 (25%)	120 (23%)
35-44	21 (14%)	83 (22%)	104 (20%)
45-54	40 (27%)	79 (21%)	119 (23%)
55-64	31 (21%)	54 (14%)	85 (16%)
65-79	11 (7%)	13 (3%)	24 (5%)
80+	0	4 (1%)	4 (1%)
TOTAL	150 (100%)	377 (100%)	527 (100%)
Average age (mean)	44	41	42

6. Race and ethnicity of household head

	Number	Percentage
American Indian/Alaskan Native	40	8%
Asian	6	1%
Black/African American	16	3%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	8	2%
White	430	82%
Other	3	<1%
Other Multi-Racial	2	<1%
Missing	22	4%
TOTAL	527	100%
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	30	6%

* Up to two categories, including "other multi-racial," were recorded for each guest. The answers are reported here in a manner consistent with reporting used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

		Adults			
	Single males	Single females	Families with children	Youth	ALL*
	n=70	n=87	n=338	n=32	n=527
Has a disability of long duration	47%	49%	33%	11%	37%
Served in US military?	25%	2%	7%	0%	10%
Has been to a Project Homeless Connect event like this one before*	11%	17%	12%	5%	17%

7. Disability, veterans status, and previous experience with Project Homeless Connect*

* Previous experience according to self-report (not through de-duplicating with prior events).

Living situation

County	City	N	Not currently homeless	1 st time homeless	Multiple times homeless	Long term homeless	Unknown/ Missing
Aitkin	Aitkin	130	120 (77%)	-	2 (2%)	-	8 (6%)
Isanti	Cambridge	64	55 86%)	1 (2%)	4 (6%)	1 (2%)	3 (4%)
Clay	Moorhead	63	21 (33%)	-	29 (46%)	12 (19%)	1 (2%)
Mille Lacs	Milaca	72	60 (82%)	-	4 (6%)	4 (6%)	4 (6%)
Kanabec	Mora	68	56 (82%)	-	4 (6%)	1 (2%)	7 (10%)
Rice	Faribault	38	19 (50%)	-	7 (19%)	2 (5%)	10 (26%)
Chisago	Lindstrom	9	6 (67%)	-	2 (22%)	-	1 (11%)
Pine	Hinckley	83	68 (82%)	-	7 (8%)	1 (2%)	7 (8%)
All sites		527	405 (77%)	1 (<1%)	59 (11%)	21 (4%)	41 (8%)

8. Homeless status of household head – All sites

9. Living situation last night, by household

	Number	Percentage
Emergency shelter	23	4%
Transitional housing for homeless	3	<1%
Living with friends	21	4%
Rental house or apartment	162	31%
Living with family	48	9%
Place not meant for habitation	10	2%
Psychiatric hospital or facility	3	<1%
Substance abuse treatment center	4	<1%
Permanent housing for formerly homeless	2	<1%
Owned house or apartment	105	20%
Hotel or motel (without an emergency voucher)	3	<1%
Foster care/group home	8	2%
Hospital	2	<1%
Other (unspecified)	5	1%
Missing/don't know/refused	128	26%
TOTAL	527	100%

Income and sources of assistance

10. Household income sources last 30 days*

	Adults				
	Single males n=70	Single females n=87	Families with children n=338	Youth n=32	ALL n=527
General Assistance	21%	6%	9%	16%	10%
Employment**	24%	20%	41%	44%	33%
SSDI	23%	31%	14%	6%	18%
Social Security (other)	19%	37%	20%	0	22%
MFIP	3%	2%	17%	21%	13%
Contributions from others	4%	3%	9%	3%	6%
Other income sources*	1%	5%	19%	1%	6%
No income sources	10%	8%	18%	22%	16%

* Intake staff were encouraged to report all sources received by the household, from the list above. They also recorded other income sources, reported by the guest. The "other" sources reported included child support payments, pensions, unemployment benefits, and other miscellaneous sources.

** Includes temporary employment and day labor.

11. Other assistance currently received by household*

	Single males	Single females	Parents/ Guardians	Youth	ALL
	n=70	n=87	n=338	N=32	n=527
Medical assistance	41%	48%	65%	63%	59%
Food stamps	36%	43%	55%	44%	50%
Medicare	20%	40%	12%	9%	18%
Public housing	4%	9%	7%	6%	7%
Other rental assistance	1%	9%	10%	3%	8%
Section 8	7%	12%	10%	13%	10%
Veterans medical or other veterans benefits & services	11%	1%	3%	6%	4%

* Intake staff were encouraged to report all sources received by the household, from the list above.

Services sought

12. Main types of service sought by household*

	Single males	Adults Single females	Parents/ Guardians	Youth	ALL
	n=70	n=87	n=338	N=32	n=527
Housing	26%	15%	27%	48%	26%
Employment	20%	14%	24%	34%	22%
Dental Care	16%	15%	14%	14%	14%
Eye care	7%	7%	9%	11%	9%
Lacks an ID	20%	13%	12%	18%	14%
Wants help obtaining ID (of those lacking an ID)	10%	8%	10%	11%	9%
Haircut	9%	7%	13%	11%	11%
Education	7%	12%	16%	22%	13%
Legal assistance	6%	7%	10%	4%	9%
Social Security benefits	9%	7%	7%	11%	7%
Public Assistance	9%	8%	6%	16%	7%
Medical care (other)	6%	6%	6%	7%	6%
Voicemail	2%	0%	2%	0%	1%
Mental health	10%	8%	8%	3%	8%
Emergency shelter	6%	1%	3%	0%	3%
Veterans benefits	4%	2%	3%	4%	3%
Chemical health	3%	0%	1%	0%	1%

* Guests were asked what their top three services were from the list provided above. Some indicated more than three.

De-duplication with data in Minnesota's HMIS

One of the reasons Project Homeless Connect organizers wanted to enter data from the event into Minnesota's HMIS was to get a sense of how many of those served at the event were already involved with social service providers, particularly providers whose mission is to serve people experiencing homelessness. While Minnesota's HMIS remains imperfect for the task, there is an increasing number of organizations whose mission is to serve those experiencing homelessness that participate in HMIS. As of June 2007, the HMIS included 43 percent of shelter beds, 87 percent of transitional housing program beds, and 54 percent of permanent supportive housing beds in Minnesota. Entering the data into the HMIS enabled us to run matches against people served by providers participating in HMIS.

As discussed in the introduction, all guests who signed a consent form at Project Homeless Connect were entered as "unnamed clients" in the HMIS database. This means that while elements of the clients name were used in creating a unique identifier, the name was not permanently stored in the system. This procedure allows Wilder to unduplicate clients served in Project Homeless Connect with other records in the database, without permanently storing their names. The 23 guests who indicated a preference not to provide their name or other potentially identifying information at the event were entered anonymously, and it is not possible to match their records with others existing in the database. Setting aside the anonymous clients we found that:

75 of the 501 identifiable guests – or 15 percent – were served by an organization participating in Minnesota's HMIS prior to the event. Of the 75 identified, 35 (46%) identified as currently homeless.

Note that around 11 percent of all clients entered into Minnesota's HMIS are entered as anonymous, many of whom are clients of domestic violence or legal service providers. Thus, it is likely that the de-duplication here is a conservative estimate of the number of Greater Minnesota Project Homeless Connect guests actually served by agencies participating in Minnesota's HMIS. Also, it is important to reiterate that the 75 guests who were found to have existing records in the HMIS under-represent the total number who had previous contact with social service providers, even those whose specific mission is to serve those experiencing homelessness, since there are providers within each area that held an event who are not currently participating in Minnesota's HMIS. When broken down geographically, Moorhead had the highest number and percentage of guests who had been previously served by an HMIS-participating provider. In Moorhead, 57 percent of guests were found to be in HMIS previously, compared to 8 percent of guests at the events in Central and Southeast Minnesota. This could be due to the fact that West Central Minnesota has a much higher rate of participation in HMIS for emergency shelter and transitional housing beds (100% for each) compared to Central (73% for emergency and 80% for transitional) and Southeast (39% for emergency and 88% for transitional).

For example, 19 guests were served by organizations participating in Minnesota's HMIS (and entered with identifiable records into the HMIS) sometime between January 1 – March 30, 2008. These guests received various services within that time period which include emergency shelter, rent payment and rent deposit assistance, case management, and transportation assistance. Although we cannot say whether Project Homeless Connect directly resulted in these connections to services, we can see that several Project Homeless Connect guests who did not have identifiable records in HMIS prior to the events did receive services after attending one of the events.

Looking forward: Project Homeless Connect and Minnesota's HMIS

Since the Project Homeless Connect data are maintained in the statewide HMIS database it may be useful to conduct further outcomes analysis at some point. For example, to help assess whether the event had an impact on housing stability it would be helpful to know how many of the guests who were living on the streets or in homeless shelters are successfully placed in transitional and permanent supportive housing programs; or conversely, how many guests return to shelter or other emergency services. Analyses like these are enabled by the Homeless Management Information System, and should help inform future Project Homeless Connect events, as well as broader state and regional plans to end homelessness.

Appendix

Project Homeless Connect Intake Form

Project Homeless Connect Intake Form

Hi, My name is ______. Thanks for taking a few minutes to help us gather information for this event. This also gives me a chance to tell you about the services available today. We hope that your answers will help us to better understand what services are needed in the community and also to help us direct you to the services that you want today. This should take about 10 minutes. Also, please take a few minutes before you leave to fill out an exit survey.

Before we start filling out this form lets look through the list of services available to you today [READ THROUGH SERVICE LIST WITH THE PERSON/FAMILY AND CHECK ANY OFF THAT THE PERSON IS INTERESTED IN].

Now, I am going to ask a few questions about you (and your family). We hope that by answering these questions we will be able to better serve you today and in the future. You do not have to answer any of these questions if you do not want to.

What is your Name?:			ServicePt ID#			
FIRST	MI LAST	SUFFIX				
BIRTH DATE://						
GENDER: Female (H) Male (H) Transgender Unknown						
Do you consider yourself (PRIMARY RACE) (SECONDARY RACE (OPTIONAL/ IF OFFERED))						
American Indian or Alaskan Native						
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander		Native Hawaiian or Other Paci	fic Islander			
Black or African American		Black or African American				
☐ White		☐ White				
☐ Asian		☐ Asian				
Other Multi-Racial		Other Multi-Racial				
Other Unknown	n	□ Other	Unknown			
Are you Hispanic/Latino Not	Hispanic/Latino C] Unknown				
Are you part of a household/family?		☐ Yes (family/household)	□ No (single adult/youth)			
	Female Single Parent Male Single Parent	t D Foster Parent Non-Custodial Caregivers	☐ Grandparent(s) & Child ☐ Other			
How many dependent children do you have	total? (17 or young	er, including those not here)				
Are you HERE WITH OTHER HOUSEHOLD	MEMBERS – Num	ber with guest (NOT including gue	est)			
Adult males: Adult females:	Teens (13 -17	'): Children, 5-12yrs:	Children, 0-4yrs:			
EVER SERVED ON ACTIVE DUTY IN THE U.S. ARMED FORCES *NOTE If yes, please direct to veterans services area Yes * No Don't know Refused						
Do you have any type of disability that keeps you from working, shopping or other daily activities? (Physical or Mental) (If Yes) Do you expect it to last for years to come? (A DISABILITY OF LONG DURATION?)						
□ Yes (& long duration) □ No	Don't know	Refuse				
During the last month did you receive any income from						
No income	□ Yes □	No Don't know	Refused			
Employment	□ Yes □	No Don't know	Refused			
General Assistance	□ Yes □	No Don't know	Refused			
Social Security Disability (SSDI)	□ Yes □	No Don't know	Refused			
Social Security (incl. SSI, Retirement)	□ Yes □	No Don't know	Refused			
MFIP (MN Family Investment Program)	□ Yes □	No Don't know	Refused			
Contributions from other people	□ Yes □	No Don't know	Refused			
Any other source?						

Do you currently receive						
Food stamps?	☐ Yes	D No	🗖 Don't	know 🛛 Refused		
A Section 8 Housing Voucher (for rent)?	□ Yes	🗆 No	🗖 Don't	know 🛛 Refused		
Public housing?	□ Yes	🗆 No	🗖 Don't	know 🛛 Refused		
Any other type of rental assistance?	□ Yes	🗆 No	🗖 Don't	know 🛛 Refused		
Medical Assistance (or Medicaid or MA)	? 🛛 Yes	🗆 No	🗖 Don't	know 🛛 Refused		
Medicare?	□ Yes	🗆 No	🛛 Don't	know D Refused		
Veterans Medical assistance or services	? 🛛 Yes	🛛 No	🗖 Don't	know 🛛 Refused		
Are you currently Homeless?						
	Not currently homeles	SS				
□ YES	→ First time homeles	ss AND less that	n 1 year without	home		
			-	and NOT more than 4 times in 3 years		
	→ Long term: at lea	st 1 year OR at	least 4 times in t	he past 3 years		
WHERE DID YOU STAY LAST NIGHT?	—					
Emergency shelter	•	son, or juvenile f	•	Hotel/motel (without voucher)		
Transitional housing for homeless		nouse/apartment		Foster care/group home		
	Permanent housing for formerly homeless D house/condo/apartment that you own (includes living on the street/o					
□ Psychiatric hospital or facility □ Living with family				Don't know		
□ Substance abuse treatment center, incl detox □ Living with friends						
Hospital Other						
HOW LONG HAVE YOU STAYED THERE?	п.			4		
1 week or less			ths but less than	1 year		
 More than 1 week but less than 1 month 1 to 3 months 		year or longer				
		01150				
WHAT CITY WAS THAT IN? CHECK BOX IF Outside of Minnesota						
Have you ever been to a Project Homeless			e today?			
Yes No Don't know Did you receive services as a result of a pro-	Ref evious Proiect Home					
□ Yes □ No □ Refused Specify:						
Now I have a few questions about how we can help you. What are the top 3 things you would like help with today?						
Employment Yes	Social Security Be			al Care		
Education	Veteran's Benefits		,			
Legal assistance Yes	Public Assistance		,	cal Care (other)		
Housing Ves	Mental Health		,			
Emergency Shelter	Chemical Health		,			
Emergency Shelter Yes Chemical Health Yes Voice Mail Yes Other services (write in):						
Do you have a Minnesota picture ID?						
(IF NO) Would you like help getting a picture ID?						

We would like you to feel free to visit as many resources and providers as you choose today. I am happy to walk around with you, show you where things are, and help you find the services and resources you want. Would that be okay? IF NOT, LET CLIENT/FAMILY WALK AROUND ON THEIR OWN. IF THEY WANT TO WALK AROUND ON THEIR OWN, REMIND THEM TO PLEASE FILL OUT AN EXIT SURVEY AND PICK UP A BAGGED LUNCH, ALONG WITH A FEW OTHER ITEMS, BEFORE THEY LEAVE]