

**COMMUNITY PARTNER DESCRIPTION:**

The Affordable Housing and Homelessness Working Group is a multi-sectoral group consisting of members including the Ally Centre, Cape Breton Community Housing, Public Health of the NS Health Authority, Mental Health and Addictions, Cape Breton Police Service, the Community Entity, Cape Breton University, NSCC and New Dawn. The purpose Of AHHWG is to understand and act upon homelessness and affordable housing in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality, and we have been active since 2015.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

The Affordable Housing and Homelessness Working Group will conduct their third service-based count in the CBRM. In a service-based count, community partners (such as local food banks, libraries and youth-serving organizations) review their client files over a fixed, one-month period to determine how many people they have assisted who are experiencing homelessness. We have conducted two service-based counts to date (one in 2016 and one in 2018), with our third scheduled for the 2020/21 year. This timing is in keeping with the national Reaching Home approach Of conducting enumerations once every two years.

During the first two counts, the Public Health of the Nova Scotia Health Authority played a vital role in providing leadership for community data collection training, data verification, analysis and dissemination. However, due to issues related to COVID-19 the project team has had to seek other sources of support and looked to Cape Breton University (and CLARI) to provide that support.

**PROJECTED BENEFITS:**

These data are critical to understanding the scope and nature of homelessness in the CBRM; educating the public and decision-makers about local homelessness; developing local responses to addressing homelessness and securing funding for community-based services.