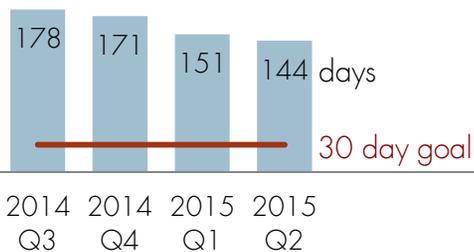# Opening Doors-CT HEARTH Data Dashboard   November 2015
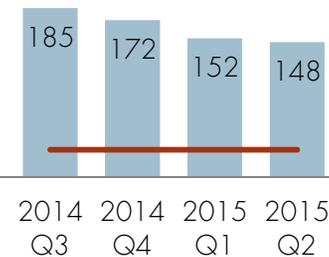
Data Source: CCEH VITALS II (includes statewide CT HMIS emergency shelter use data only)

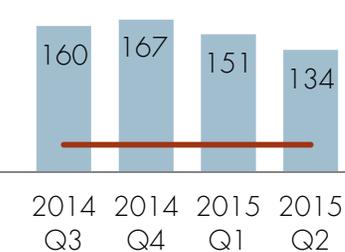## Length of Homelessness Episode (Average # Days)
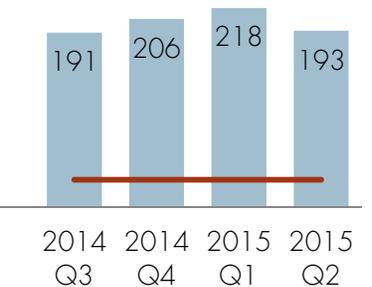
All Individuals
(3,813 people, 2015 Q2)

178	171	151	144 days
2014 Q3	2014 Q4	2015 Q1	2015 Q2

30 day goal

Individual Adults
(2,761 people, 2015 Q2)

185	172	152	148
2014 Q3	2014 Q4	2015 Q1	2015 Q2

Families
(1,010 people, 2015 Q2)

160	167	151	134
2014 Q3	2014 Q4	2015 Q1	2015 Q2

Chronically Homeless
(563 people, 2015 Q2)

191	206	218	193
2014 Q3	2014 Q4	2015 Q1	2015 Q2

Length of Time in Shelter (Average # Bednights)

All Individuals
(3,813 people, 2015 Q2)

156	154	137	126 bednights
2014 Q3	2014 Q4	2015 Q1	2015 Q2
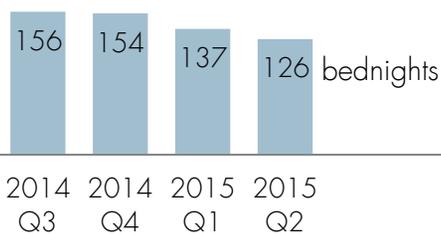
Individual Adults
(2,758 people, 2015 Q2)

158	152	135	126
2014 Q3	2014 Q4	2015 Q1	2015 Q2

Families
(1,013 people, 2015 Q2)

151	161	142	127
2014 Q3	2014 Q4	2015 Q1	2015 Q2
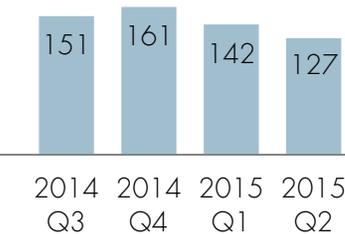
Chronically Homeless
(588 people, 2015 Q2)

157	176	184	149
2014 Q3	2014 Q4	2015 Q1	2015 Q2

First Episode of Homelessness (# episodes)   Repeat Episodes of Homelessness (# episodes)

	CY 2012	CY 2013	CY 2014	Trend 2012-14	Q1-Q2 2015	CY 2012	CY 2013	CY 2014	Trend 2012-14	Q1-Q2 2015
All Individuals	5,386	5,199	4,116		1,030	6,788	6,637	5,761		2,768
Individual Adult	3,479	3,148	2,593		541	5,771	5,449	4,871		2,287
Families	1,874	2,017	1,484		467	1,015	1,222	897		472
Chronic	1,029	863	607		27	2,539	2,485	1,823		409

About VITALS II

The data presented in this dashboard was pulled from the VITALS II (Valuable Information to Assist Local Systems) platform, administered by the CT Coalition to End Homelessness. VITALS II provides data on several key measures: time in shelter, time homeless, first time homeless and repeat homelessness. Metrics included in this dashboard are intended to reflect performance measures specified in the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009. Statewide data is provided in this dashboard.

VITALS II includes information only on individuals utilizing emergency shelter programs that input data into the CT Homelessness Management Information System. Data presented does not factor in utilization of other programs, such as transitional housing or homelessness outreach programs.

Full documentation on VITALS II is available here: https://apps.kjmbsolutions.net/cceh/helpdoc.pdf. For more information about VITALS II, contact Brian Roccapriore at broccapriore@cceh.org.

What time periods are covered in this dashboard?

For "Length of Homelessness Episode" and "Length of Time in Shelter," this data dashboard provides data by quarter for the last year available. Quarters are presented using the calendar year. For example, 2015 Q1 covers 1/1/15 to 3/31/15.

Data for "First Episode of Homelessness" and "Repeat Episodes of Homelessness" are presented by calendar year (January 1-December 31). Partial years are shown when full calendar year data is not available.

How is "Length of Time in Shelter" calculated?

"Length of Time in Shelter" is the average number of bed nights. In VITALS II, the measure used is "Time in Shelter." This measure is a simple count of bed nights, averaged across the state. State data includes a person's bed nights across all projects in the state.

The equation for "Time in Shelter" is:

average # of bed nights = total # of bed nights / # of people (client count)

How is "Length of Homelessness Episode" calculated?

While "Length of Time in Shelter" averages the bed nights for each separate shelter stay, "Length of Homelessness Episode" is the average # of days *per episode*. For this measure, an episode is determined by grouping together bed nights and bridging gaps if days out of shelter are less than 30 days between the days in shelter. In VITALS II, the measure is "Time Homeless."

What do the differences between "Length of Time in Shelter" and "Length of Homelessness Episode" mean in the reported data?

We have reproduced an explanatory diagram from the *VITALS II Help Document* to explain the difference in how these two measures calculate each person's time spent in shelter(s):

Person 123 has the following pattern in the selected time period:

5 Days in Shelter A	5 Days NOT in Shelter	20 Days in Shelter A

Length of Time in Shelter is summarized as:
- 2 shelter stays in the time period
- 25 bed nights in the time period

Length of Homelessness Episode is summarized as:
- 1 episode of homelessness in the time period
- 30 days homeless (not in shelter time is added since the period not in shelter is <=30 days between the instances of in shelter time)

How is "First Episode of Homelessness" calculated?

"First Episode of Homelessness" ("First Time Homeless" in VITALS II) measures the number of persons experiencing homelessness for the first time in the time period identified. A person is counted if their "First Date HMIS" falls within the reporting time-frame. This means that a person can only show up as first time homeless *once* across all time periods.

How can an individual be "chronically homeless" and still be counted in the "First Episode of Homelessness" measure?

As stated above, the "First Episode of Homelessness" measure looks at the date provided in the "First Date HMIS" field. To determine whether someone is likely chronic, information is pulled from other questions that individuals are asked upon entering shelter. It is possible for someone to indicate that they have experienced multiple episodes of homelessness while still having an entry in the "First Date HMIS" field within the time period selected. This may occur for multiple reasons – i.e., the individual has been unsheltered or has used programs or services not tracked through CT HMIS.

How is "Repeat Episodes of Homelessness" calculated?

"Repeat Episodes of Homelessness" ("Repeat Homelessness" in VITALS II) counts the # of persons who have experienced multiple shelter stays. A person is counted if their first shelter stay during the selected period is greater than the "First Date HMIS." It only counts the episode in the time period specified if the start date of the episode is in the time period specified.

An important note: data can be presented for different time units in VITALS II – by month, quarter or year. For "Repeat Episodes of Homelessness," a person can be counted multiple times over time depending upon the time unit selected for the data to be presented in – month, quarter or year – and the length of time selected. Again, an example from the *VITALS II Help Document* provides better insight into how this works:

Person ABC has the following pattern in the selected time period:

First HMIS Date: 3/1/12

Shelter stay: 3/1/12-3/15/12	NOT in Shelter	Shelter stay: 5/5/12-5/28/12	NOT in Shelter	Shelter stay: 11/7/12-11/8/12	NOT in Shelter	Shelter stay: 11/10/12-11/21/12

If we run the data to see "Repeat Episodes of Homelessness" for the time period of 1/1/2012-12/31/2012, then we will see Person ABC counted as a repeat homeless in the following ways:

Data run by MONTH
- once in May 2012
- once in November 2012

Data run by QUARTER
- once in 2012-Q2
- once in 2012-Q4

Data run by YEAR
- once in 2012

This dashboard presents data for repeat homelessness by calendar year. Because of this, "Repeat Homelessness" will appear lower than if it were run by month or quarter.

A further example: Person ABC in the above example had a shelter stay from 1/5/13 to 1/20/13 in addition to the stays shown above. If the data were run by year, s/he would be counted once in 2012 and once in 2013.

How are the populations presented in the dashboard defined?

Data from VITALS II is presented in the dashboard for various populations and household types:

- All Individuals: includes all individuals, adults and children, in households that have utilized emergency shelter through a provider that inputs data into CT HMIS.
- Individual Adults: includes all individuals in adult-only households that have utilized emergency shelter through a provider that inputs data into CT HMIS.
- Families: includes all individuals, adults and children, in adult-child households that have utilized emergency shelter through a provider that inputs data into CT HMIS.
- Chronically Homeless: includes all individuals that have utilized emergency shelter through a provider that inputs data into CT HMIS and are indicated to be chronically homeless utilizing the HUD 2010 HMIS data standards. The number of individuals indicated as chronically homeless under the 2010 data standards is approximately 55% higher than those indicated as chronically homeless under the 2014 data standards. Please note that it is not possible to use the HUD 2014 data standards to determine chronic homelessness for individuals whose records have not been updated since the 2014 data standards were implemented.

How was this data filtered in VITALS II?

In the "Choose Measure and Analysis Type" screen, the following options were chosen for each measure:

- Primary Analysis type = Compare organizations over time
- Organization type= State
- Time Units =
  - Quarter for "Time in Shelter" ("Length of Time in Shelter" in the dashboard) and "Time Homeless" ("Length of Homelessness Episode" in the dashboard)
  - Year for "First Time Homeless" ("First Episode of Homelessness" in the dashboard) and "Repeat Homelessness" ("Repeat Episodes of Homelessness" in the dashboard)

On "Choose Population of Interest by Narrowing Population" screen, the following options were selected:

- To get all individuals, no filters were selected
- Individual Adults: Household Type = Adults-Only Households
- Families: Household Type = Adult-Child Households
- Chronically Homeless: Chronic Homelessness Status = Yes

Last updated November 12, 2015