



PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT™

2017 PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT REPORT ON OUTCOMES

July 20th, 2017
Evergreen Middle School
7621 Beverly Ln. Everett, WA

This event was made possible largely in part by:
Employees Community Fund of Boeing Puget Sound

Also in partnership with the following key community partners:

Catholic Community Services
of Western Washington

City of Everett

Everett Public Schools

Everett Transit

Providence Regional Medical Center Everett

Snohomish County
Human Services Department

United Way of Snohomish County

plus...
over 90 other service providers

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What is Project Homeless Connect (PHC)?

Project Homeless Connect (PHC) is an annual one-day, one-stop-shop event designed to provide free and immediate services to individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness or at-risk of becoming homeless. This year's PHC was the 9th PHC in Snohomish County and was held at Evergreen Middle School on Thursday, July 20th, 2017.

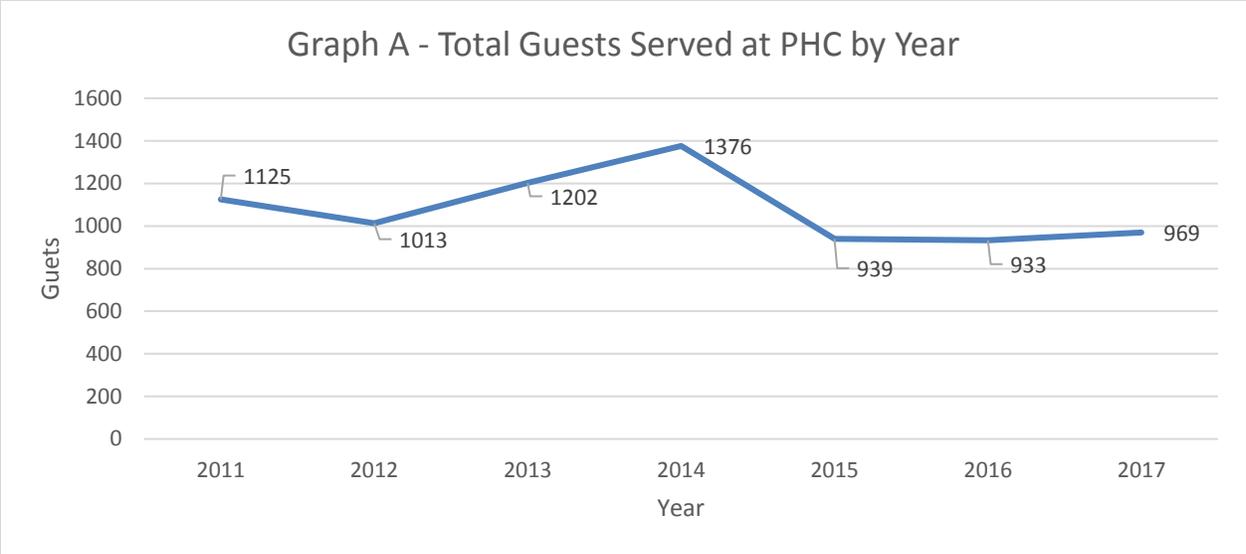
PHC is a coordinated effort between many different groups and has a Steering Committee comprised of the following organizations: Catholic Community Services of Western Washington, ChildStrive, the City of Everett, Providence Regional Medical Center Everett, the Snohomish County Human Services Department, and United Way of Snohomish County. The lead agency has shifted over the years and is currently led by United Way of Snohomish County. In addition to the major organizers mentioned, the event brought together 95 partners from multiple sectors, including health and human service agencies, public entities and private groups. Other key community partners included Everett Public Schools and Everett Transit.

Over the years, the event has continued to grow and serve homeless households as well as those at risk of being homeless in Snohomish County. Since its inception, the event has grown in capacity and the number of services offered has greatly expanded. This year's event provided 109 services including giveaways, hygiene opportunities, employment and educational resources, on-site assessments, public benefit sign-ups, haircuts and a free meal – just to name a few. With the continued support and sponsorship of the Employees Community Fund of Boeing Puget Sound over the years, the sustainability and quality of the event continues to grow in response to the many different needs of those who are experiencing homelessness or at-risk of being so.

Project Homeless Connects are the county's largest one-day events that brings together a multitude of various services in one location, with the mission of connecting guests to and improving access for guests to critical services. PHC is a national best practice model that strives to connect individuals and families to basic needs services such as clothing and food giveaways, transportation assistance and hygiene services. Bringing community resources together, in one location, improves access to services dramatically. PHC has proven to provide a substantial support step for guests that are experiencing homelessness or at-risk of becoming homeless. Not only are basic needs services free and provided on-site, but screening and assessments for long-term stability programs are also integrated into the service model to increase access to wrap-around and holistic services. In Snohomish County, PHC continues to be the largest one-day, community homeless outreach event.

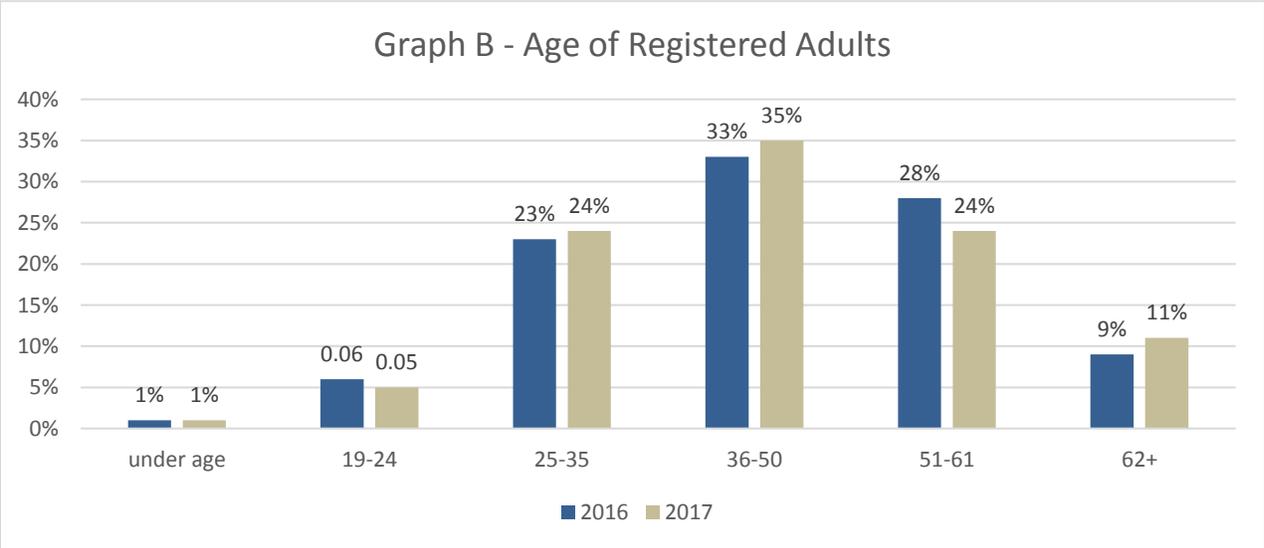
Who did we serve?

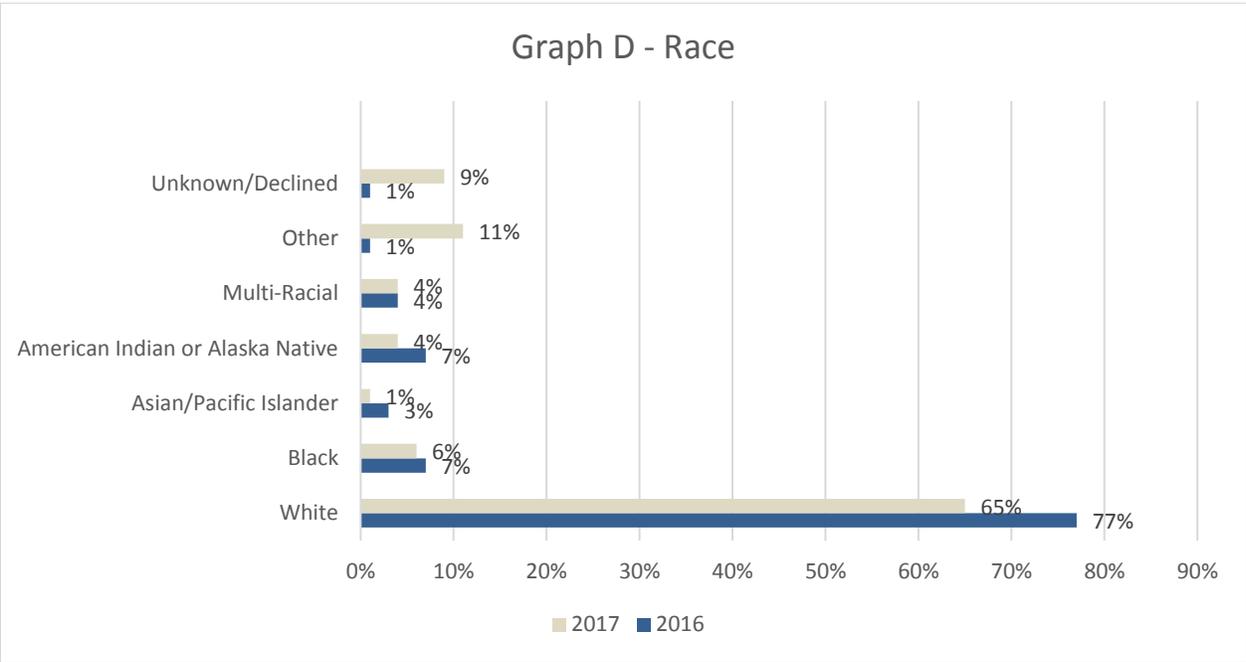
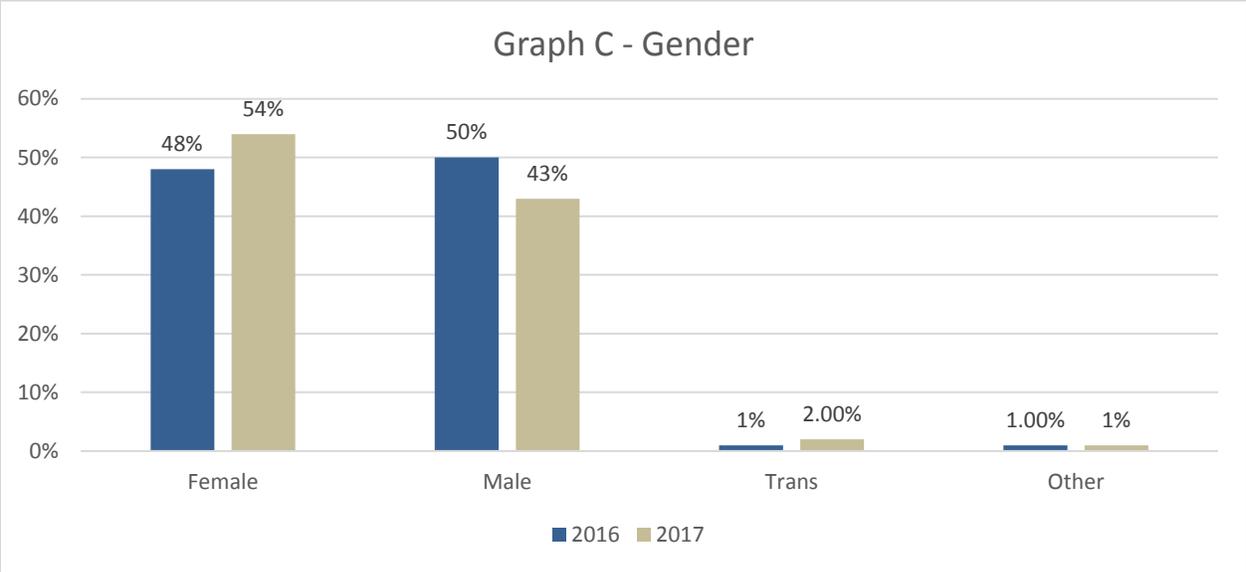
In total, 969 people were served at the 2017 PHC event. Graph A below, shows past PHC attendance. This year during the registration and intake process of entering the event, guests were taken through a survey by volunteers. Survey questions captured demographic data, circumstances for current homeless situation, and current living circumstances. When reading through the survey results please take note that while the intake survey provided an accurate count of attendees registered for the event, guests were given the option of declining to respond to specific survey questions.



Of those served – 241 were accompanying children under the age of 18, including 137 under the age of 8 years old. 17% of respondents were families – an increase of 4% from 2016. Graph B shows a breakdown of all adults which includes those that came individually and those that came with accompanying children (total registered adults = 728). The majority of registered adults reported they were between the ages of 25-61, with 11% of adults being over 62 years old.

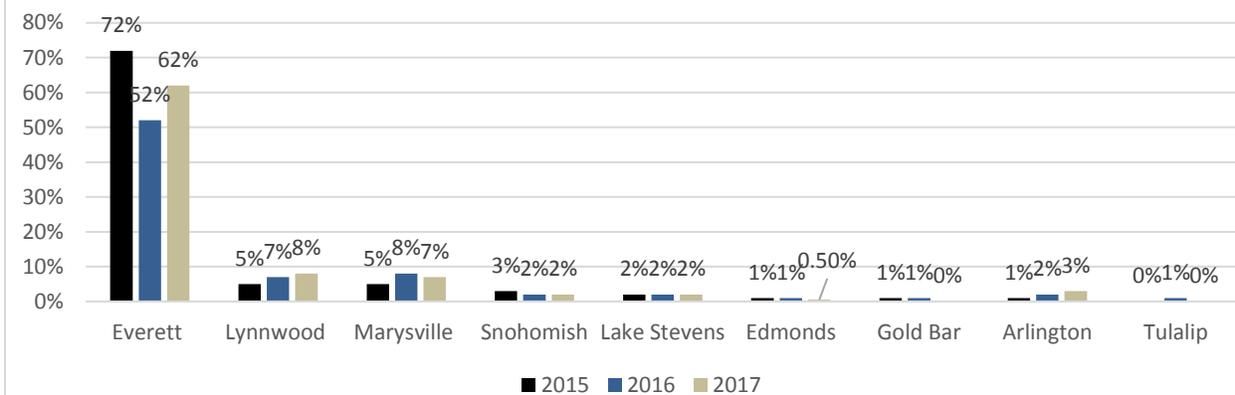
Of those that responded, 54% of guests were female, 43% were male, and 2% transgender as seen in Graph C. Graph D, shows the race breakdown of guests. The vast majority of responding guests reported they were White, with an increase in those declaring “other,” and also those that declined to answer this question. Due to the low percentage of guests reporting being of a minoritized race, greater investigation into outreach efforts to these populations are among points of improvement for next year’s event. Due to the time of this reporting, the current Snohomish County Point-in-Time County (PIT Count) had yet to be released. This comprehensive report on the county’s state of homelessness will be used to help guide future outreach efforts, to ensure PHC is proportionately serving the county. Improvements to this survey question are also recommended for next year, to better capture this information from guests.





In addition to demographic data, PHC also tries to capture historical data regarding guests place of residence. Volunteers asked guests “What was your last permanent address?” to best obtain this information. Graph E shows data from 2015-2017 events. Though the majority of guests have resided in the Everett area, other larger cities like Lynnwood and Marysville are steadily growing in representation, while more rural and east county representation have seen a small number of guests attend.

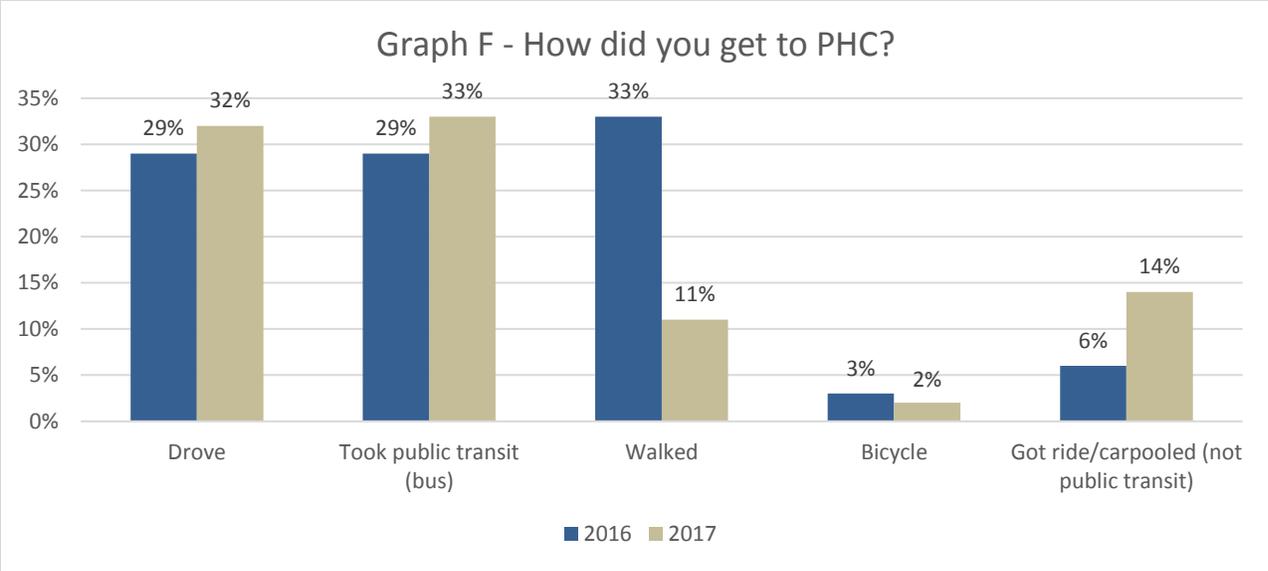
Graph E - What was your last permanent address?



How did guests get to PHC?

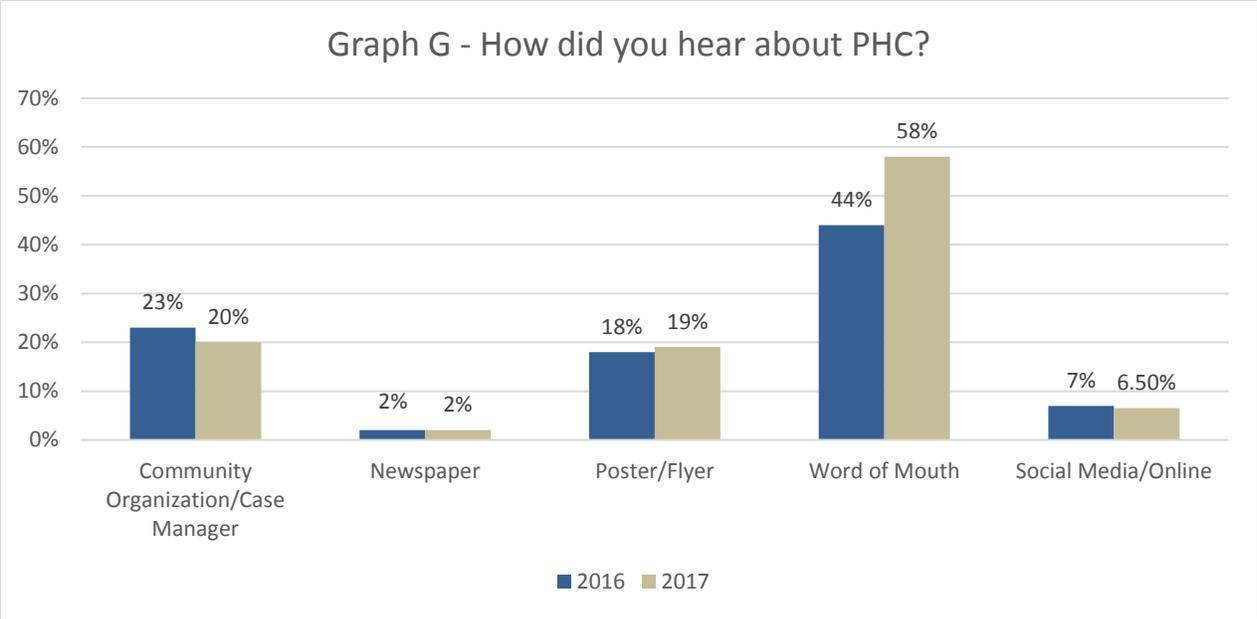
Many variables come into play when outreaching to all of Snohomish County regarding PHC, including the location of the event, timing of hours, service availability, and capacity. However, the major barrier to attending the event for those from outside the Everett area is access to transportation. Continuing efforts to secure public transportation from outside the Everett area remain a priority to the PHC Steering Committee. On the day of PHC, Everett Transit offers rides free of charge to anyone requesting a ride to PHC and this support is a critical part of ensuring that guests can access PHC. Access to transportation continues to be a significant barrier for low-income individuals and families and lack of transportation limits access to services such as basic needs and everyday tasks like getting groceries or going to a doctor appointment.

The conversation of transportation leads us to data surrounding how individuals reported getting to PHC this year. Graph F illustrates how guests reported getting to PHC. As predicted, a fairly large portion of respondents reported they took public transportation such as a bus to the event, while another large portion reported they drove either individually, or by a carpool. A noticeable data point is the decrease in number of those that walked to the event. The event location is a large indicator of why there was such a change from 2016 to 2017. The 2016 PHC was held at Everett High School, located in the heart of downtown Everett, which may have been at a more walkable location for PHC guests. This year's location at Evergreen Middle School could have been more conducive to access by a vehicle or public transit, as the school was positioned on two bus lines and near two busy highways.



How did guests hear about PHC?

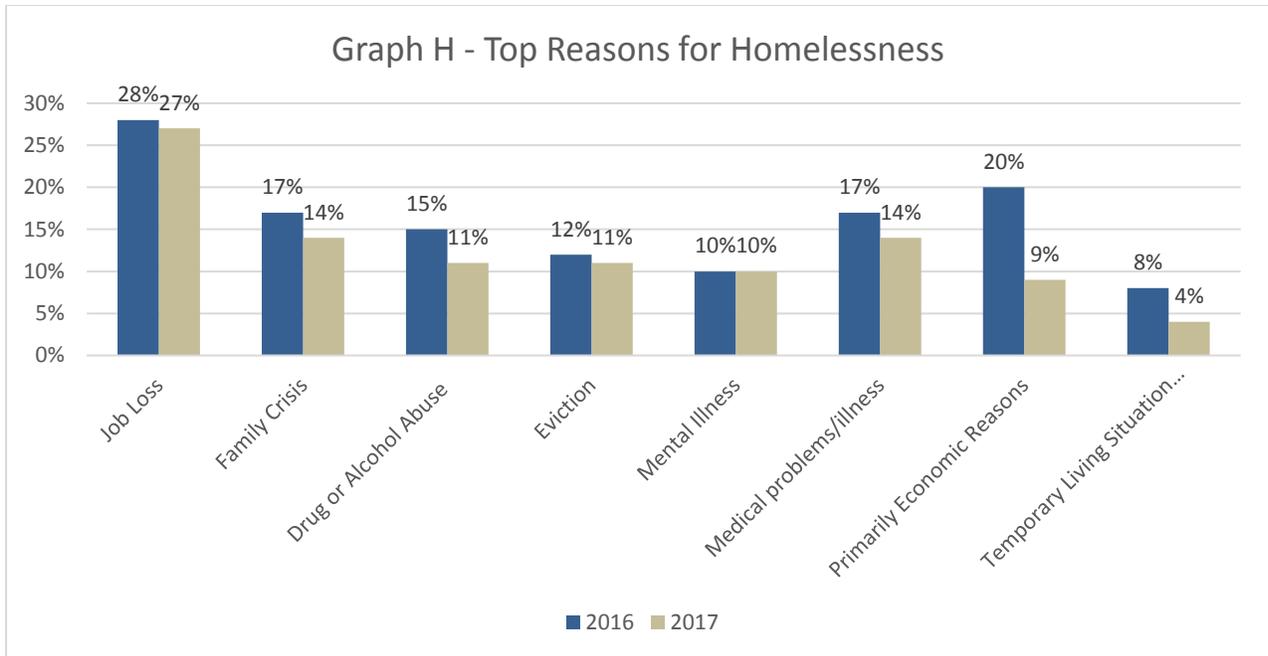
Outreach to provide details regarding PHC is a joint-effort among not only the major partners, but all of the partners providing services. We have found that the most effective outreach regarding PHC happens when we can communicate details to service providers, volunteers, and the community at large well before the event date. When we continue to communicate details frequently, service providers, community members and potential guests have sufficient opportunity to spread the word regarding PHC. Graph G shows survey responses on how guests heard about the event. Even in the 9th year, guests primarily find out about PHC from word-of-mouth. After word-of-mouth, guests heard about PHC through communication from case managers and service partners, direct service organizations such as YWCA and Catholic Community Services most commonly, and traditional flyer methods. Both methods were comparable to 2016 percentages. Since there is a great deal of demographic variation throughout Snohomish County, reaching those most vulnerable and in need can take continued awareness and multiple forms of outreach.



56% of respondents had never attended PHC before, an increase of 5% from 2016. Though that information may indicate the event reached more people unaware of the event than in the past, the PHC Steering Committee agreed further improvements in outreach is necessary. Further involvement by outreach-driven groups being involved in this process is critical to improving overall awareness.

Top Reasons for Homelessness

Guest responses to the question on causes of homelessness provide some interesting data regarding the state of housing and homelessness in Snohomish County. Graph H shows the top reasons reported by guests. Many circumstances can lead an individual or family to become homeless – ranging from the top reason of ‘Job Loss,’ to ‘Drug and Alcohol Abuse,’ to ‘Medical Problems/Illness,’ and even for ‘Primarily Economic Reasons.’ Recommendations for improvements to the survey include the addition of ‘Lack of Affordable Housing’ as an option for next year’s event.

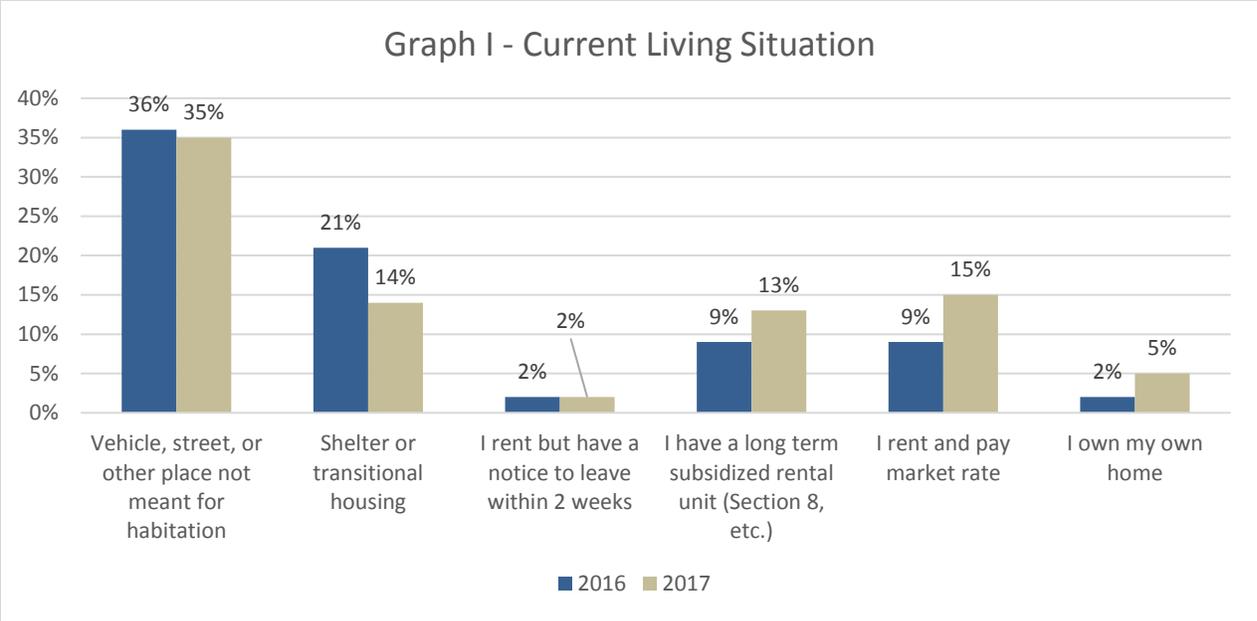


Graph H demonstrates that homelessness (and poverty) is so multifaceted – there is not a single solution or program that will ease the burden of people facing homelessness. Rather, it takes multiple supports to build a bridge out of homelessness and poverty. PHC effectively helps start the journey towards stability by making connections to the supports available to those that need them.

Current Living Situation of Guests

Learning about our guests’ current living situation is a key point of information to capture in order to get a clearer picture of the guests who utilize PHC services. Graph I shows the top responses to the question regarding current living situation. 40% of guests reported living in a vehicle, street, or other place not meant for habitation, 13% reported they have a long-term subsidized housing unit, and 15% reported paying rent at market rate. There was a decrease in guests reporting living in a shelter or transitional housing, while a slight increase in guests reporting that they own their own home.

The increase in the number of guests who indicated they live in a vehicle, on the street, or other place not meant for habitation supports the anecdotal observation of a growing number of homeless households who are utilizing vehicles as residences. As the lack of affordable housing continues to be a county-wide, as well as a national, epidemic, people in poverty continue to struggle to obtain stable, long-term housing. Though the 2017 PHC data shows an increase in long-term housing situations, there is also a comparable increase in those living in places not meant for habitation.



Services Offered

“The mission of PHC is to provide a single location where community members collaborate to serve individuals and families experiencing homelessness, or that are at risk of becoming homeless, with comprehensive, holistic and immediate services.”

In the initial planning meetings of PHC, the Steering Committee created the PHC’s first-ever mission statement (above) which was used to focus and guide the planning and organization of the event. Though the event has been originally focused on providing free and immediate services, further thought was put into involving more groups or organizations that provided holistic and comprehensive services. New service providers like Pregnancy Aid of Snohomish County, Everybody’s Closet, and the Everett Recovery Café, were among the many new organizations that were involved in PHC for the first time.

In response to feedback from previous years, a few notable changes to the service model were implemented, included intermingling the majority of services and increasing customer service through navigation assistance. For many years, service providers were placed in particular service areas; such as educational providers in an ‘Education’ labeled area, or ‘Children’s Services’ stationed all together, or ‘Mental Health/Chemical Dependency’ providers assigned to the same area. Though this model was primarily used to more easily set-up the event, it indirectly presented barriers to both guests and service providers alike. The traditional model led to guests being unaware of certain services that could help them, due to the fact that they wouldn’t approach or enter broadly labeled areas. It also created a stigmatizing feeling for some guests uncomfortable with approaching tables concerning potentially sensitive resources, such as Behavioral Health Treatment services. Intermingling the majority of services led to more contact between guests and service providers and increased awareness for certain services.

The creation of the Navigator role was also an important addition this year, leading to further improvement in the event’s customer service. Volunteers from the outreach organizations, MercyWatch and the Hand Up Project, were used to provide one-on-one assistance to guests for the day of PHC.

Navigators helped in many ways, including answering basic event questions, leading guests to tables, providing emotional and social support, as well as being an overall resource for the guest experience. Feedback from both guests and service providers indicated the Navigator role was a valuable addition to PHC and should continue to be provided at future PHC events.

In total, 95 services were offered. A few statistics outlining the range of services are below:

- 1,053 backpacks and toiletries distributed
- 2,225 pairs of shoes distributed
- 1,463 restaurant style meals served
- 131 pets received care
- Over 400 eye glasses and readers were provided
- 455 medical services provided
- Over 100 foot care washing/assessments
- 70 showers and 25 loads of laundry were done
- 44 dental procedures completed
- 600 Orca cards provided
- 110 signed up for benefits assistance such as utilities, food, clothing and healthcare
- 235 haircuts were given
- 58 Veterans served

A complete list of every service provider and program represented at the 2017 PHC event is as follows:

- American Red Cross
- Amerigroup
- DSHS - Basic Food Employment & Training
- Bridgeways: Clinical Services - Supported Employment and Housing
- Cascadia College: Workforce Education
- Catholic Community Services: Recovery Center
- Catholic Community Services: Coordinated Entry
- Catholic Community Services: Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)
- Center for Human Services
- City of Everett
- ChildStrive
- Clothes For Kids
- Cocoon House
- Community Health Center of Snohomish County
- Compass Health: PATH
- Core Clinical Research
- Department of Licensing (DOL)
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- DSHS - Division of Child Support
- DSHS - Employment Security Dept.
- Domestic Violence Services of Snohomish County
- DSHS Community Service Office - Community Service Office
- Early Childhood Education & Assistance Program (ECEAP)
- Edmonds Community College
- Edmonds Community College Head Start & Early Head Start
- Everett Animal Shelter
- Everett Area Narcotics Anonymous
- Everett Gospel Mission
- Everett Police Department: Community Outreach and Enforcement Team
- Everett Public Schools
- Everett Recovery Café
- Everett Transit
- Everett Vet Center
- Evergreen Recovery Centers
- Everybody's Closet
- Family Focus Portraits
- FareStart
- Farmer Frog
- Free Letters Home: Lydia's Letters
- Friends of Youth: New Ground Everett

- Homage Senior Services
- HoneyBucket
- Everett Housing Authority: Hope Options
- Islamic Resources by Mail
- League of Women Voters of Snohomish County (LWVSC)
- Lions Clubs
- Lions Giving Library: Children's Giving Library
- Low Income Housing Institute
- Lutheran Community Services Family Support Centers
- Lutheran Community Services Northwest: Familias Unidas – Everett Neighborhood Center
- M&I RECOVERY SERVICES: Engagement Center
- Madden Industrial Craftsmen
- Madison Community Church
- Medical Teams International
- MercyWatch
- Molina Healthcare
- NAMI Snohomish County
- Navy Federal Credit Union
- OK Cascade Company
- Olive Crest: Safe Families for Children
- Paroba College of Cosmetology, Barbering, and Esthetics
- PAWS Animal Shelter
- Pregnancy Aid Snohomish County
- Providence Health and Services NW: Providence Institute for a Healthier Community
- Providence Intervention Center for Assault and Abuse
- Providence Regional Medical Center
- Puget Sound Christian Clinic
- Redeeming Soles
- Safelink Wireless Free Phones
- Sea Mar Community Health Center
- Sea Mar Behavioral Health
- Seattle Goodwill - S. Everett Job Training & Education Center
- Sharing Wheels Community Bike Shop
- Shoreline Community College
- Snohomish County Prosecuting Attorney and King County Prosecuting Attorney, Family Support Divisions - Navigator Services Program
- Snohomish County DAV Chapter 13
- Snohomish County Human Services Department
- Snohomish County Legal Services
- Snohomish County Veterans Assistance Program
- Snohomish Health District: Access to Baby and Child Dentistry
- Snohomish Health District: Snohomish Medical Reserve Corps
- Sno-Isle Libraries: Library on Wheels
- Social Security Administration
- St. Vincent de Paul: Assistance & Project Pride
- Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians: Behavioral Health Programs
- Sunrise Services, Inc: Behavioral Health Services
- The Hand Up Project
- The Salvation Army Everett Corps
- Therapeutic Health Services
- UnitedHealthcare's Community Plan
- VA Puget Sound: Suicide Prevention Team
- United Way of Snohomish County
- VBA (Seattle VA Regional Office)
- Veterans For Worship
- Volunteers of America Western Washington: Dispute Resolution Center
- Volunteers of America Western Washington: Behavioral Health - Access to Mental Health
- Volunteers of America Western Washington: North Sound 2-1-1
- Volunteers of America Western Washington: Maud's House & Transportation Assistance
- Washed Mobile
- Washington Home of Your Own: Representative Payee program
- Washington State Health Care Authority
- Wind Walkers the Nomad Project

- WithinReach
- Workforce Snohomish: Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program
- WorkSource: Veteran Employment
- WorkSource Youth Center
- YWCA Seattle/King/Snohomish: Mental Health Program & Children's DV Advocacy Program
- YWCA Seattle/King/Snohomish: Women's Working Wardrobe
- YWCA Seattle | King | Snohomish: Backpacks & Hygiene Items

In addition to the generous sponsorship of the Employees Community Fund of Boeing Puget Sound, the event has brought awareness and support from many other community groups that came together to support in other ways. Toiletry and sock drives were organized, clothing donations were collected, and citizens from all walks of life volunteered their time to help neighbors in need.

Total Impact to the Community

Measuring PHC's impact to the community is integral to the continued efforts and sustainability of the event. Data from providers, vendors, volunteers and staff are collected as quickly and efficiently as possible, to ensure the most accurate and complete information as possible. Each service provider is asked to detail the approximate scope of services they provided at the event – from staff time, to the value of volunteer hours, to the value of items and goods distributed. At an 80% response rate from service providers, an approximate measure of the return in investment back to Snohomish County was gathered.

With an initial grant of \$55,000 from the Employees Community Fund of Boeing Puget Sound, goods and services brought back to the community came to an estimated \$349,544.71 in value. Again, this is calculated based on an 80% response rate from service providers, which indicates that the actual return back to the community could be much higher.

Contributing a record breaking 866 hours of service - 211 event volunteers donated a combined \$25,105.34 in the value of time. As mentioned previously, many groups and organizations supported the event through donations from organized drives and collections. The value of In-kind donations was estimated to be at over \$14,000 which were included in the overall impact back to the community.

Guest Feedback

Input from guests attending the event is used year after year to continuously improve the event. Guests have the opportunity to provide feedback to roaming volunteers taking mobile surveys during the event, giving input on what they like about the event and suggestions for improvements – including any gaps in services.

The top responses for what guests liked most about the event included transportation assistance, pet care, giveaways such as shoes, backpacks and toiletries, haircuts, the free meal, medical services and housing information.

Top suggestions for future PHC events included the inclusion of vision and hearing services, which were unavailable due to scheduling. Connections for vision and hearing service providers for PHC is a priority for 2018 improvements.

In an effort to integrate the majority of services, many guests suggested more space around the event to sit down and rest. More space between service providers was also recommended for easier access between areas.

Other suggestions include increases in dental services and foot care capacity. A handful of needs and gaps in services were also identified and included; school supplies, gas cards for transportation, emergency housing vouchers, and sleeping bags. Better signage around the event and increased advertising were also an area for improvement.

Service Provider Feedback

Along with guest feedback, service providers are also consulted for their input on continuously improving PHC. Feedback from service providers was very positive regarding the integration of the majority of services in the layout of the event. Improvements to integration included having more space between providers to allow for better flow of people in the gyms. Networking opportunities and meeting other partners was another positive for service providers, although suggestions to increase knowledge of services being offered among the service providers was recommended.

Service providers also liked the location of Evergreen Middle School over the 2016 location of Everett High School, but requested more confidential spaces to conduct on-site assessments and better Wi-Fi access.

Looking Ahead to 2018

Project Homeless Connect has become a growing and established community event. Much has been done to elevate the event as a great return on investment, continuously improving each year to become more impactful. As PHC looks to its 10th year in 2018, continued focus on providing navigation and one-on-one assistance will be implemented. Having established a mission statement centered on not only delivering free and immediate, but holistic and comprehensive services, allows service providers opportunities to work together in helping individuals and families that are experiencing homelessness, or at-risk of becoming homeless.

In addition to increasing customer service for guests, there is also a need to continue to bring additional, or new, service providers to PHC. Not only would more providers ensure less gaps in service but also more capacity could be added. Health services, including on-site mental health assessments, continue to grow in demand. Though PHC's 'one-stop-shop' service model is largely effective for many neighbors struggling with homelessness, follow-up support and communication is also lacking. Implementing follow-up support could create greater long-term impact.

Addressing the barriers that individuals and families experiencing homeless face in getting to PHC is also a continued concern. Transportation is the leading barrier for those struggling with poverty to access services. Further connection with groups providing rides to and from the event is another gap to be addressed for future PHC events.

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Want to be involved in the 2018 Project Homeless Connect? Reach out to phc@uwsc.org to be added to the email distribution list for continuous planning updates each year.

Also follow the PHC Facebook page, for event details, including general community updates and other local events: @phcsnoco.