



Finding Our Way Home: Research on  
Indigenous Homelessness in Surrey

## **PART 3: DATA SUMMARY**

October 2022

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

As part of the Finding Our Way Home project, available data on Indigenous homelessness was collected and analyzed. The findings from this research are summarized in this document.

Data were obtained from BC Housing's Research and Corporate Planning Department, the Reaching Home Community Entity for Metro Vancouver, and the City of Surrey.

## 1.1 Key Findings

The following represents key findings related to the experience of Individuals experiencing homelessness as reflected in the 2020 Homeless Count in Metro Vancouver and 2018-2022 HIFIS shelter use data.

- 141 Indigenous people were identified as experiencing homelessness in Surrey through the 2020 PiT Count. That is 31% of survey respondents. An average of 17% of all logged shelter stays between January 2018 and March 2022 were by people who identified as Indigenous. As a result, there is a smaller share of shelter users who are Indigenous than the PiT count would suggest. The discrepancy may be a result of the over-representation of Indigenous people who remain unsheltered as 50% of Indigenous, compared to 27% of non-Indigenous people were unsheltered in the PiT count in Surrey.
- An additional 494 Indigenous individuals are estimated to have been hidden homeless during the PiT Count period, meaning they may be couch surfing or living in cars. This means a total of 635 Indigenous individuals are estimated to have been homeless in Surrey in 2020.
- Between March 2020 and March 2022, an average of 536 Indigenous and non-Indigenous unique clients were registered at Year-Round (ESP, Temp) and Emergency Response Centre Shelters in Surrey on a monthly basis.
- On average in the 2021-2022 winter season, 18% of Extreme Weather Response (EWR) shelter stays were by individuals who identified Indigenous. However, this varied dramatically between shelters, with 46% of women accessing the women's only shelter identifying as Indigenous and only 3% of people accessing the Surrey Cloverdale shelter identifying as Indigenous. Data quality and differences in reporting may be a concern for some of the EWR shelters.

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- Age data for Indigenous people experiencing homelessness shows more younger and fewer older people than among non-Indigenous people. This is reflected in both the PiT data (13% Indigenous under 25 years vs. 5% non-Indigenous and 14% Indigenous over 55 vs. 29% non-Indigenous) and the shelter use data (9% Indigenous under 25 years vs. 7% non-Indigenous and 9% Indigenous over 55 vs. 26% non-Indigenous).
- Of all women experiencing homelessness, 38% identified as Indigenous in the PiT Count while 26% of all men were Indigenous. The same can be observed in shelter stay data, where women who use shelters in Surrey were more likely to identify as Indigenous than men: 26% of shelter stays by women were by Indigenous women compared to men where 14% of all men were Indigenous. This is also observed among stays at Women’s Transition Houses where an average of 32% of stays were by women who are Indigenous during the study period.
- According to the PiT Count, Indigenous people experiencing homelessness are more likely to identify as 2SLGBTQ+ (17%) than non-Indigenous individuals (7%).
- Indigenous individuals experiencing homelessness were more likely to be living with a learning disability or cognitive impairment (76% vs. 60%), as well as with addiction (54% vs. 44%), than non-Indigenous individuals.
- The proportion of Indigenous individuals living with an acquired brain injury is higher (38%) than among non-Indigenous individuals (26%).
- Indigenous people experience homelessness younger than non-Indigenous individuals, with 35% of Indigenous respondents to the PiT Count experiencing homelessness for the first time before they were 19 as compared to 23% of non-Indigenous respondents.

### 1.2 Data Sources

This document summarizes available data on Indigenous homelessness in Surrey, including custom data from the 2020 Homeless Count in Metro Vancouver, shelter use data, and data on the Supportive Housing Registry. The intent of this data summary is to document available quantitative data on Indigenous homelessness as of Spring 2022. Data were obtained from BC Housing’s Research and Corporate Planning Department (shelter use data), the Reaching Home Community Entity for Metro Vancouver (homeless count data), and the City of Surrey (data on shelter stock).

## 2 HOMELESS COUNT DATA

### 2.1 Overview and Limitations

Data on Indigenous respondents of the 2020 Pit Count was provided by the Reaching Home Community Entity for Metro Vancouver via BCNPHA as part of the Finding Our Way Home Project. This section summarizes what we know about Indigenous individuals experiencing homelessness based on this data.

Point-in-Time counts are known to yield an undercount as they represent only those individuals identified during the 24-hour period of the count. It is known that the number of people who are experiencing homelessness is greater than what is presented in this report.

Community agencies often state that especially women and Indigenous people tend to be part of the hidden homeless population. They often stay with families and friends or in unsafe situations rather than staying on the streets or accessing services for the homeless. As such, they are more likely to be undercounted using a Point-in-Time count methodology.

Despite this limitation, the PiT count is an accepted methodological tool for collecting data on homelessness that is slowly being enriched with new data sources such as HIFIS shelter use data as provided in the next section.

### 2.2 Indigenous People Experiencing Homelessness in Surrey

644 individuals were identified as experiencing homelessness in Surrey in the 2020 Homeless Count in Metro Vancouver (“PiT Count”), an increase of 7% since 2017 when 602 individuals were identified. In this count, 141 individuals self-identified as Indigenous (31% of those that answered the question about Indigenous identity). 312 identified as non-Indigenous (69% of those who answered the question). 191 did not answer the question and are not included in the percentage calculation as their identity is unknown.

Indigenous people experiencing homelessness are more likely to be unsheltered than non-Indigenous people who are homeless. As seen in Table 1, 50% of Indigenous, compared to 27% of non-Indigenous people were unsheltered in the PiT count in Surrey.

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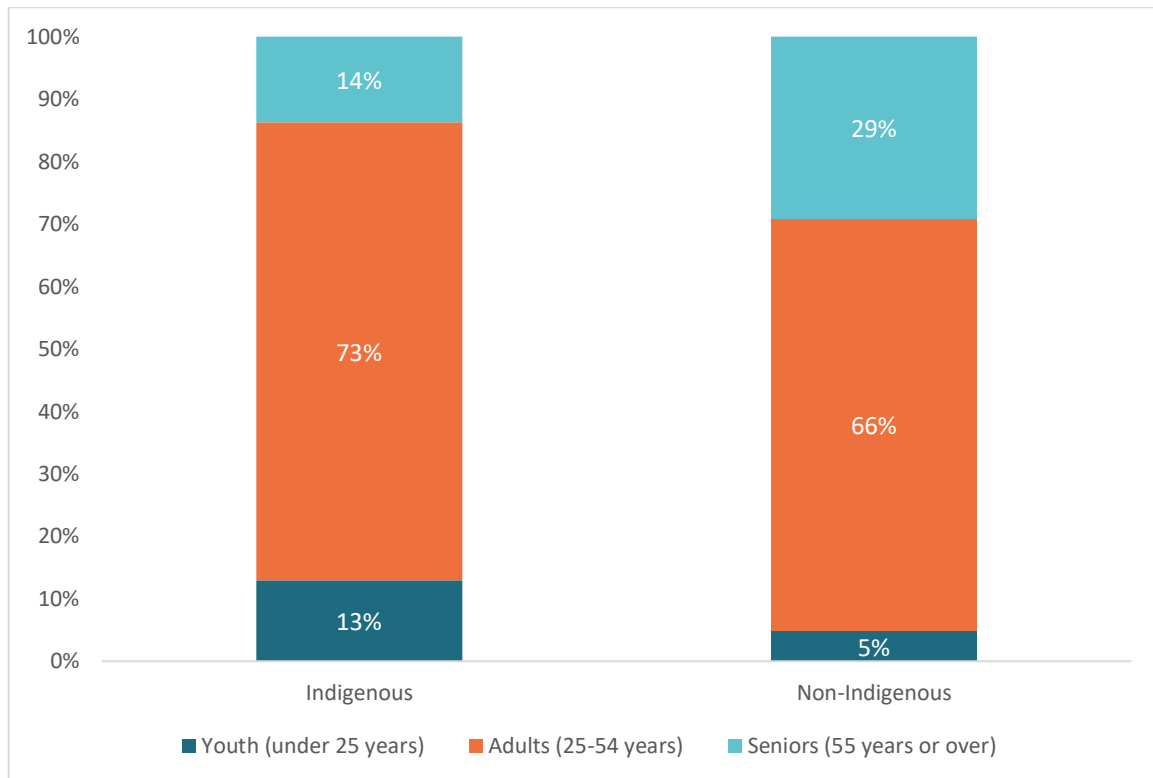
Table 1 Indigenous Identity by sheltered and unsheltered respondents (Surrey - 2020).<sup>1</sup>

	INDIGENOUS		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%
Unsheltered	70	50%	173	27%
Sheltered	71	50%	471	73%
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>644</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 2.3 Demographic Indicators

- **Age** – Indigenous individuals experiencing homelessness are younger than non-Indigenous individuals. 13% of Indigenous individuals experiencing homelessness in Surrey were under 25, compared to only 5% of non-Indigenous individuals. A smaller proportion of Indigenous individuals experiencing homelessness are seniors compared to non-Indigenous individuals.

Figure 1 Age groups by Indigenous identity (Surrey - 2020)



Source: BCNPHA. (2022) 2020 Homeless Count in Metro Vancouver – Surrey Custom Dataset.

<sup>1</sup> The Total includes Indigenous, non-Indigenous and Unknown identities. As a result, the subtraction of Indigenous people from the Total does not yield the share of non-Indigenous people.

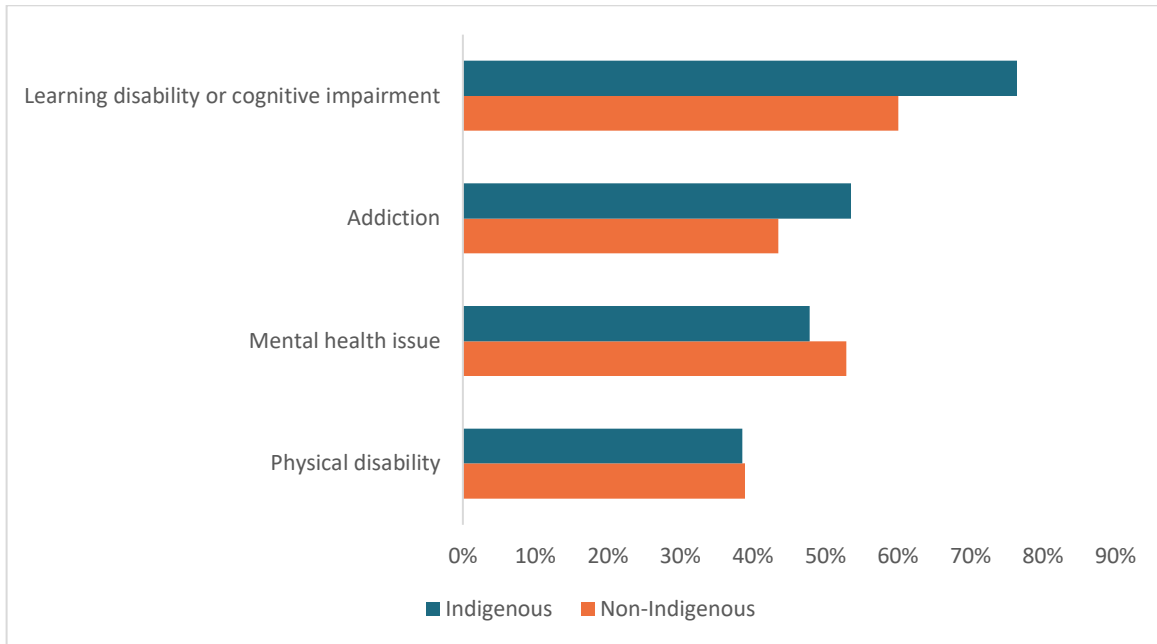
- **Gender** – A higher proportion of Indigenous individuals experiencing homelessness are women (42%) compared to non-Indigenous individuals (28%). Further, of all women experiencing homelessness, 38% identified as Indigenous compared to 58% who identified as non-Indigenous.
- **Sexual orientation and/or gender identity** – 17% of Indigenous individuals experiencing homelessness in Surrey identify as 2SLGBTQIA+, compared to 7% of non-Indigenous individuals.

### 2.4 Experience of Homelessness

- **Length of time experiencing homelessness** – Indigenous individuals experiencing homelessness in Surrey had experienced homelessness for similar lengths of time as non-Indigenous individuals. There was slight variation but not significant enough to note differences. However, Indigenous individuals were slightly more likely to report chronic homelessness (homeless for more than six months over the past year): 79% of Indigenous individuals, compared to 75% of non-Indigenous individuals.
- **Previous community** For Indigenous individuals who had moved to Surrey from elsewhere, 44% were from Metro Vancouver, 23% came from a community outside of BC, 22% were from other parts of BC, and 8% were from the Fraser Valley. In general, Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals from outside of Surrey reported similar geographic distribution, though Indigenous individuals were more likely to report being from other parts of BC than non-Indigenous individuals.
- **Health conditions** – Indigenous individuals experiencing homelessness were more likely to report a learning disability or cognitive impairment (76% vs. 60%), as well as an addiction (54% vs. 44%), compared to non-Indigenous individuals.

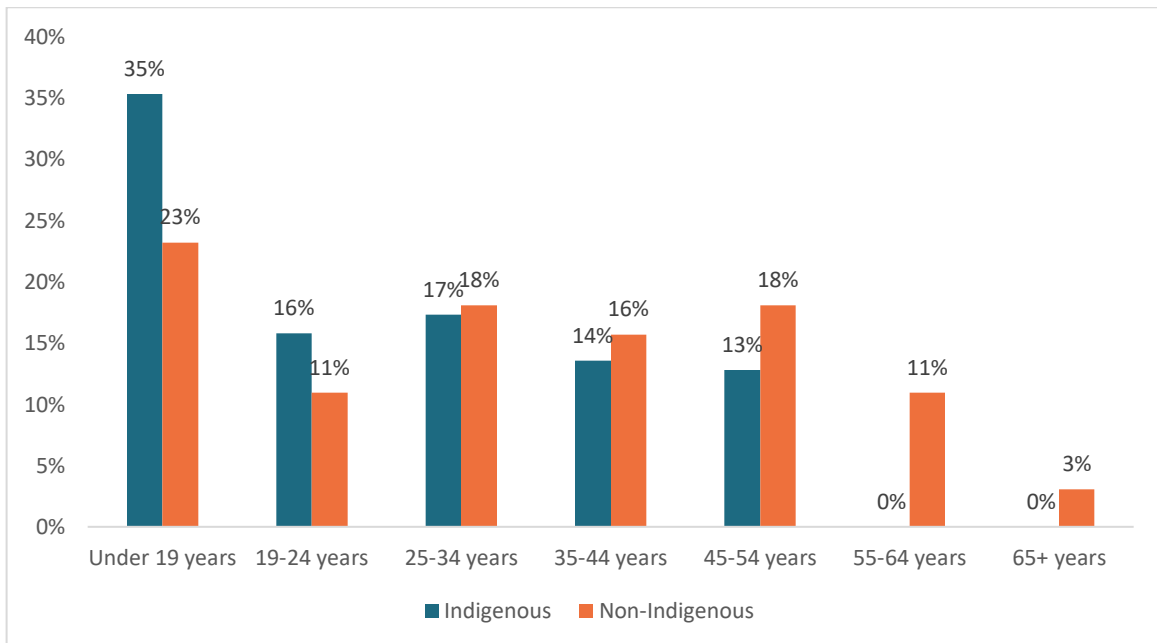
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Figure 2 Health conditions by Indigenous identity (Surrey - 2020)



- Acquired brain injury** - Indigenous individuals were much more likely to report an acquired brain injury (38%) than non-Indigenous individuals (26%).
- Age of first experience of homelessness** – Indigenous individuals were more likely to report a younger age of first experiencing homelessness, with 51% of respondents reporting that they had first experienced homelessness before 24 years of age, compared to 34% of non-Indigenous respondents who reported the same age of first experience.

Figure 3 Age first time experiencing homelessness by Indigenous identity (Surrey - 2020)

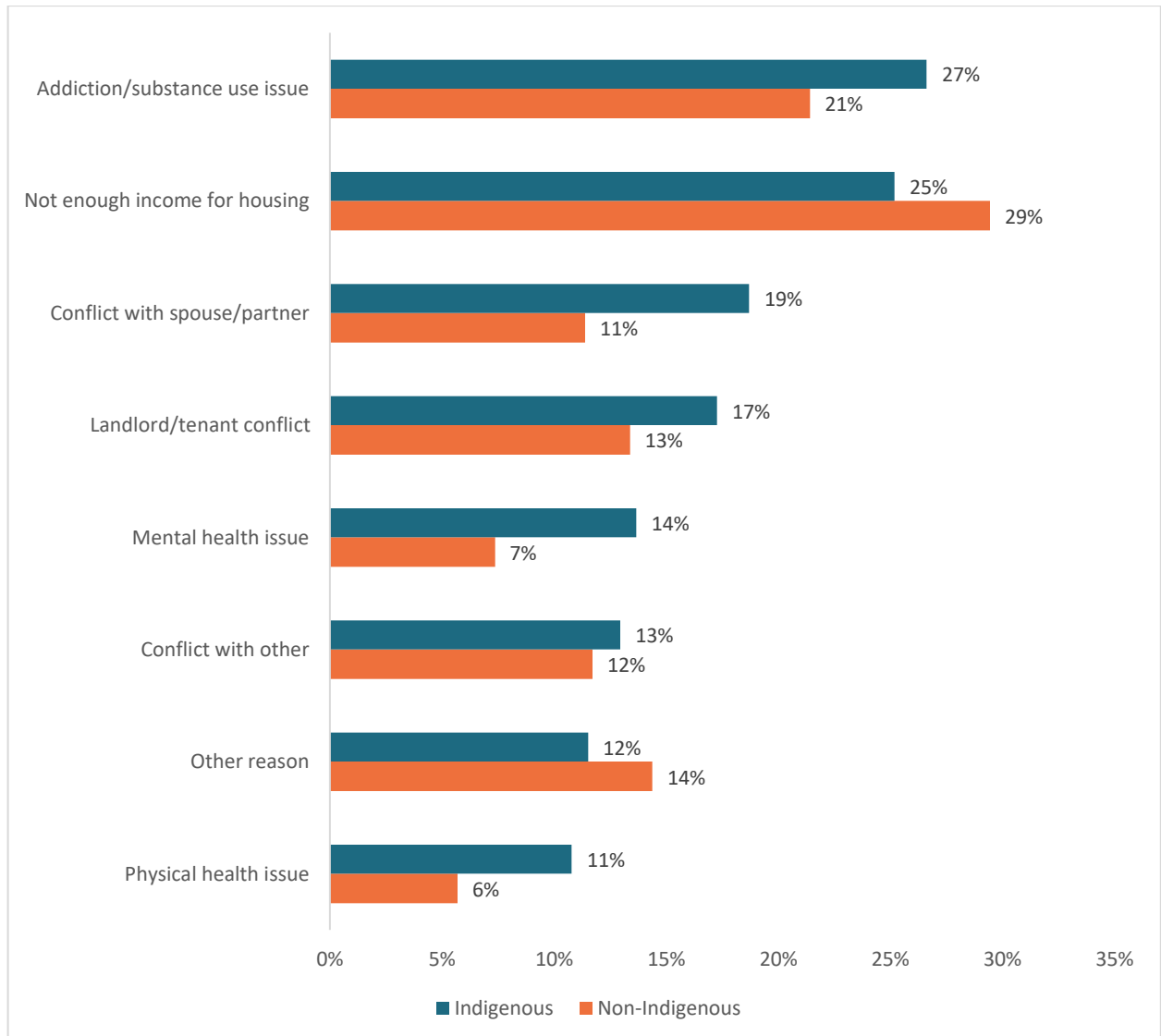




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- **Reason for most recent housing loss** – The top five reasons for most recent housing loss for Indigenous individuals were: addiction/substance use issue (27%), not enough income for housing (25%), conflict with spouse/partner (19%), landlord/tenant conflict (17%), mental health issue (14%). Compared to non-Indigenous respondents, Indigenous respondents were more likely to report addiction/substance use issue, conflict with spouse/partner, landlord/tenant conflict, and physical health issue as reasons for most recent housing loss.

Figure 4 Reason for most recent housing loss by Indigenous identity (Surrey - 2020)



- **Where unsheltered respondents stay** – There was no notable difference between where Indigenous and non-Indigenous respondents who were unsheltered stayed. 55% of Indigenous respondents who were unsheltered stayed outside (vs. 58%), 20% at someone else's place (vs. 19%), and 14% in a makeshift shelter or tent (vs 15%).

# 3 ESTIMATING HIDDEN HOMELESSNESS

The PiT Count methodology cannot capture hidden homelessness, such as couch surfing, which is more common among women and families. This means that a significant portion of the population experiencing homelessness is missing from the PiT Count.

A 2009 research study for Metro Vancouver estimated that approximately 3.5 individuals are experiencing hidden homelessness for every individual counted through the PiT Count.<sup>2</sup> This methodology was used in the Surrey Housing Needs Report to estimate the overall hidden homeless population in Surrey.

**Based on this proxy measure, an additional 494 Indigenous individuals in Surrey may be experiencing homelessness.**

## 3.1 Shelter Capacity and Shelter Use Data

### 3.1.1 OVERVIEW AND LIMITATIONS

Data on Indigenous respondents who stayed in shelters in the City of Surrey was provided by BC Housing and the City of Surrey. It shows shelter capacity, shelter occupancy, shelter stays and unique shelter visits. This section summarizes what we know about Indigenous individuals who use shelters in Surrey based on this data.

Note that the number of people experiencing homelessness included in this data must be considered an undercount as only people who are in contact with services and who accurately disclosed their identity have been reliably counted in the HIFIS database.

Importantly, for privacy, data on shelter stays is suppressed for categories with fewer than 10 observations. As a result, any suppressed data was excluded from the calculations. These exclusions directly affect the validity of the data on demographics in this data set, as the reported counts and proportions do not include small categories. In consequence, any identity groups with small shares were excluded from the denominator and numerator to prevent skewing. This also affects data on

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<sup>2</sup> M. Eberle et al., *Results of the pilot study to estimate the size of the hidden homeless population in Metro Vancouver, 2009.* <https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/ia1uqcls.pdf>

people who identify with other gender identities, including those who are Indigenous, who are not represented in this data. Also note that time periods for data vary for different data points.

### 3.1.2 SHELTER CAPACITY

BC Housing and the City of Surrey track capacity of shelter beds and mats in Surrey. The following summary is based on data provided by both sources.

There are four types of emergency shelters across seven types of programs in Surrey.

1. **Year-Round Shelters:** The Emergency Shelter Program (ESP) includes year-round (permanent) shelters that operate 24 hours and 7 days a week. Temporary Shelters (Temp) operate for a short period of time during the year, either seasonally or longer, in order to meet a community need. However, in Surrey, these shelters have been operating year-round.
2. **Extreme Weather Response (EWR) Shelters:** Mats that are available over night only when the community issues an Extreme Weather Alert during inclement weather. EWR shelters only operate in the winter months.<sup>3</sup>
3. **Women Transition House Shelters:** Spaces at Transition Houses, Second Stage Houses, Safe Homes, and Expansion Spaces that are reserved for women, who may be accompanied by children.
4. **Emergency Response Centre (ERC):** Spaces secured by BC Housing in Hotels and Community Facilities during the COVID-19 Pandemic. These sites did not operate in the same fashion as a shelter. In Surrey there were 190 spaces (96 spaces in a former recreation centre converted to an ERC and 94 hotel rooms).

The following shelters operated in Surrey as of March 2022:

Table 2 Shelters in Surrey. BC Housing, March 2022.

TYPE	NAME, TYPE & ADDRESS	SPACES
Year-Round Shelters <sup>4</sup> : Permanent (ESP)	Sheena's Place	12
	Hyland House (6595 King George Blvd)	35
	Gateway Shelter (10667 135A St)	40
	Cynthia's Place	14
	Bill Reid Place (17752 Colebrook Rd)	16
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>117</b>
	Temp Shelter - SUM (10776 King George Blvd. Surrey, V3T 2X7)	30

<sup>3</sup> Capacity Expansion Shelters (CES) are extended spaces from Extreme Weather Response shelters operating on a daily basis to respond to community need. BC Housing reported that there are 6 CES beds in Surrey, which are not included in this summary.

<sup>4</sup> The provided numbers reflect reduced COVID capacity. Where possible post-Covid capacity (April 2022) numbers are provided.

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TYPE	NAME, TYPE & ADDRESS	SPACES
Year-Round Shelters: Temp & Capacity Expansion (CES)	<i>(Post-Covid Capacity: 50)</i>	
	Temp Shelter - The Cove (10607 King George Blvd., Surrey V3T 2X6) <i>(Post-Covid Capacity: 42)</i>	25
	Temp Shelter - The Olive Branch (10731 City Pkwy, Surrey, V3T 4C8)	44
	Temp Shelter Lookout Guildford (14716 104 Ave, Surrey, BC V3R 1M3) <i>(Post-Covid Capacity: 40)</i>	24
	Temp Shelter Lookout Parkway (10667 135A Street, Surrey V3T 4E3) <i>(Post-Covid Capacity: 40)</i>	20
	CES - Lookout Guildford (14716 104 Ave, Surrey, BC V3R 1M3) <sup>5</sup>	6
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>149</b>
Extreme Weather Response Shelters – Winter 2021-2022	EWR - Lookout Surrey Alliance (13474 96 Avenue, Surrey, BC V3V 1Y9)	30
	EWR North Surrey Rec Centre (10275 City Pkwy, Surrey, BC V3T 4C3)	30
	EWR - Surrey Cloverdale (5337 180 St, Surrey, V3S 4K5)	15
	EWR - Lookout Fleetwood (9165 160 Street, Surrey, BC V4N 2X7)	14
	EWR - PCRS (10453 Whalley Blvd., Surrey V3T 5V1)	6
	EWR – Mt. Olive Lutheran Church (2350 148 ST, Surrey, V4A 4M7)	20
EWR - Shimai House (13327 100A Ave, Surrey, BC V3T 5R4)	6	
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>121</b>
Women Transition House Shelters	Katherine Parland House	10
	Durrant Transition House	10
	Evergreen Transition House	10
	Virginia Sam Transition House	10
	Shimai House	10
	Transition to New Beginnings (Efy)	6
Ama House	6	
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>62</b>

<sup>5</sup> While reported as EWR capacity expansion mats, these are ongoing overnight mats which are provided on an ongoing basis (not in response to EWR activation).

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TYPE	NAME, TYPE & ADDRESS	SPACES
Emergency Response Centre (COVID-19) <sup>6</sup>	ERC Civic & Temp - Capacity Expansion Civic - North Surrey Rec Centre (10275 City Parkway, Surrey V3T 4C3)	96
	ERC LH - Canadian Inn (6528 King George Blvd, Surrey V3W 4Z3)	24
	ERC LH - Linda Vista Motel (6498 King George Blvd, Surrey, V3W 4Z3)	29
	ERC LH - Sandman Guildford (10608 151a Street, Surrey, V3R 1J8)	15
	ERC LH - Sheraton Guildford (15269 104 Ave, Surrey, BC V3R 1N5)	26
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>190</b>
<b>Total Number of Spaces</b>		<b>643</b>

As of March 31, 2022, BC Housing reported a total of 697 shelter beds or mats across different shelter types in Surrey. Of these beds 351 operate continuously. Not included are a total of 30 units at the Foxglove Supportive Housing & Shelter at 9810 Foxglove Drive (opened in April 2022) and 40 beds at The Rosewood at 9671/9677/9687 137 Street (opening in September 2022) as these were not operational during the reporting period. (The Rosewood beds will replace the 26 existing shelter spaces in the two Elizabeth Fry shelters).

As shelter capacities fluctuate over time, some discrepancies exist between BC Housing and City of Surrey data, which are reflected in the table below. The reporting period was during the COVID-19 pandemic and BCH therefore reported the reduced shelter capacity and additional hotel capacity while the City reported full shelter capacity and did not report additional hotel spaces.

The snapshot of HIFIS data is representative of capacity as of March 2022 as reported by BC Housing.

*Table 3 March 2022 Shelter Capacity by Shelter Type. BC Housing & City of Surrey, March 2022*

	CITY OF SURREY	BC HOUSING
Year-Round Shelters (Temp & ESP)	351	266
Extreme Weather Response Shelters (EWR)	121	121
Capacity Expansion Shelters	6	6
Emergency Response Centre (COVID-19)	96	190
Women's Transition House Shelters <sup>7</sup> (City of Surrey Data only)	62	62
<b>Total Beds/Mats</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>645</b>

<sup>6</sup> Surrey does not typically report on ERC hotel spaces as they were to compensate for reduced capacity at the shelters during the COVID-19 pandemic.

<sup>7</sup> As BC Housing did not provide a capacity overview of its WTHSP sites and City data is assumed to reflect the number of available spaces.

### 3.1.3 MONTHLY SHELTER OCCUPANCY (ESP, ERC & TEMP SHELTERS ONLY)

The total number of clients who can stay at a shelter may be limited by the available shelter capacity. The occupancy of a shelter provides an indication whether shelters were operating at or below capacity.

Shelter occupancy changes seasonally: during high need months most of the available beds are often occupied, while other months see occupancy drop.

Based on BC Housing data, during most months of the year the available shelter capacity in Surrey is reportedly not exhausted across all reported shelter types. During the reporting period of March 31, 2020, to Dec 31, 2021, BC Housing reported an average shelter occupancy of between 50% in the EWR program (see section 4.6) and up to 89% in the Temp Shelter program.

Table 4 Average annual occupancy by shelter type. BC Housing, March 31, 2020 - Dec 31, 2021.

	TEMP SHELTER	ESP	EWR	CES	ERC8
2020 (March – Dec)	78%	81%	50%	98%	77%
2021 (Jan-Dec)	89%	83%	56%	98%	96%

As shelters were not operating at or near complete occupancy for *most of the time*, capacity does generally not set an upper limit on the number of people staying at shelters most of the time.

However, as shown in Figure 5, peak occupancy levels were reached on several occasions, including in December 2021 when EWR occupancy over the period of the full month reached close to 100%. At other points, Temp shelters were close to fully occupied. A resilient shelter system should not be operating at maximum capacity.

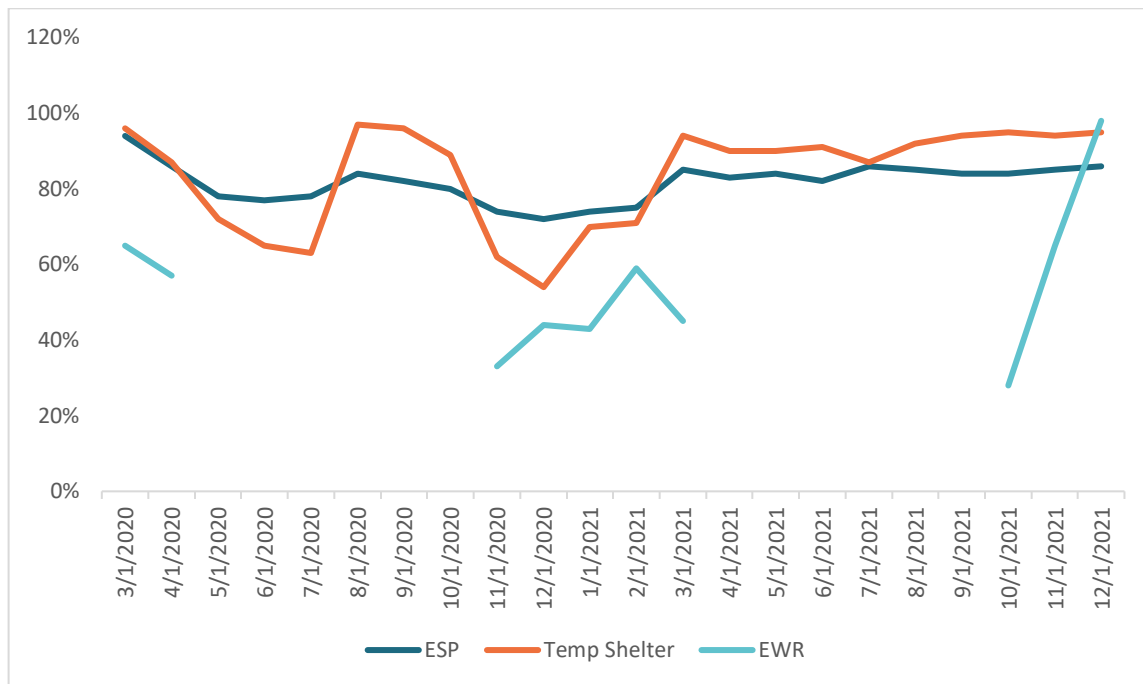
Unfortunately, we do not know how many days of the month any of the shelters were fully occupied (see section 4.6 for an analysis of EWR data).

Further, while there may be space, people may also choose to not stay at a shelter for other reason, including not feeling safe at shelters or experiencing barriers to access (i.e., addictions, pets, partners, etc.). As shown in the previous section, PiT count data shows that Indigenous people are overrepresented among people who are unsheltered.

<sup>8</sup> Note that only 6 beds were included in the Capacity Expansion Shelter (CES) category and ERC sites did not operate in the same fashion as a shelter. In Surrey there were 190 spaces (96 spaces in a former recreation center converted to an ERC and 94 hotel rooms). For this reason they are not reviewed in detail.

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Figure 5 Monthly occupancy by shelter type. BC Housing, March 2020 - December 2021.<sup>9</sup>



### 3.1.4 NUMBER OF UNIQUE SHELTER USERS IN SURREY

Shelter service providers enter data on each client into the BC Housing Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) which is then reported to BC Housing on a weekly basis. Every unique individual who enters a BC Housing funded shelter is included in the data collection process as all emergency shelters in Surrey are funded by BC Housing. As the data is from emergency shelters only, it does not include unsheltered individuals and those who are couch surfing.

The number of *Unique Clients at Shelters* data is a count of the number of unique clients per month who are entered into HIFIS at Year-Round Shelters (ESP, Temp) and Emergency Response Centre (COVID-19) Shelters (ERC) in Surrey that are BC Housing funded. The reporting period is March 31, 2020 - March 31, 2022. Shelters included in the data are listed in the previous section.

#### 3.1.4.1 Limitations

This specific data does not include EWR shelters and Transition Houses as no information on unique individuals was provided for these sources. Women Transition House Shelters are not included in the HIFIS integrated cluster data for privacy and safety reasons. BC Housing indicated that EWR data on unique individuals was not available. Available data on EWR shelters and Transition Houses is provided separately in sections 4.5 and 4.6.

<sup>9</sup> All Shelters were adjusted for physical distancing effective August 1, 2020, adequately capturing occupancy levels.

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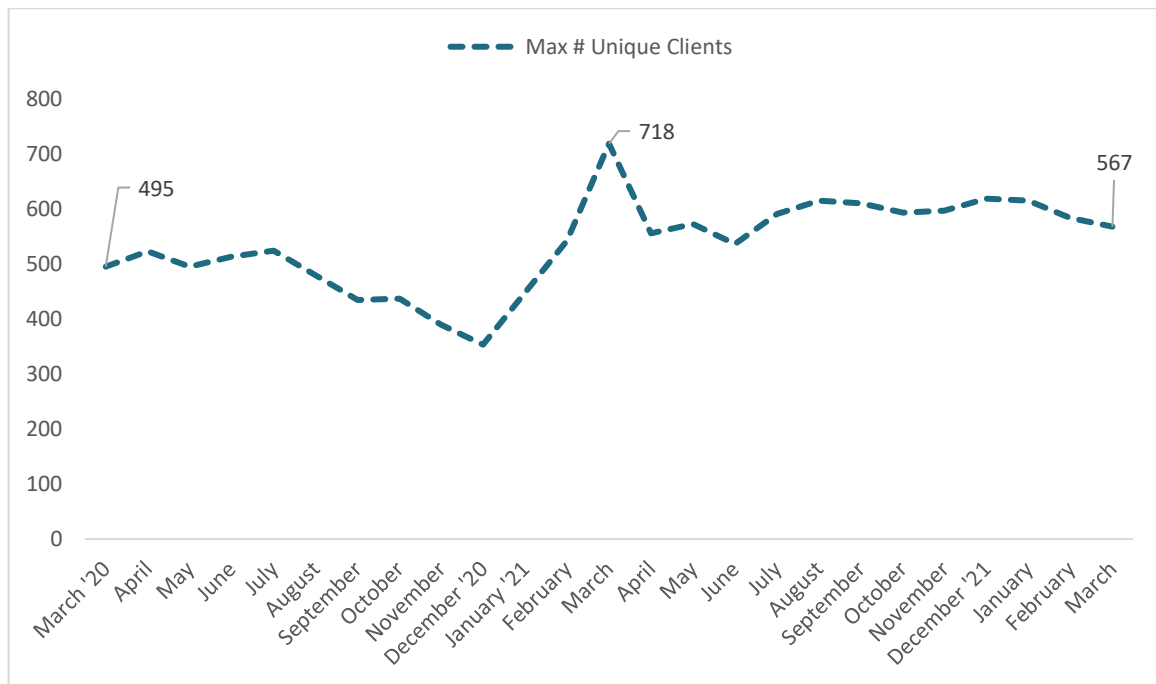
The Unique Clients data is subject to errors and limitations, including front-line data entry errors (such as spelling errors leading to potential duplicate records, small variations in data entered and real occupancy of shelters and limitations in access for clients to shelters due to COVID protocols, among other potential areas of bias).

### 3.1.4.2 Total Shelter Users

**Between March 2020 and March 2022, an average of 536 Indigenous and non-Indigenous unique clients were registered at Year-Round (ESP, Temp) and Emergency Response Centre Shelters in Surrey on a monthly basis.** Changes over time are shown in Figure 6. A significant limitation of this data set is that it does not account for individuals who may be moving between shelter types during the course of a month. It is possible that some individuals may be double counted if they switch shelter types (not shelters alone). However, more accurate data is currently not available.<sup>10</sup>

The graph below shows the monthly total of unique shelter users (incl. some duplicates) across all shelter types. This number does not include EWR shelters and Transition Houses.

Figure 6 Unique Clients at Year-Round (ESP, Temp) and Emergency Response Centre (COVID-19) Shelters (ERC) in Surrey, March 31, 2020 - March 31, 2022



<sup>10</sup> If we'd assume that 15% of unique shelter users access more than one shelter type during the course of a month, an estimated average of 456 unique individuals were accessing shelter services in Surrey per month.



### 3.1.5 INDIGENOUS SHELTER USERS

BC Housing provides data on shelter stays for people experiencing homelessness. A stay is recorded when a shelter user stays one or multiple consecutive nights at the shelter. Regardless of the number of consecutive night(s) an individual stays at the shelter, it would be counted as one stay. Shelter stay data includes information on the age, Indigenous status, and gender identity of shelter users.

The reporting period is January 2018 to March 2022. Shelters included in the data are Year-Round Shelters (ESP, Temp) and Emergency Response Centre (COVID-19) Shelters (ERC) in Surrey that are BC Housing funded. Transition Houses are analyzed separately. EWR and COVID Emergency Site data is limited and provided separately in section 4.6.

An important observation is that the share of Indigenous people at the homeless population skews smaller in HIFIS data than in PiT data (which also includes data from people who are unsheltered). This can be attributed to the fact that Indigenous people are reported to be less likely to access shelters. The 2020 Indigenous Homeless Count in Metro Vancouver notes that 51% of the indigenous homeless population is unsheltered compared with 28% of the non-Indigenous homeless population.<sup>11</sup>

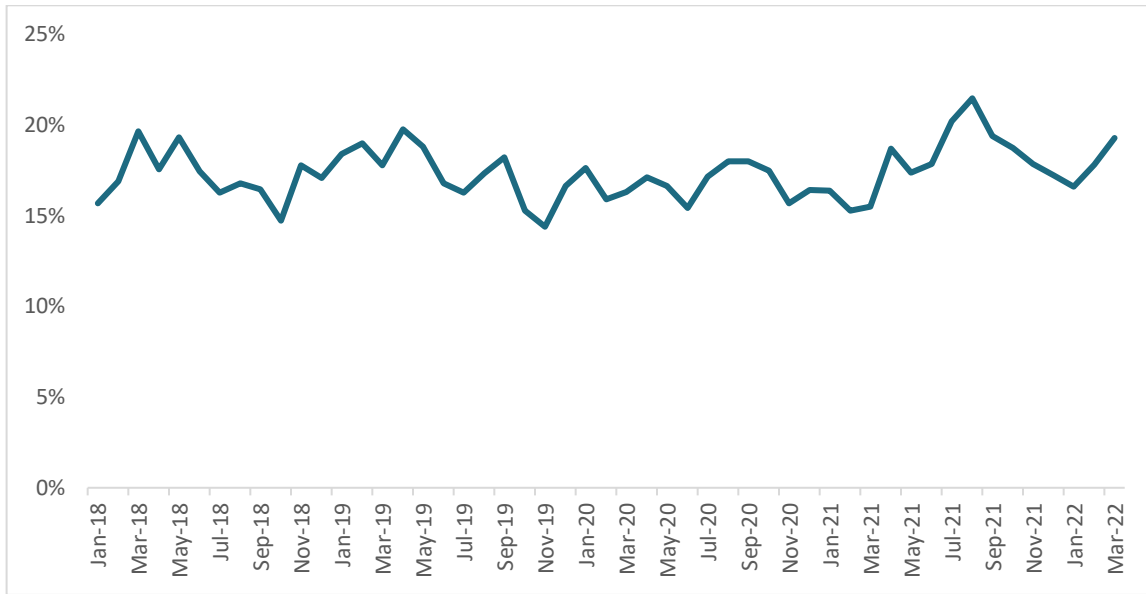
*Table 5 Average proportion of shelter stays by people with Indigenous identity, (ESP, ERC, Temp), 2018-2022. BC Housing.*

USER	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Indigenous	85	17%
Non-Indigenous	365	75%
Unknown	39	8%
<b>Average Stays</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>11</sup> 2020 INDIGENOUS HOMELESS COUNT. Results in Metro Vancouver. Infocus Consulting. 2020. URL: <http://infocusconsulting.ca/wp-content/uploads/Homeless-Count-Infographic-2020-FINAL.pdf>. Last Accessed: July 27, 2022

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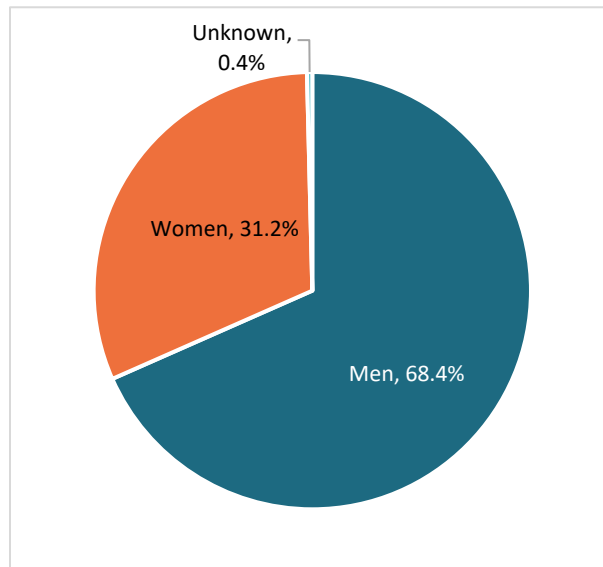
Figure 7 Proportion of shelter stays by people with Indigenous identity over time, 2018-2022. BC Housing.



- Despite only making up 2.6% of the population in Surrey in 2016, an average of 17% of people who used shelters between 2018 to 2022 identified as Indigenous, reflecting an over-representation of Indigenous people in the homeless population.
- However, compared to the PiT count the share of shelter users is smaller than expected. In the PiT count more than 30% of respondents identified as Indigenous. The discrepancy may be a result of this over-representation of Indigenous people who remain unsheltered.
- The proportion of users with an Indigenous identity has been increasing during this time frame.

### 3.1.5.1 Indigenous Shelter Users - Gender

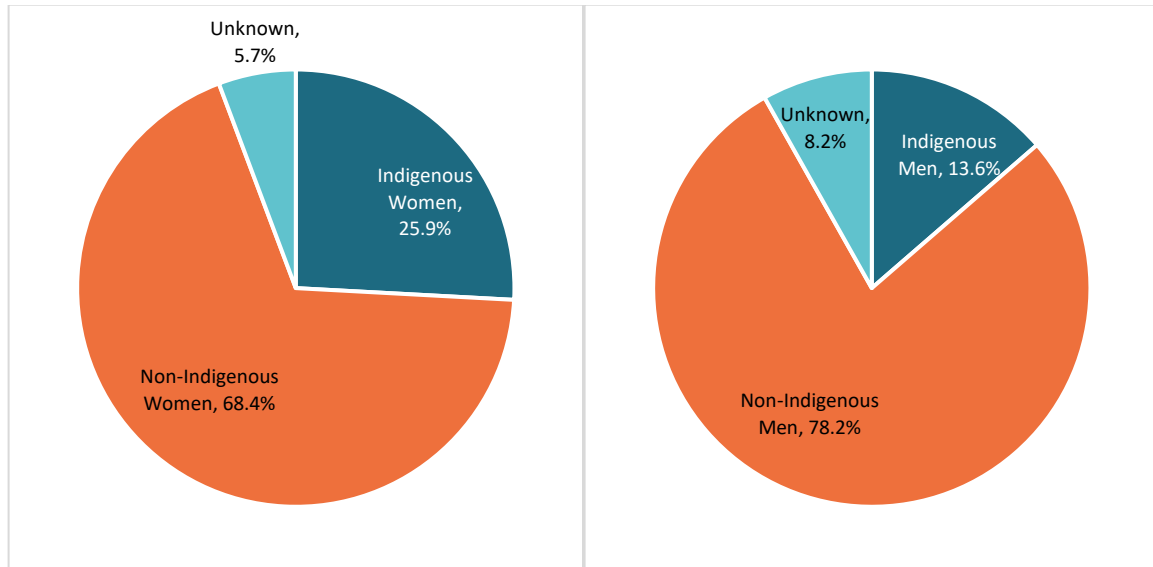
Figure 8 Shelter Stays by Gender Identity in ESP, Temp, ERC shelters, Average 2018-2022



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- As a monthly average, 31.2% of all stays in shelters between 2018 to 2022 were by women and 68.4% of all stays by men.

Figure 9 Shelter Stays by Indigenous Shelter Users, by Female and Male Gender Identity in ESP, Temp, ERC shelters, Average 2018-2022



- Of all stays by women in homeless shelters in Surrey, 26% identified as Indigenous.
- Of all men who stayed in shelters in Surrey, 14% identified as Indigenous.

### 3.1.5.2 Women's Transition House Users

- Women Transition House Shelters are not included in the HIFIS integrated cluster data for privacy and safety reasons and are not reflected in the previous section.
- On average, BC Housing recorded 70 monthly stays across 62 Women Transition House Shelter spaces between April 1, 2020, to March 31, 2022.
- During this period, an average of 32% of stays were by women who are Indigenous.**

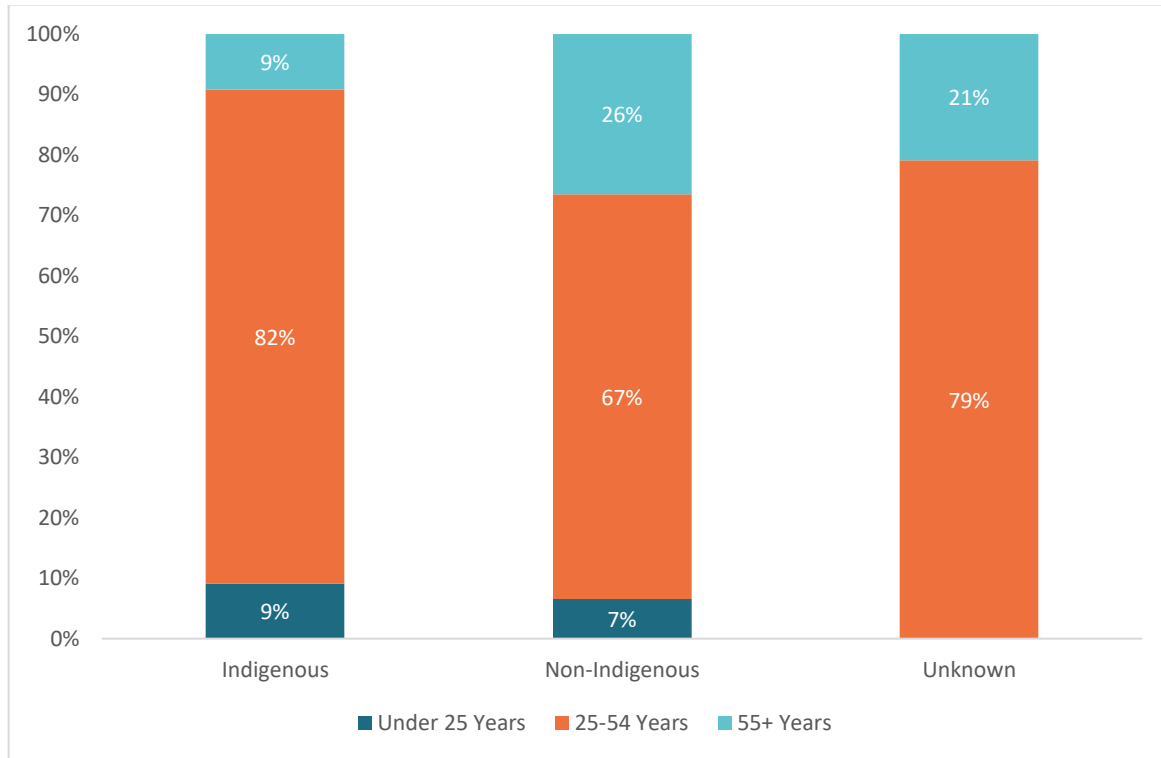
Table 6 Average monthly proportion of Transition House users with Indigenous identity, 2018-2022. BC Housing.

USER	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Indigenous	22	32%
Non-Indigenous	48	68%
Unknown	n/a	n/a
<b>Average Stays</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 3.1.5.3 Indigenous Shelter Users - Age

- Figure 10 shows age distribution among shelter users by Indigenous identity. Compared to non-Indigenous shelter users, Indigenous shelter users are more likely to be under 25 and between 25 and 54. At the same time, only 9% of Indigenous shelter users were over 55, compared to 26% of non-Indigenous shelter users.<sup>12</sup>

Figure 10 Transition House Stays by Indigenous identity, by Age Group, Average 2018-2022



### 3.1.6 EMERGENCY WEATHER RESPONSE

#### 3.1.6.1 2020-2022 EWR Occupancy (BC Housing)

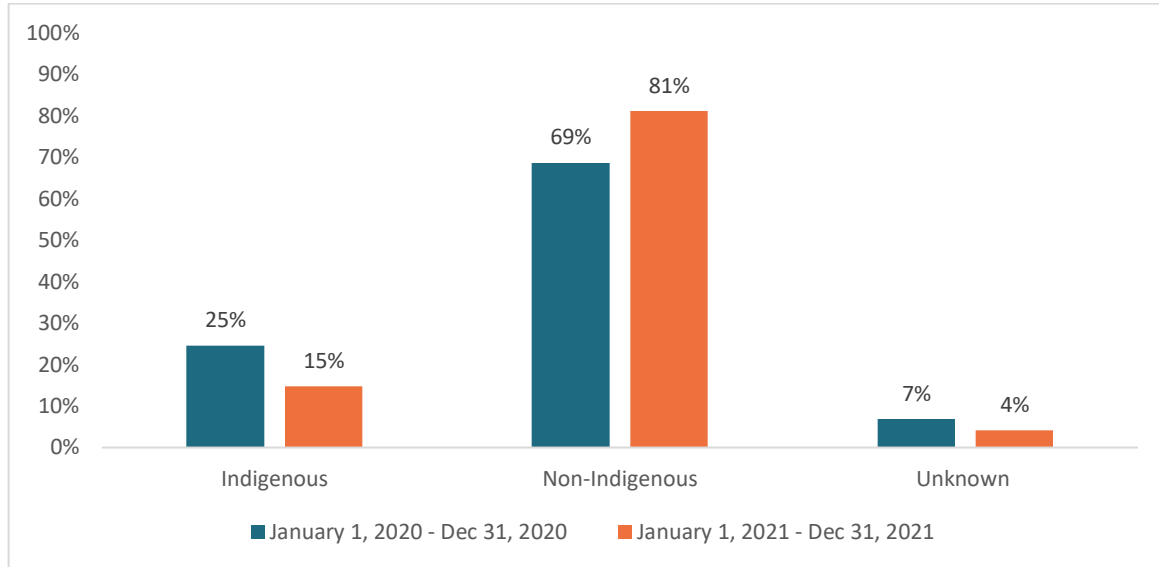
See Figure 5 for an overview of EWR occupancy data over time across all EWR shelters.

Figure 11 shows nightly occupancy by Indigenous identity for all EWR shelters. More detailed data for these is unavailable. It is assumed that collection of information on Indigenous identity for EWR shelters is not reliable due to the nature of the shelter operations and should be treated as indicative only.

<sup>12</sup> This may be due to rising homelessness among younger cohorts in recent years and access to housing for Elders. However, this may also be correlated to lower life expectancy among Indigenous people 55 and over who have a history of homelessness.

## FINDING OUR WAY HOME: DATA SUMMARY

Figure 11 Emergency Weather Response Nightly Occupancy by Indigenous Identity, January 2020 to December 2021. BC Housing.



### 3.1.6.2 2021-2022 EWR Capacity & Occupancy (Surrey)

This data is for the 2021-2022 EWR season only and was provided by the City of Surrey.

As seen in Table 7, there were 121 EWR beds in Surrey in the 2021-2022 season which are available to people experiencing homelessness from November to March when an Emergency Weather Alert is issued.

EWRs were open and occupied for an average of 80 days during the season, with Shimai house being open for 121 days in total and the Alliance Church EWR open for 24 days. The average seasonal occupancy was 78% for all EWR shelters.

On average, EWR shelters were at or over capacity for 30 days, or 39% of the days they were operational. There is great variation between shelters, with the Surrey Cloverdale shelter being over or at capacity 2 out of 3 days (66%) it was open.

The share of Indigenous people in EWR shelters in this season varies drastically across shelters. There is a much higher proportion of Indigenous women accessing the women's only shelter with 46%, while the Surrey Cloverdale shelter only reported 3% of people being Indigenous. On average, 18% of shelter stays were reportedly by people who are Indigenous.

As noted above, this number should be treated as indicative only due to the often-chaotic nature of shelter operations and its impact on data tracking. While numbers are similar, it is important to note that BC Housing and Surrey data does not align entirely, resulting in discrepancies in the total share of Indigenous people (see 4.6.1).

## FINDING OUR WAY HOME: DATA SUMMARY

Table 7 EWR Capacity & Occupancy Data, 2021-2022. City of Surrey.

NAME	CAPACITY	AVERAGE OCCUPANCY	DAYS OPEN AND OCCUPIED	DAYS AT OR OVER CAPACITY	% INDIGENOUS
EWR - Lookout Surrey Alliance	30	17%	24	0 (0%)	11%
EWR North Surrey Rec Centre	30	85%	65	16 (24%)	19%
EWR - Surrey Cloverdale	15	109%	107	71 (66%)	3%
EWR - Lookout Fleetwood Reform Church	14	83%	100	34 (34%)	22%
EWR - PCRS	6	10%	28	0 (0%)	5%
EWR – Mt. Olive Lutheran Church	20	85%	112	42 (38%)	24%
EWR - Shimai House	6	82%	121	47 (39%)	46%
<b>[Total] / Average</b>	<b>[121]</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>30 (39%)</b>	<b>18%</b>

# 4

## SUPPORTIVE HOUSING REGISTRY DATA

BC Housing provided data on Indigenous applicants to the Supportive Housing Registry. The Supportive Housing Registry provides some information on who is applying for supportive housing in the community. It is not an accurate picture of overall need for supportive housing as it is driven by both, the availability of housing at any given time (i.e. providers encourage submissions to the SHR when units become available) and due to self-initiated applications via the website.

There is no clear knowledge about the quality of data and this information should be treated as indicative only.

There were a total of 249 applicants to the Supportive Housing Registry between April 2018 and March 2022. The number of applicants per month is typically less than 10. Over this period, 34 applicants identified as Indigenous, 134 as non-Indigenous, and 76 did not answer. This is 14% of total applicants, but it is 20% of applicants that answered the question.