

In From The Cold

Reaching out to the unsheltered.

Our community works every day to provide shelter, services and support to those who live unsheltered in the woods or on the streets. Most struggle with disabilities that make them unable to access the services, supports and housing that they need. A collaboration of faith-based communities, nonprofits, businesses and local government agencies has provided outreach, drop-in and hypothermia services in the Fairfax-Falls Church community for many years to ensure the health and safety of our most vulnerable neighbors.

Winter seasonal programs run from late fall to early spring and offer people who are unsheltered the opportunity to have a warm and safe place to stay. Because of the

collaborative efforts of the partnership, no unsheltered individuals died in FY 2011 due to hypothermia.

The Health Care for the Homeless program is a collaborative partnership led by the Fairfax County Health Department that provides critical medical care year round. Project to Assist Transition from Homelessness (PATH), operated by the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board, provides mental health and substance abuse services. Each of these programs seeks to engage people in the services they need and ultimately, if they are interested, housed. Despite all the community's work and outreach, the effort needs to expand. Just this year, more than 1,000 people who were homeless were unable to access even an emergency shelter.



“The experience of feeling like you have everything, then to have it all taken right from under you is indescribable. With that being said, I am humbled, grateful and am looking to pay it forward when I am back on my feet...”





During the winter season in FY 2011, **more than 200 individuals** who were homeless lived outside in wooded areas in our community and **were at risk for hypothermia** during extreme weather.

Highlights

- In FY 2011, 15 individuals moved from winter seasonal programs directly to permanent housing, **double the number from FY 2010.**
- The number of people who participated in winter seasonal program services **decreased by 150 from FY 2010.**

Winter Seasonal Programs

Health Care for the Homeless

PATH Outreach

Number of people served: **1,026**

(Including the Hypothermia Prevention Program and winter seasonal overflow shelters.)

- Participants receive medical, mental health and substance abuse services, case management, information and screenings, life skills and other critical services.

Number of people served: **1,260**

- Participants receive physical and mental health care, transportation to medical care, mental health and substance abuse services and dental care.
- The Medical Respite Program served 47 individuals.

This data was not collected in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

Data reported in FY 2010 only captured the numbers from two of the four human service regions.

Number of people served: **207**

- Participants receive case management, assessment, diagnosis and treatment for mental health and substance abuse disorders, resource identification and assistance in obtaining benefits such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) and food stamps.

This data was not collected in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

Success Story

The Falls Church Winter Shelter program successfully provided services during the hypothermia season in 2011 — serving 37 unduplicated individuals. More than 300 volunteers have provided shelter shift coverage, 700 meals and ensured food and other operating staples. The Lamb Center, First Christian Safe Haven, Unity Club and the Wellness Center, have provided local day services to residents. In addition to providing counseling and access to other social services, the program has helped two residents move into permanent supportive housing programs and two others with market-rate housing. Also, with the help of the program, three residents secured placement in local emergency shelters.