



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR THE CHR HIFIS REPORT

Version 1 - September 2022

### 1. Can I use this Report for my 2021-22 CHR (covering the period April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022)?

Within Section 4 of the CHR, there are two data options:

1. report on a full year worth of data (April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022) or
2. report on one month worth of data (March 2022).

To know if this report can be used for either data point, a few factors will need to be considered: data quality, comprehensiveness, and when you updated to version 4.0.59.1 (or above).

- Understanding data quality:
  - Has the community been using HIFIS since April 1, 2021, including day-to-day activities to keep clients active, entering shelter stays, and updating housing history records to identify when a client becomes housed, homeless, or transitionally housed?
  - If data entry began after April 1, 2021, it may not be comprehensive for the full year picture.
    - Comprehensive is defined as including everyone currently experiencing homelessness in the community, as much as possible right now (e.g., beginning with everyone that has come into contact with the homeless-serving system in some way).
- When did the community update to version 4.0.59.1 (or above)
  - The update to 4.0.59.1 included the key elements of Client State and Housing Status which are used to determine the data points in the CHR. If the update occurred after April 1, 2021, the data may not be comprehensive for the full year picture (for example, if the update was in July 2021, there may be data gaps between April 2021 and July 2021).

For more information about how to assess comprehensiveness under Reaching Home, see Section 4 of the [CHR Reference Guide](#).



## 2. Should I use this Report for my 2021-22 CHR?

As this Report is being released close to the 2021-22 CHR deadline, a community does not have to use it for their CHR for this year.

It is recognized that communities likely need time to analyze the CHR results that they are getting using any pre-existing methodologies against the results they get using the Report. If there are differences, communities will need to explore the reasons behind them and build a strategy for ensuring that the data that is submitted in their CHRs is high quality, which will likely also take some time.

If a community chooses to use their own methodology to generate CHR results from HIFIS, please indicate as such in the comment boxes in Section 4 for the outcomes.

## 3. How can I get help with comparing the results between this Report and other methodologies my community has been using?

The Report was developed with specific rules that produce each outcome. The [CHR HIFIS Report Guide](#) details how each data point is calculated. To support the process of comparing results generating using different methodologies, an SQL query can be provided to list clients by name or Client ID to better understand which clients are appearing in each result.

For example, a client may be appearing on one report, but not the other. This SQL query can be provided to communities by contacting the HIFIS Client Support Centre at [support@hifis.ca](mailto:support@hifis.ca).

## 4. How do I know this data is accurate?

The goal is for communities to have a Report that generates data that represents an accurate and complete picture of homelessness at the community level.

For this Report, all data points are calculated using data entered in HIFIS by end users. This includes client vitals information (such as age, gender identity, Indigenous status and veteran status), as well as experiences of homelessness in the Admissions module and Housing History.

As data entry practices improve over time, communities may notice that the results they get in their various reports, including this Report, changes. This is expected. With good data entry practices, reliability in the results also increases, giving communities greater confidence in the accuracy of their data.



## 5. Can I identify people within this Report?

This Report is an aggregate report and displays the total amount in each data point. At this time, it is not possible to determine the unique clients directly within the Report. A future version of the report could include this feature. Per Question 3, communities can use SQL to query Client IDs or names directly from the database.

Note that within the Report Manager, a community can download the RPT file and modify the report. If the community has the expertise, they could create a version of the Report that does list the clients that appear in each data point and re-upload using the Custom Reports feature.

## 6. I ran the Report for 1 day (start and end date of today), then compared the overall homeless total to the Unique Identifier List in the Coordinated Access Module, why are the numbers different?

There are two possible reasons why this could be occurring.

1. The Unique Identifier List includes clients with an unknown housing history. In the Report, a client with an unknown housing history record has missing data that does not allow HIFIS to know if the client is currently homeless. This means they may not be included in the Report.
  - Note: The List includes people with an unknown housing status in order to ensure that they are not excluded in error or due to incorrect data entry.
2. The Unique Identifier List includes only clients that have provided Coordinated Access consent, while the Report includes clients with Inherited and Explicit consent (see Note below). This means that there may be clients that are missing Coordinated Access consent who do not appear on the Unique Identifier List, that are in the report.
  - Note: In order to be as inclusive as possible, the report was written to exclude clients who have provided Declined Anonymous consent. Any client who has not provided their consent will not appear in the Report.

## 7. Some of the demographic data points don't add up to the total at the top of the page. For example, my overall homelessness number is 95, but if I add up the totals from the gender identity section, I only get 92. Why?

As with many data points in HIFIS, the option exists to decline answering the question or entering an unknown response. If the numbers are different, it means there is unknown data within that data point that HIFIS doesn't have.



## 8. How does Unknown Housing Status impact the Report?

Housing Statuses of Unknown will impact the data and will result in under reporting of the outcomes. In addition, poor data quality prior to the reporting period will result in under reporting for Outcome 3 (Returns to Homelessness) and Outcome 5 (Chronic Homelessness) as the Report looks before the reporting period for those calculations.

Unknown Housing Statuses indicate that HIFIS does not have the necessary data to classify a person's housing as either Homeless, Housed, or Transitional.

Examples:

- For Outcome 1 (Fewer people experience homelessness), if housing history or admissions records are missing or if housing history is unknown, the person will not be able to be counted as homeless during the reporting period.
- For Outcome 2 (Fewer people were newly identified), if housing history is unknown, the Report will be unable to determine if they are newly identified within the reporting period.
- For Outcome 3 (Fewer people return to homelessness from housing or transitional housing), if housing history is unknown, the Report will be unable to calculate the person as returned to homeless.
- For Outcome 4 (Fewer Indigenous peoples experience homelessness), similar to Outcome 1, if housing history (or admissions records) are unknown, the person will not be counted as homeless during the reporting period.
- For Outcome 5 (Fewer people experience chronic homelessness), if past experiences of homelessness are not included, the person may be experiencing chronic homelessness, but the system does not have enough data to identify the person as experiencing chronic homelessness.

## 9. Is transitional housing a housing type that falls under the Housing Status of housed or homeless in this Report?

For the purposes of this Report, housing history records within transitional housing are considered "housed" (i.e. a person who has been in transitional housing for the entire reporting period will not appear as "experiencing homelessness".)

That being said, people that are discharged from transitional housing into homelessness will appear in the "Returned to Homelessness" outcome.



## **10. My community uses the Geographic Regions functionality, how can I benefit from this Report?**

Currently, the Report calculates the data based on the overall cluster that the user is logged in under. It does not have an option to further filter the data based on the Geographic Region. The Homelessness Policy Directorate is currently working on enhancements within HIFIS to allow this functionality to support those communities that use the Geographic Region function.

Note that if a community has the expertise, they could create a version of the Report that considers Geographic Regions in the results by downloading the RPT files and modifying the report locally to include their unique geographic regions as a report parameter.

## **11. Can I compare this data with monthly Built for Zero or CAEH data?**

In partnership with the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness, the Homelessness Policy Directorate is currently working on a reference document that outlines the differences between the Built for Zero HIFIS reports and the CHR HIFIS report.

If communities run the CHR HIFIS report for a one month duration, then compare against their BfZ Report, they may see a similar, but not exact, result. This could be due to data entry differences or report definitional reasons.

This comparison document will be shared with HIFIS Leads and posted on the Homelessness Learning Hub when available.

## **12. I have a large database, will this Report work?**

Yes, this Report has been optimized to work for all database sizes. Regardless of database size, it should run directly from the Report Manager.

If your community is unable to run the Report, please notify the HIFIS Client Support Centre at [support@hifis.ca](mailto:support@hifis.ca) to help troubleshoot any problems.

## **13. Do I need to update my technical specifications for this Report?**

If your community uses Microsoft SQL 2012, this Report will not function. At minimum, you will need to update to SQL 2014.

Note that the Homelessness Policy Directorate is currently updating the HIFIS Installation Guide to reflect this increased minimum technical specification.

# HIFIS



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## **14. One of the pages in the Report is blank. Is this an error?**

If this occurs, refer to the totals on page 1. If one of the totals is zero, the corresponding page with additional demographic details will be blank as there is no data to support the creation of that page. This is not an error.

## **15. What troubleshooting support is provided for this Report?**

If you are having issues running the Report, or understanding the data that it produces, refer to the CHR HIFIS Report Guide, or contact the HIFIS Client Support Centre at [support@hifis.ca](mailto:support@hifis.ca).

### **Useful Information**

Consult the [Reaching Home website](#), [the Coordinated Access Guide](#), [the HIFIS Toolkit](#) and [the Homelessness Learning Hub](#) for more information on Reaching Home and the steps to implement Coordinated Access and HIFIS.

Visit the [HIFIS release notes webpage](#) for information on the latest HIFIS enhancements and fixes.

### **HIFIS Support and Staying Connected**

Contact the HIFIS Client Support Centre by email at [support@HIFIS.ca](mailto:support@HIFIS.ca) or by phone at 1-866-324-2375 for questions about HIFIS.

To receive the HIFIS Newsletter send a request to sign up by email at [info@HIFIS.ca](mailto:info@HIFIS.ca).