

Impacts of Housing and Homelessness Program and Funding Changes

Financial Changes

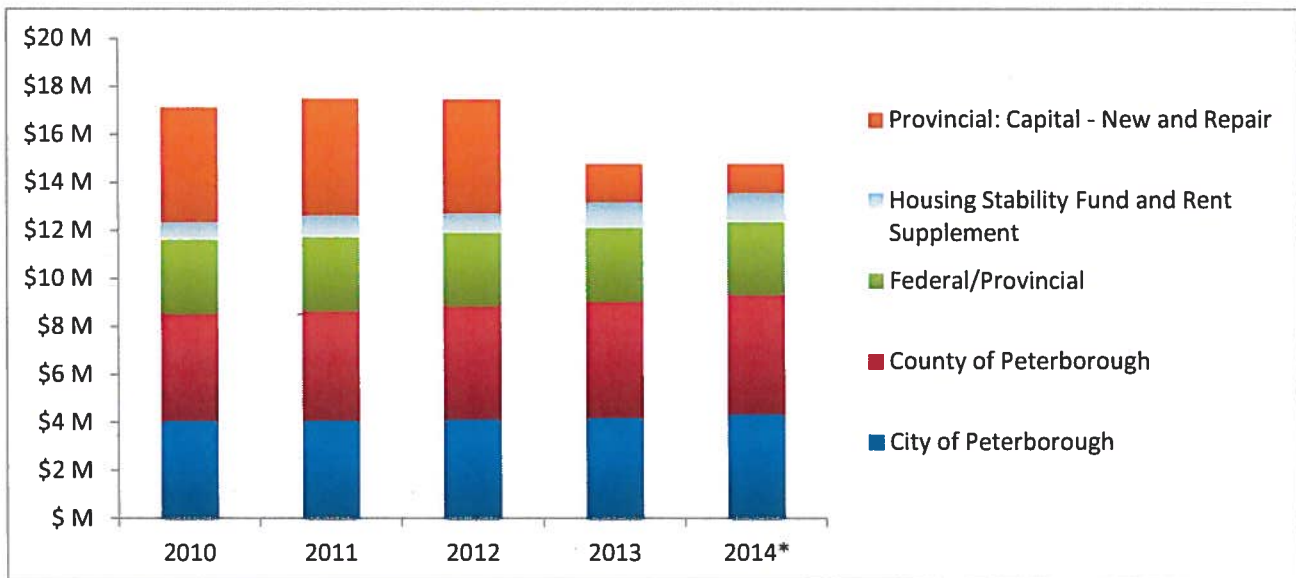
The Province continues to upload social assistance costs but program funding in areas such as homelessness prevention have been reduced. Even with the program reductions, over the last four years the provincial subsidy to the overall Social Services Division budget¹ has grown both in gross dollars and as a percentage of total spending. The provincial funding is growing to support a greater share of Ontario Works.

Figure 1. Overall Social Services spending/provincial subsidy 2011-2014

	2011 actual	2012 actual	2013 (projected from Sept)	2014 budget
Total	\$58,328,213	\$54,794,217	\$55,111,765	\$56,054,249
Municipal	\$12,093,111	\$12,278,347	\$11,588,659	\$11,214,555
Provincial subsidy	\$41,235,103	\$42,515,869	\$43,523,106	\$44,839,693
Provincial share (%)	77.3%	77.6%	79.0%	80%

The provincial contribution in housing has remained fairly stable over the last 4 years but will start to decline in 2017. Overall the housing budget has remained steady except the reduced amount of capital spending.

Figure 2. Overall Housing Division spending/ subsidies 2010-14



¹These financial totals include all social services spending and not just the Ontario Works program.

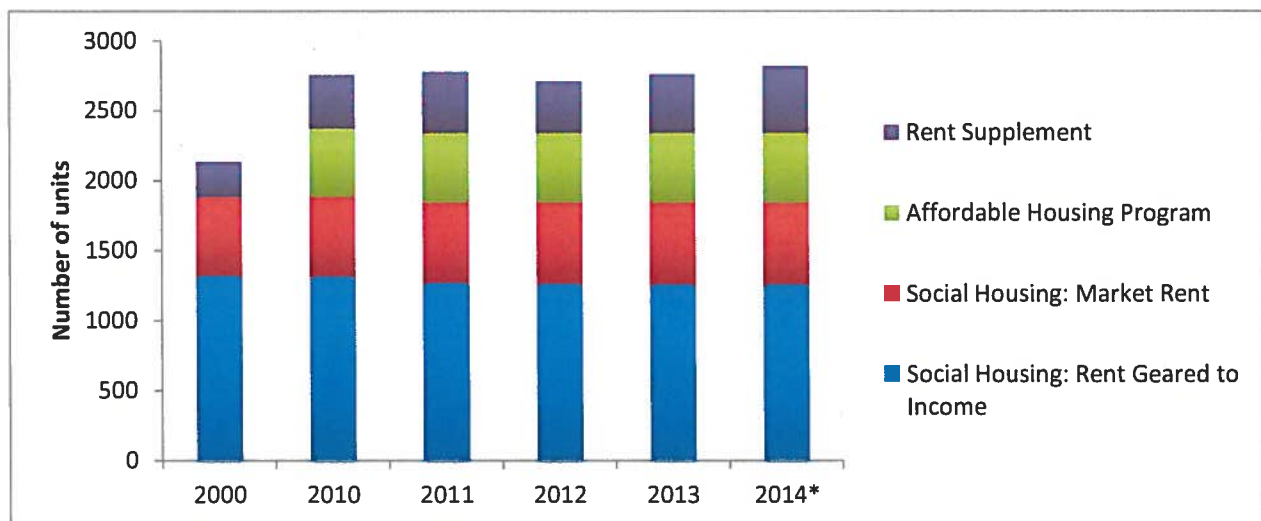
- Social Housing is the largest housing expense for the Division
- Capital funding (Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH) and Affordable Housing Program (AHP) for new rental and repair) depends on provincial programs
- Province funds the Housing Stability Fund (part of CHPI) and Rent Supplement (IAH)
- Federal/Provincial funding will decline starting in 2017
- City and County contributions to housing have increased by 9.37% since 2010

In Social Services, the provincial share funding is increasing due to the upload; however, key programs such as Community Start Up have been eliminated. In Housing, Provincial capital funding has declined, but may increase to previous levels by 2015. Provincial Federal funding and municipal funding for social housing has remained relatively stable. A proposal for new municipal rent supplement of \$200,000 annually is in the 2014 budget and the provincial rent supplement from IAH is \$322,000 in 2014 (up from zero in 2011).

Housing Programs

The biggest changes in the housing portfolio since 2000 are an increase in funding for rent supplements and capital dollars for new construction.

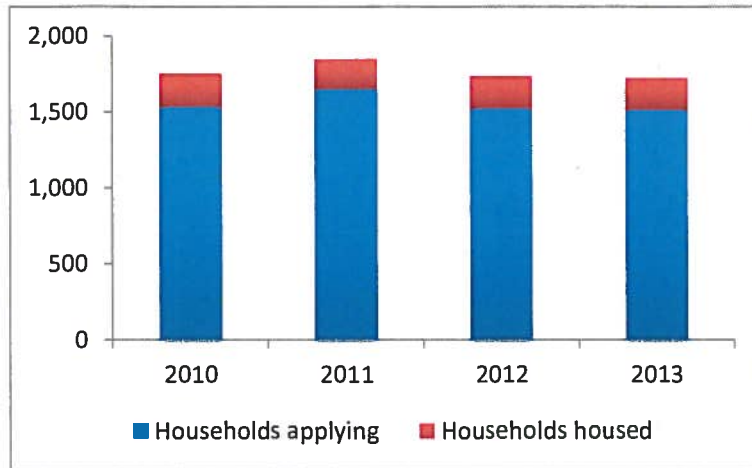
Figure 3. Housing Portfolio 2000- 2014



- Social Housing: RGI + Market equal almost 2000 units.
- Since mid-2000s focus has been to sustain social housing, build new rental and add rent supplements
- The number of Social Housing/RGI units will decline starting in 2017 as Operating Agreements expire

Figure 4. Centralized Waitlist for RGI Housing

Wait list numbers are fairly static year over year. Each year about 200 applicants are housed. Provincial Special Priority Policy (SPP) limits the number of non-SPP applicants who can be housed in a given year.

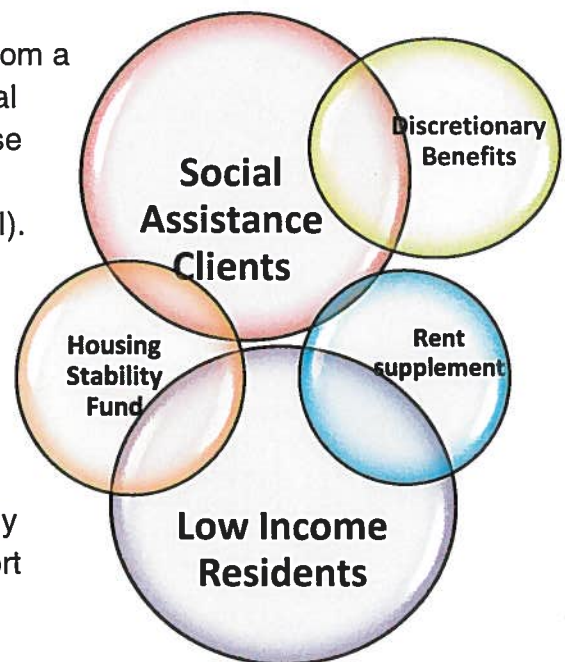


- Applicants to PHC and 12 other social housing providers use this list
- Includes RGI households seeking transfer and new applicants
- Applicants for multiple units are counted more than once
- Nine social housing providers, AHP and IAH landlords do not use this waiting list

Over 500 affordable housing units have been built since 2000, but the social housing waiting list has remained stable. More households are receiving monthly rent supplements than in 2012

Homelessness Prevention Programs

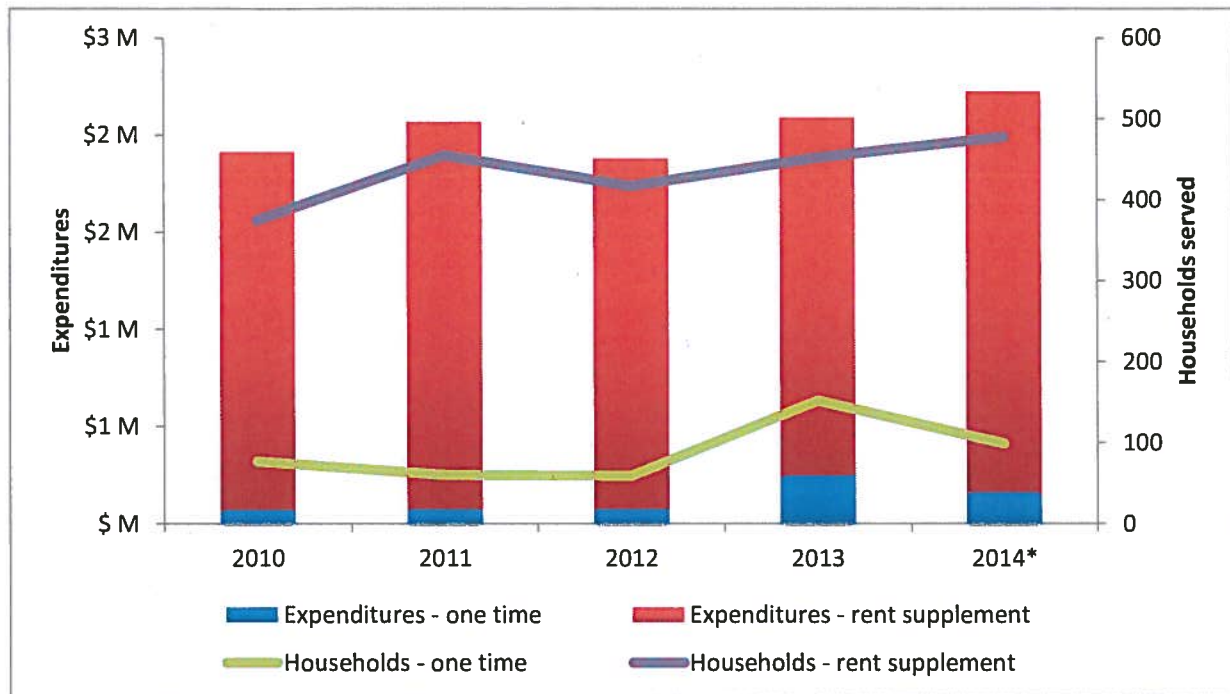
Supports to residents to prevent homelessness come from a number of different programs funded by either the Social Services Division or the Housing Division. Some of these programs are funded by the province through the Consolidated Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI). These CHPI programs include emergency shelter, housing stability fund for social assistance recipients and low income residents and some rent supplements. Together these programs provide some relief from immediate housing crisis for low income residents and can also provide some preventative supports. Discretionary benefits is exclusively available to social assistance recipients can also support households in financial crisis.



Housing Division

The Housing Division is responsible for funding programs delivered by Peterborough Housing Corporation and the Housing Resource Centre. These programs are aimed at creating housing stability and preventing homelessness among low income households.

Figure 5. Onetime (emergency) Housing Assistance and Monthly Rent Supplements



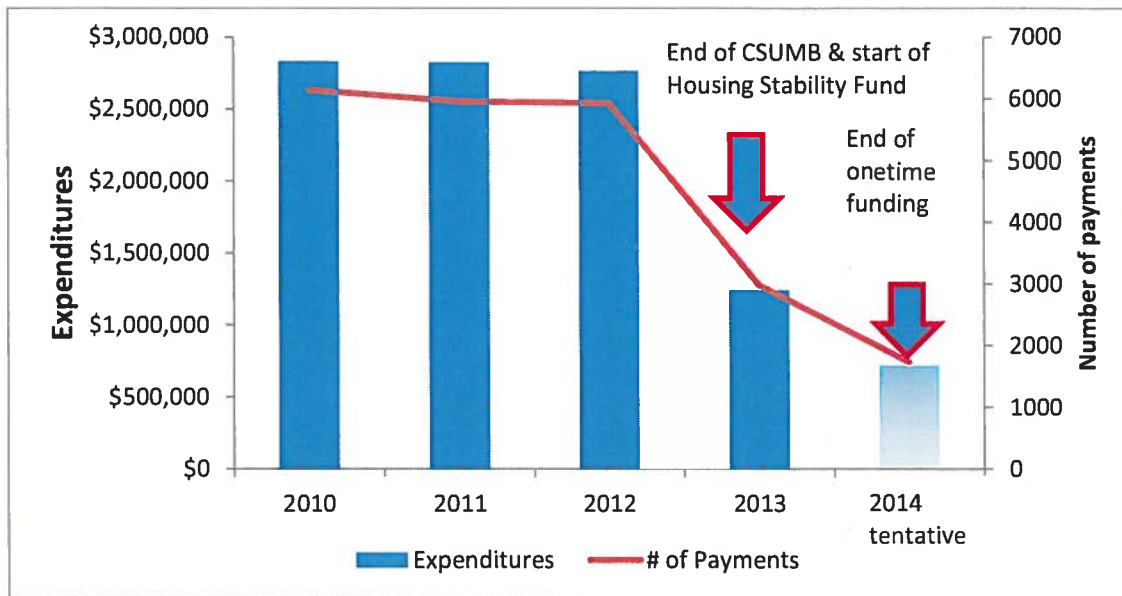
Households served are increasing as funds are made available. Demand has not levelled off indicating an unmet need in the community.

- Expenditures increased by 8% due to IAH rent supplement and CHPI Housing Stability Fund
- Expenditure increase in 2014 includes proposed \$200,000 (municipal) rent supplement and new IAH rent supplement.
- In 2013, HRC started delivering onetime housing assistance, now called the Housing Stability Fund (HSF) to low income residents that were not eligible for social assistance.

Social Services Division

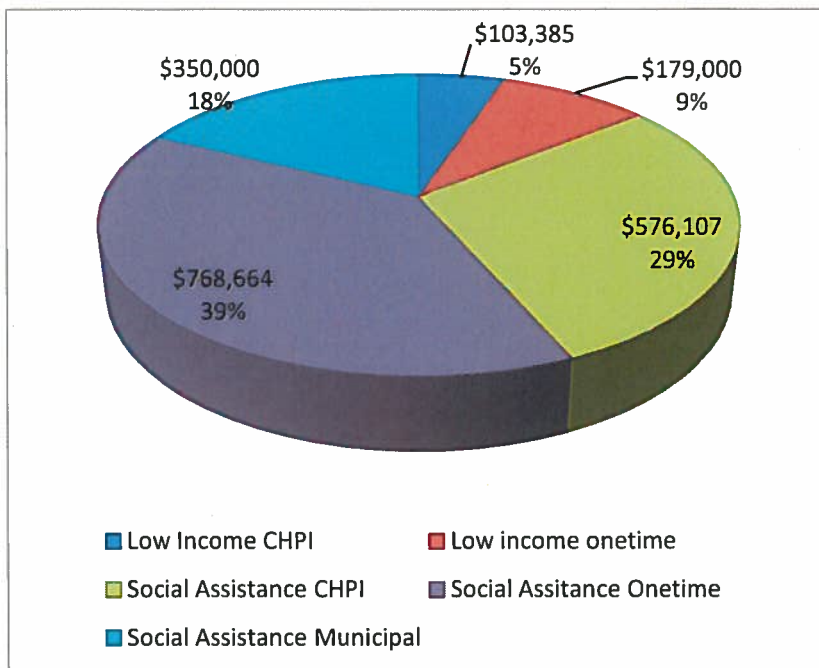
In Social Services the HSF is delivered to Social Assistance recipients. The fund is designed to partially mitigate the gap left after the province eliminated Community Start Up and Maintenance Benefit (CSUMB)

Figure 6. Social Services Emergency Housing Benefits/Funds Expenditures and Payments Issued



- From 2010 to 2012 only 1% of the discretionary benefits were spent on emergency housing related costs such as fuel and hydro costs, home repairs, moving expenses, last months rent or rent arrears.
- **CSUMB was the largest mandatory benefit issued to social assistance recipients to prevent homelessness with approximately 6000 payments issued per year resulting in \$2.8 million in expenditures.**
- In 2013 this benefit was replaced with the HSF which will provide approximately 3000 payments in 2013 with \$1.2 million in expenditures.
- There have been 2164 requests for HSF in the first 8 months of the program and 92% of requests have been approved.

Figure 7. HSF Allocations 2103



- HSF will drop again in 2014 with the end of the one time transitional funding in April
- The final allocation from CHPI to the HSF for 2014 is still to be determined.
- Approximately 15% of the HSF is allocated for low income residents that are not in receipt of social assistance.

The Housing Stability Fund (HSF) has been designed to help prevent homelessness. It starts to fill the gap in programming created by the end of Community Start Up Benefit (\$2.8M). The HSF is now available to all low income residents rather than just those eligible for social assistance. The HSF has been supplemented in 2013 by a onetime grant which ends in April 2014. HSF allocation was \$2.0M in 2013 reducing to \$1.0M in 2014 and \$0.7M in 2015 (final allocation for 2014/15 is still to be determined).

Social Services – Discretionary Benefits

Social Services also provides discretionary benefits to social assistance recipients. These benefits historically represented a very limited homelessness proportion of the budget (1%) but the homelessness benefits were eliminated in 2013 in response to provincial funding changes.

The total level of funding for discretionary benefits have been reduced by approximately \$650,000 (or 30%) over the last 5 years mostly due to provincial funding constraints over the last two years. Social assistance caseloads have grown by approximately 15% over the same time period. The current focus for the discretionary benefits program is on health related benefits such as vision and dental care.

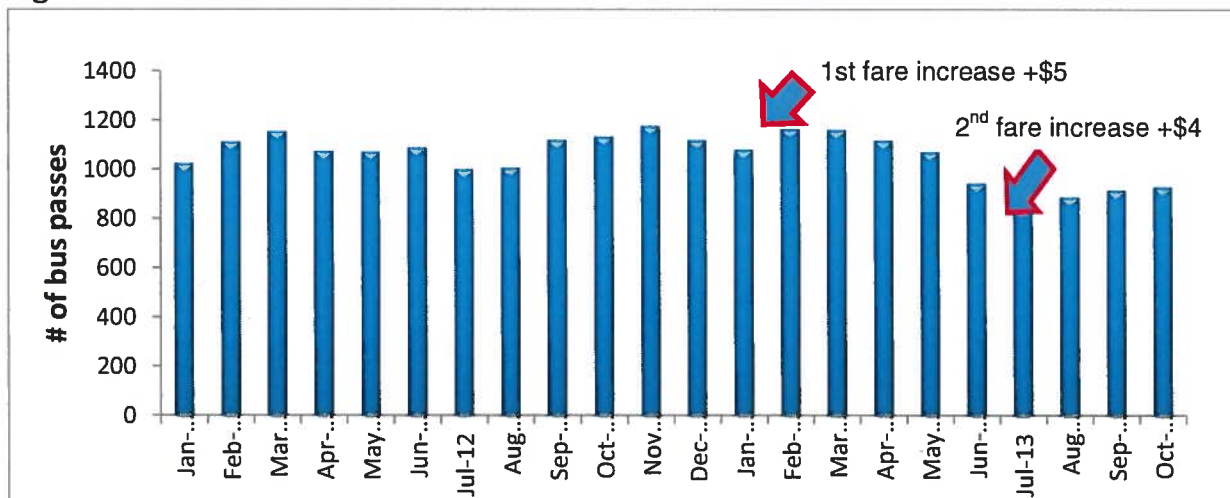
Figure 8. Summary of Discretionary Benefit Spending 2010 - 2014

	2010 actual	2011 actual	2012 actual	2013 actual	2014 forecast
Housing related benefits	\$30,977	\$25,502	\$21,853	\$0	\$0
Funerals	\$186,868	\$195,506	\$170,282	\$185,142	\$122,462
Dental and Dentures*	\$1,218,251	\$908,172	\$996,844	\$958,510	\$808,193
Transit (bus passes)	\$342,890	\$398,918	\$444,618	\$408,443	\$295,400
Other health	\$228,757	\$256,934	\$250,341	\$207,387	\$223,088
Other non health	\$182,651	\$208,112	\$204,341	\$138,924	\$100,000
Provincial subsidy	\$1,765,466	\$1,618,439	\$1,399,679	\$1,898,406	\$1,549,143
Provincial % share	80.6%	81.2%	67%	46.3%	60.0%
Total	\$2,190,394	\$1,993,146	\$2,088,278	\$1,898,406	\$1,549,143

*dentures are limited to \$60,000/ year since May 2013 dropping from approx \$250,000/ year

- Discretionary benefit transit bus pass sales have declined following the price increases for clients in January 2013 from \$21 to \$26 and again in June 2013 from \$26 to \$30. This represents almost 50% increase over 6 months. Full fee riders had a 9% increase from \$55 to \$60. Conventional transit usage has been increasing steadily from 2010 (3.2 million rides) through 2013 (3.9 million rides projected).

Figure 9. Subsidized Transit Passes



There has been a 30% reduction in discretionary benefits over the last 5 years (mostly in the last two years). Key areas of concern are clients' access to subsidized bus passes and the level of funding for dentures. Though discretionary benefits are important, the cuts have not and will not likely create the level of impact resulting from the recent homelessness program changes.

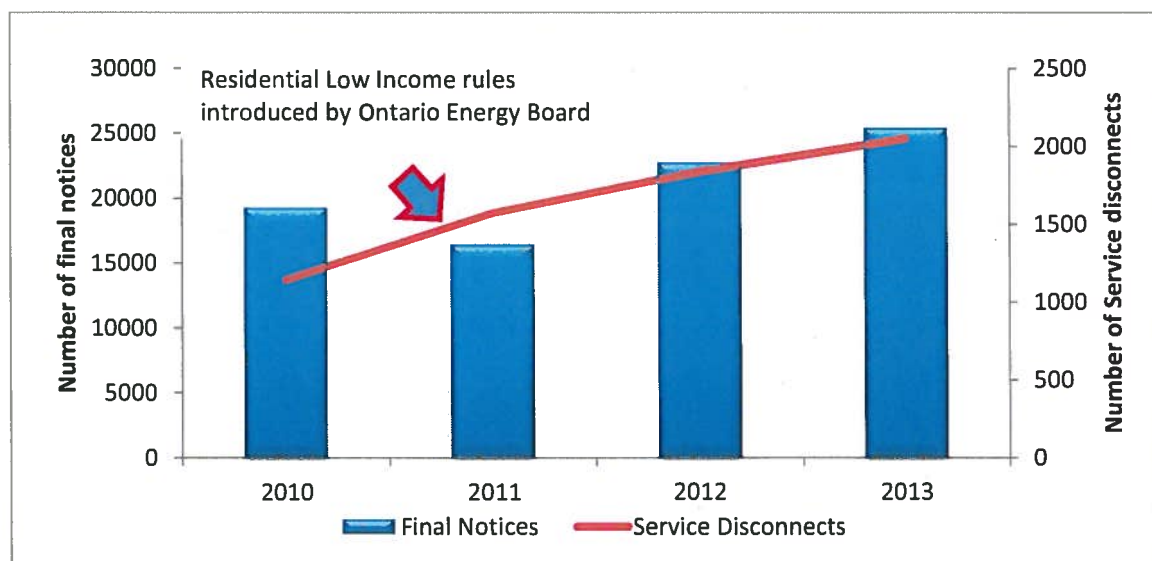
Indicators in the Community

A number of community indicators have been explored to investigate the impacts of recent funding changes. Indicators that were reviewed included Community Legal Centre activities, eviction applications, food bank usage, emergency shelter usage and hydro final notices and disconnections. Many of these measures are tracked on an annual basis and therefore are not sensitive to recent changes but merit continued monitoring. Discussions with community partners highlighted the importance of working with the community to monitor and evaluate the outcomes of program changes.

Hydro Disconnects

- Hydro service disconnects continued to rise over the last 4 years despite Residential Low Income Rules introduced in 2011.
- The size of arrears owing is also growing, partially due to changes in the rules related to payment arrangements.²

Figure 10. PUG Final Notices and Disconnections

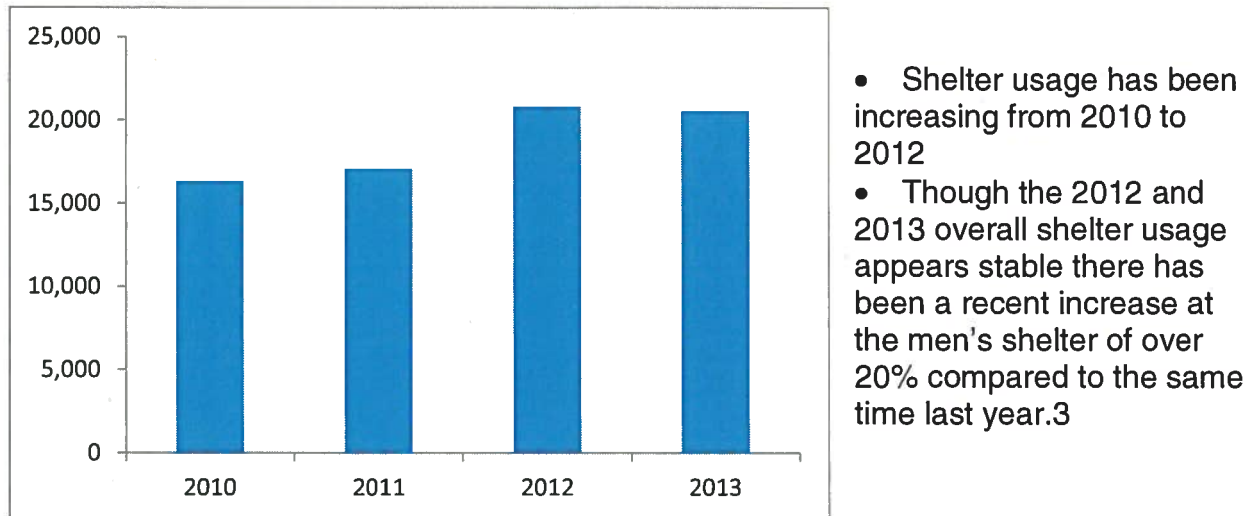


Shelter Usage

Shelter usage can be a good proxy measure for homelessness but it does not count those that are not engaged in the shelter system (on the street, couch surfing etc).

² Data provided by Director Customer / Corporate Services and Conservation Officer Peterborough Utilities Services Inc. 2013 data is actual to Sept 30th and then prorated to a full year

Figure 11. Emergency Shelter Bed Days



Evictions

One measure that has been investigated by Peterborough Community Legal Centre on a monthly basis is the number of eviction applications (L1) for the period April – July on the tribunal docket. They found that the number of applications on the docket had increased by 34.5% over the same period the year before⁴. The trend continued for August and September such that for the 6 month period the increase was 33%. Anecdotally the Legal Centre has also reported an increase in the complexity of cases.

Further investigation of trends in the Landlord Tenant Board eviction applications (rather than the docket) also indicates a significant increase over the same 4 month time period, though not as large.

Figure 12. L1 Evictions in Peterborough City and County

	L1 Application on tribunal docket	New L1 application
April – July 2012	165	146
April – July 2013	222	169
Percentage change	34.5%	15.7%

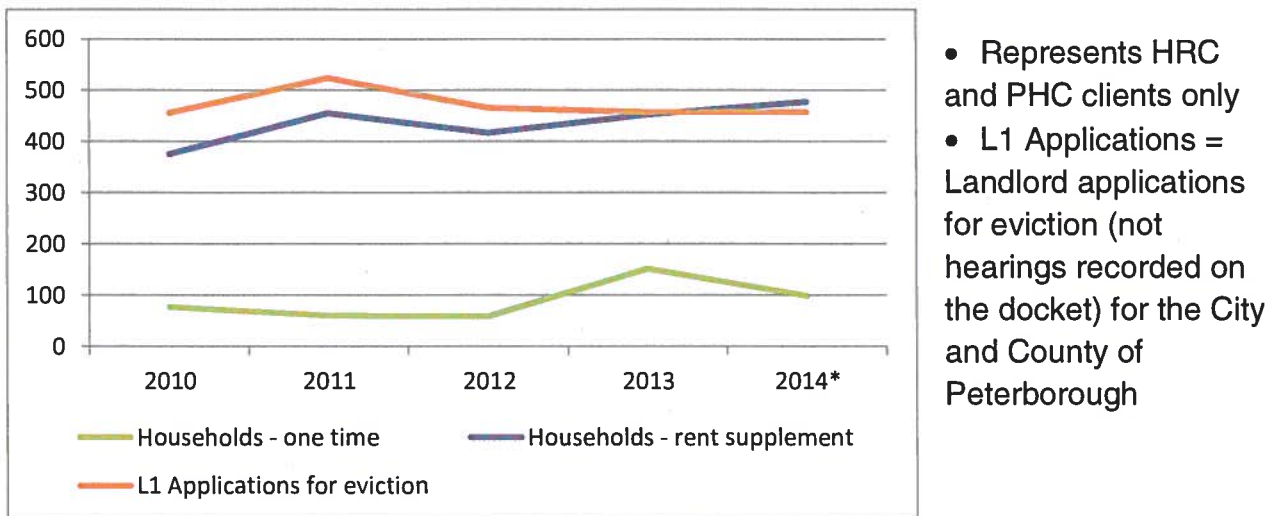
³ 2013 bed days have been projected on a straight line rather than following the increasing trend of the most recent 3 months

⁴ from "Impacts of Reductions to Discretionary and Emergency Housing Benefits in Peterborough – 2013" prepared for Peterborough Poverty Reduction Network Tara-Lyn Priddle Oct 2013

Eviction data may also provide a measure of the complexity of homelessness as there also appears to be a trend of increasing combined applications for eviction (L1 and L2) representing eviction for arrears as well as some other issue. This data requires further investigation and tracking.

As tracking becomes more detailed and consistent, comparing changes in program delivery and funding can be compared to key community indicators such as evictions to identify trends.

Figure 13. Comparison of Onetime Housing Assistance, monthly rent supplements and Eviction



It is anticipated that appropriate homelessness prevention programs will reduce evictions. When annual averages are studied to reduce any seasonal variation, the data is not sensitive enough to recent changes within the year. These types of comparisons with common measures and further details should provide better information over longer time periods.

Community indicators such as hydro disconnections, evictions and shelter usage can be used effectively to measure the impact of housing and homelessness programs. Common measures across programs need to be clearly defined and tracked over time. Though there are indications of the impact of the homelessness program changes in the monthly eviction tribunal docket and recent shelter usage, the indicators will need to be tracked on an ongoing basis to monitor the impacts.