COMMUNITY HOMELESSNESS REPORT SUMMARY

Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

2023-2024

The Community Homelessness Report (CHR) is an annual Reaching Home reporting deliverable that supports communities to prevent and reduce homelessness using a more coordinated, systems-based and data-driven response. The CHR was designed to support local discussions and decision making, using all of the information about homelessness currently available at the community level. Communities are encouraged to use their CHR data to develop clear plans of action that help them to reach their homelessness reduction targets and to leverage the collective efforts of service providers working across the community, regardless of how they are funded.

This is a summary of the CHR for the 2023-24 reporting cycle. It shows the community's self-assessment of Reaching Home implementation, which includes the following key components:
• meaningful collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners (see Section 1);
• community-level governance, coordinated service delivery (Coordinated Access) and use of a Homelessness Management Information System or HMIS (see Section 2); and,
• an Outcomes-Based Approach (tracking community-level outcomes and progress against targets using person-specific data; see Section 3).
If the community was able to report on outcomes and targets, this CHR Summary also includes results for each of the five core outcomes of Reaching Home (see Section 4).

Section 1. Community Context – Collaboration between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Partners

a) Specific to Coordinated Access, the HMIS and the Outcomes-Based Approach, has there been ongoing, meaningful collaboration between the DC CE and local Indigenous organizations, including those that sit on your CAB, over the reporting period?

→ Coordinated Access:	Yes
→ HMIS:	Yes
→ Outcomes-Based Approach:	Yes

Describe this collaboration in more detail.

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB) is both the Designate and Indigenous CE, with only one Community Advisory Board (CAB). There are members on the CAB who hold the Indigenous community representative positions.

The CAB, locally called the Homelessness Initiatives Strategic Committee (HISC), is an action-focused group that stewards and advocates for the community plan on homelessness. HISC is involved with strategic planning, funding, communication, research and best practice. It advocates for funding and policy change and members are champions in the community. HISC works closely with the RMWB to monitor trends, provide strategic direction, and guide funding based on identified community needs. One of HISC's priorities is addressing the needs and providing support to the Indigenous population, as the By Name List consistently shows a high percentage of individuals in the community experiencing homelessness self-identifying as Indigenous. Additionally, the CAB makes funding decisions for the federal and provincial Community Plan on Homelessness funding, complies with provincial and federal agreements, identifies Coordinated Access Systems barriers and works collaboratively with the community to alleviate them.

In alignment with Council's plan, HISC recognizes the need to address Indigenous homelessness and the need for Indigenous housing models in the community under the guidance and the 94 calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (as well as the organization's 29 specific calls to action). The CAB has recommended funding to the Wood Buffalo Wellness Society, an Indigenous service organization for programming, addressing Indigenous homelessness and specific Indigenous housing models.

The Wood Buffalo Wellness Society (WBWS) is a local Indigenous agency that is funded for the Centralized Intake (CI) Program and they are the team leading the Coordinated Access System (CAS) and the By-Name List (BNL).

WBWS had been instrumental in the planning for the CAS from the very beginning and was involved with the development of the BNL. WBWS has implemented changes to the CAS and BNL such as suggesting community Indigenous connections, adding Indigenous supporting data points on the BNL, and providing guidance on processes and protocols. WBWS also remains a Coordinated Access Point (CAP) and brings its experience and knowledge to the table at the monthly Coordinated Access System Team (CAST) meetings. WBWS offers programming through an Indigenous lens for Housing First, Outreach, Centralized Intake, and Rapid Re-housing. In 2023, WBWS launched a Permanent Supportive Congregate Housing style facility (Tawâw Housing Program) that houses Indigenous individuals while addressing healing with Indigenous principles. The team has a client-centered approach, which focuses on meeting the individuals where they are in their journey.

The Nistawayou Friendship Association Center is also a CAP, that provides outreach and employment services to the Indigenous population. Nistawayou is still fairly new CAP in the system, but they are a member of CAST and participate in many community meetings held by the CE. i.e., Monthly Homeless Sector Meetings, Point-in-Time Planning, etc.

In 2023-2024, 41% of individuals added to the BNL self-identified as being of Indigenous ancestry. With an overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples experiencing homelessness, that population has been identified as a priority to support. The addition of the Tawâw Housing Program to the CAS stemmed from the heightened need to support that population in the community. Tawâw Housing is partnered with McMurray Métis to provide additional services to its participants.

The CAB and the CE continue to rely on the expertise of these organizations to identify gaps within the coordinated access system and work collaboratively with all the access points to provide culturally sensitive services to Indigenous peoples. The CE also has a good standing relationship with McMurray Métis Local 1935, to the extent that there is a representative from McMurray Métis on HISC. The organization also provides regular insight at monthly HISC meetings and subcommittees.

The relationship between the Community Partnerships and Initiatives (CPI) branch of the RMWB and the Indigenous and Rural Relations (IRR) department of the RMWB is very strong and they collaborate on all aspects of funding. IRR sit on HISC as resource experts and community connection points, as they work very closely with all of the rural hamlets, local Indigenous Bands and Councils, and various Indigenous organizations in the region. IRR provides regular insight on funding and applications, events and programming, and community responses. As a result of our relationship with internal departments, partnerships, engagements and collaborations continue on an ongoing basis.

a) Specific to the completion of this Community Homelessness Report (CHR), did ongoing, meaningful collaboration take place with the local Indigenous organizations, including those that sit on your CAB, over the reporting period?	Yes

Describe this collaboration in more detail.

The CE engaged with the Community Advisory Board (CAB) during the development and completion of the Community Homelessness Report (CHR). The CAB (Homelessness Initiatives Strategic Committee (HISC)) is comprised of community partners, community members and Municipal Council with two voting seats being held by Indigenous Community representatives. Indigenous Rural Relations Department also holds a non-voting seat with the CAB. A regular scheduled CAB meeting was held on April 17th, 2024 and the CHR was discussed.   The CHR was reviewed at the HISC meeting on May 15th, 2024 and approved and signed by HISC. Sections 1,2,3 and 4a were informed by HISC input and perspectives.

The CAB and the CE acknowledge that moving forward, more knowledge sharing and representation from the Indigenous organizations is a priority.

Section 2. Coordinated Access and Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) Self-Assessment

Section 2 Summary Tables

The table below provides a summary of the work your community has done so far to meet the Reaching Home minimum requirements for Coordinated Access and an HMIS under the 2019-2024 Reaching Home funding cycle.

	Completed	Started	Not Yet Started
Number of minimum requirements	18	0	0

The table below shows the percentage of minimum requirements completed for each core Coordinated Access component.

Governance and Partnerships	HMIS	Access Points to Service	Triage and Assessment	Resource Inventory	Vacancy Matching and Referral with Prioritization
100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Section 2 Summary Comment
Highlight efforts and/or issues related to the work your community has done over the last year related to the Reaching Home minimum requirements for Coordinated Access and an HMIS.
Reaching Home Directive 4 (Coordinated Access) highlights designing and implementing a Coordinated Access System (CAS). While the CAS was designed and implemented between 2018 to 2019, there were many improvements made to the process in the 2023-2024 fiscal year. Some of these improvements include: creating quality data assurance trackers for monitoring the by-name list (BNL), addition of Coordinated Access Points, new training processes and methods, analysis of required process changes and administation protocols, improvements on accessibilty of the BNL for Centralized Intake and real-time data, improvements on the process for reporting and communicating encampment data and information. The Governance Operating Model within the Directives indicates that communities must develop policies and procedures outlining how the coordinated access process operates. In the 2023-2024 fiscal, the CE identified gaps and potential opportunities within the process. Since then, they have been working in collaboration to make edits to the Coordinated Access Guide and Standards of Practice to match the changes in the process. Also, in line with the Directives, encampment response plans and extreme weather plans and processes have been developed and updated over the last fiscal. Based on the Directives, the CE is currently working with the 7 Cities of Alberta on Housing and Homelessness on the development and transitioning to HIFIS, with the expectation there will be a transition by March 2025. Under Directive 5, during the fiscal year of 2023-2024 the Community Advisory Board (CAB) became a Council Appointed Committee, and expanded its membership to include 4 new members with representation from Indigenous Peoples and organizations, The Regional Housing Authority, Community Funding group, a local business, members of Council and is actively recruiting for various other appropriate positions. In addition to the above, during the 2023-2024 fiscal, there was a coordinated effort to streamline funding understanding the community needs in comparison to the funding availability. The community has the processes in place for working with a live BNL and are in the process of expanding the resource inventory.

Section 3. Outcomes-Based Approach Self-Assessment

Section 3 Summary Table

The tables below provide a summary of the work your community has done so far to transition to an Outcomes-Based Approach under the 2019-2024 Reaching Home funding cycle.

Step 1: Maintain person-specific data	Step 2: Maintain real-time data	Step 3: Maintain comprehensive data
Yes	Yes	Yes

Step 4: Can report monthly outcomes and set targets using data (reporting monthly data in Section 4 is mandatory for 2023-24 CHRs)

Dataset was in place as of January 1, 2024 (or earlier)	Can generate monthly data	Has set targets	Has an Outcomes-Based Approach in place
Yes	Outcome 1: Yes	Outcome 1: Yes	Yes
	Outcome 2: Yes	Outcome 2: Yes	
	Outcome 3: Yes	Outcome 3: Yes	
	Outcome 4: Yes	Outcome 4: Yes	
	Outcome 5: Yes	Outcome 5: Yes	

Step 4: Can report annual outcomes and set targets using data (reporting annual data in Section 4 is mandatory once annual data can be generated)

Dataset was in place as of April 1, 2023 (or earlier)	Can generate annual data	Has set targets	Has an Outcomes-Based Approach in place
Yes	Outcome 1: Yes	Outcome 1: Yes	Yes
	Outcome 2: Yes	Outcome 2: Yes	
	Outcome 3: Yes	Outcome 3: Yes	
	Outcome 4: Yes	Outcome 4: Yes	
	Outcome 5: Yes	Outcome 5: Yes	

Summary Comment
Highlight efforts and/or issues related to your community's work to implement, maintain or improve the Outcomes-Based Approach under Reaching Home.
The CE consistently reviews the by-name list (BNL) and data validity and participates in monthly conversations with the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness and Built for Zero - Canada Teams to better the reporting and tracking processes of the BNL. The data from the BNL is used on a daily basis for trend monitoring, systems planning, strategic planning, reporting, program mapping, and other various analytics. The BNL numbers for individuals sleeping rough are used during regular meetings with Bylaw, Outreach, and RCMP, and Indignenous Rural Relations, in an effort to better understand the housing needs of the people residing in encampments in the community. In 2023-2024, the BNL was under extensive review to analyze the trends and identify potential changes required within the BNL Excel spreadsheet. Multiple changes have been made to optimize the data validity within the list. Including, the administration of the BNL being moved to the CE, who will support with data entry, data validity and coordinate for prioritization. This will also ensure consistency within access to the BNL between all partners and Coordinated Access Points, in turn providing more accurate, real time data. Data balancing sheets were created to monitor inflow and outflow, and identify where the increases and decreases in BNL numbers are happening. These sheets are used monthly to monitor potential changes in programs and the BNL. The CE has faciliatated Outcome Measurement Training sessions with the funded agencies to improve data management and reporting outcomes. These are set to continue into the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

Additional information - Timely data
Once new information is available about a person, on average, how long does it take for changes to be updated in the database for the following:

→	Interaction with the system (e.g., changes from "active" to "inactive")?	Data entry happens immediately
→	Housing history (e.g., changes from "homeless" to "housed")?	Within 24 hours
→	Data that is relevant and necessary for Coordinated Access (e.g., data used to determine who is eligible and can be prioritized for a vacancy)?	Data entry happens immediately

| Additional information - Data collection and entry processes |
|---|
| Describe the process(es) used by service providers to collect and enter data about people currently experiencing homelessness into the database. |
| Individuals go to Coordinated Access Points seeking housing and/or referrals. VI-SPDATs (common assessment tool) and consents/documentation is completed and sent to Centralized Intake for data entry and prioritization. |

Section 4. Community-Level Outcomes and Targets – Monthly

**Outcome #1: Fewer people experience homelessness (homelessness is reduced overall)**

	March 2020	March 2021	March 2022	March 2023	March 2024	March 2025	March 2026	March 2027	March 2028	Target
People who experienced homelessness for at least one day (that month)	54	68	79	42	80					60

People who experienced homelessness for at least one day (that month)
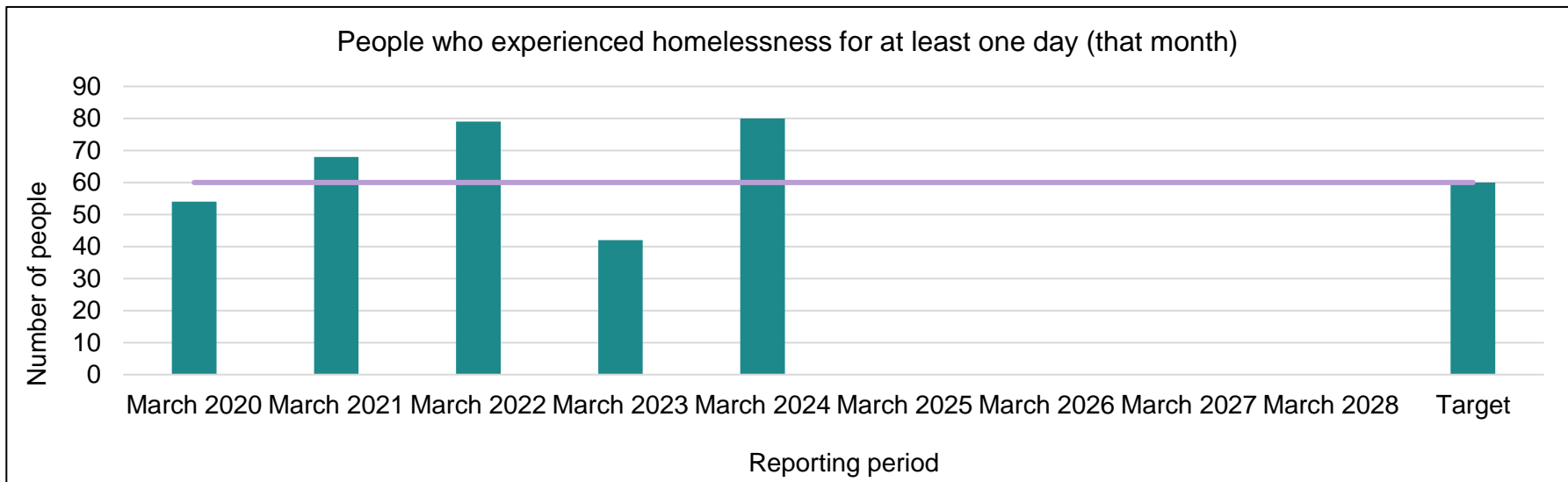
O#1(M)	What is your baseline year?	March 2024
	Overall homelessness will decrease by 25% between March 2024 and March 2028.	
	How was this Outcome generated?	Other process/tool
	The outcome was generated by using the Quality By-Name List (BNL) reporting capabilities. The BNL is currently operated in an excel document.	
	Has the data you reported for this Outcome from March 2020 to March 2023 changed from your previous CHR?	No, none of the data has changed
	Has the target you set changed from your previous CHR?	Yes, the target has changed
	Was "N/A" was used for one or more data points?	No, N/A was not used for one or more data point
	Please use the following comment box to provide context on your data.	
	d) The target has changed to 25% reduction in homelessness.	

Outcome #2: Fewer people were newly identified (new inflows to homelessness are reduced)

	March 2020	March 2021	March 2022	March 2023	March 2024	March 2025	March 2026	March 2027	March 2028	Target
People who were newly identified (that month)	8	10	8	10	6					4.5

People who were newly identified (that month)
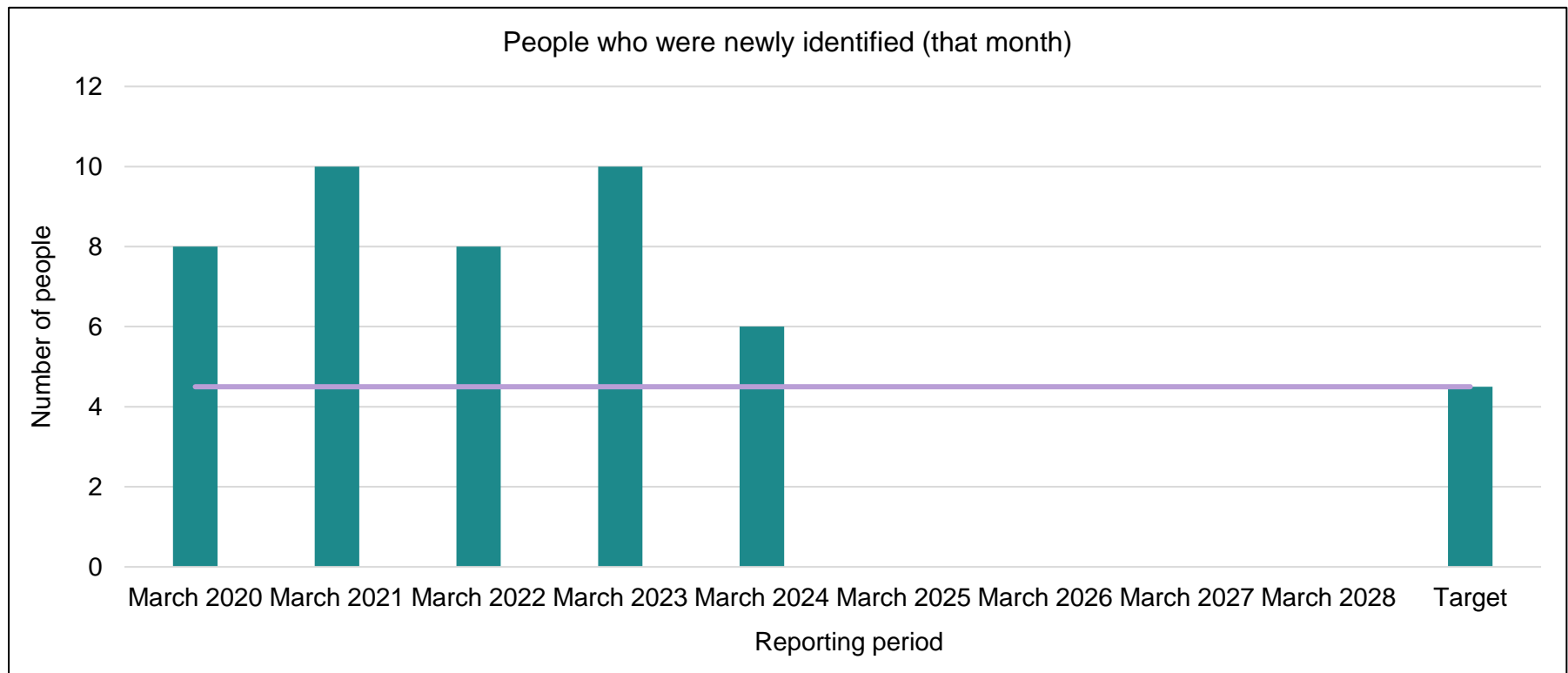
O#2(M)

What is your baseline year?	March 2024

> **New inflows to homelessness will decrease by 25% between March 2024 and March 2028.**

How was this Outcome generated?	Other process/tool

The outcome was generated by using the Quality By-Name List (BNL) reporting capabilities. The BNL is currently operated in an excel document.

Has the data you reported for this Outcome from March 2020 to March 2023 changed from your previous CHR?	No, none of the data has changed
Has the target you set changed from your previous CHR?	Yes, the target has changed
Was "N/A" was used for one or more data points?	No, N/A was not used for one or more data point

Please use the following comment box to provide context on your data.

d) The target has changed to 25% reduction in homelessness.

Outcome #3: Fewer people return to homelessness (returns to homelessness are reduced)
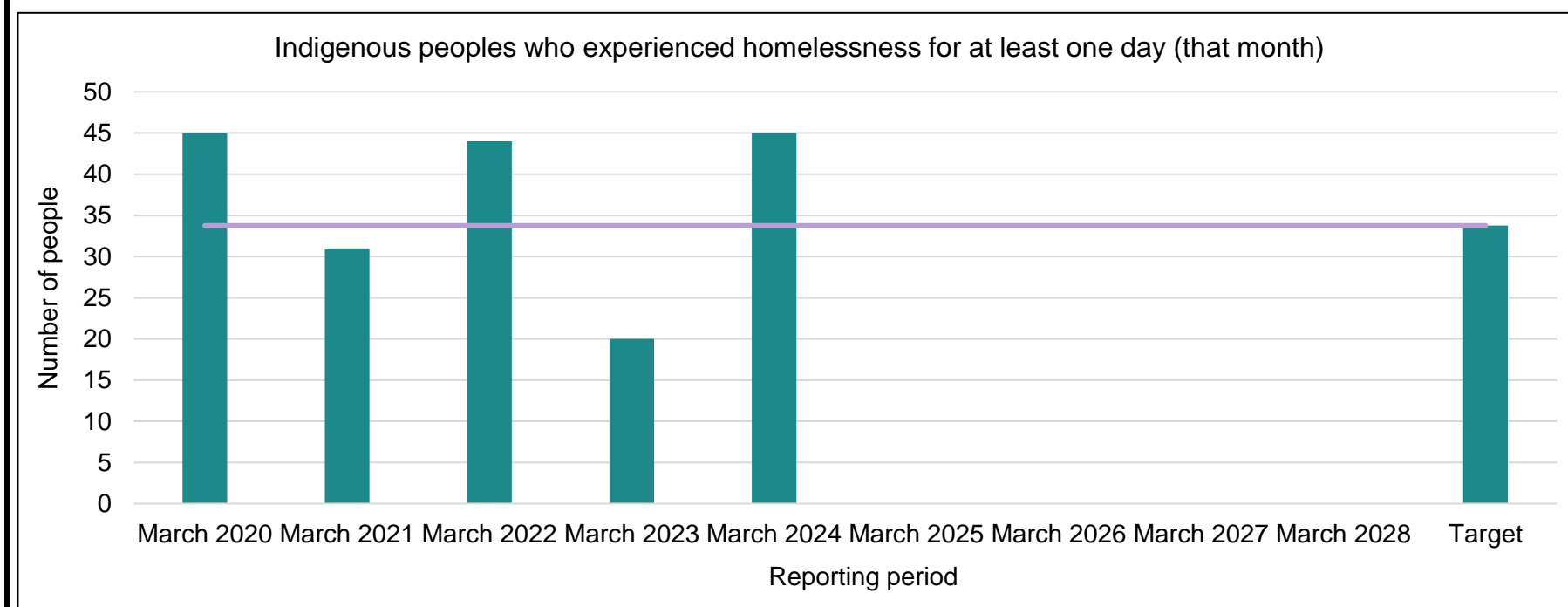
	March 2020	March 2021	March 2022	March 2023	March 2024	March 2025	March 2026	March 2027	March 2028	Target
Returns to homelessness (that month)	2	2	0	2	5					3.75

Returns to homelessness (that month)
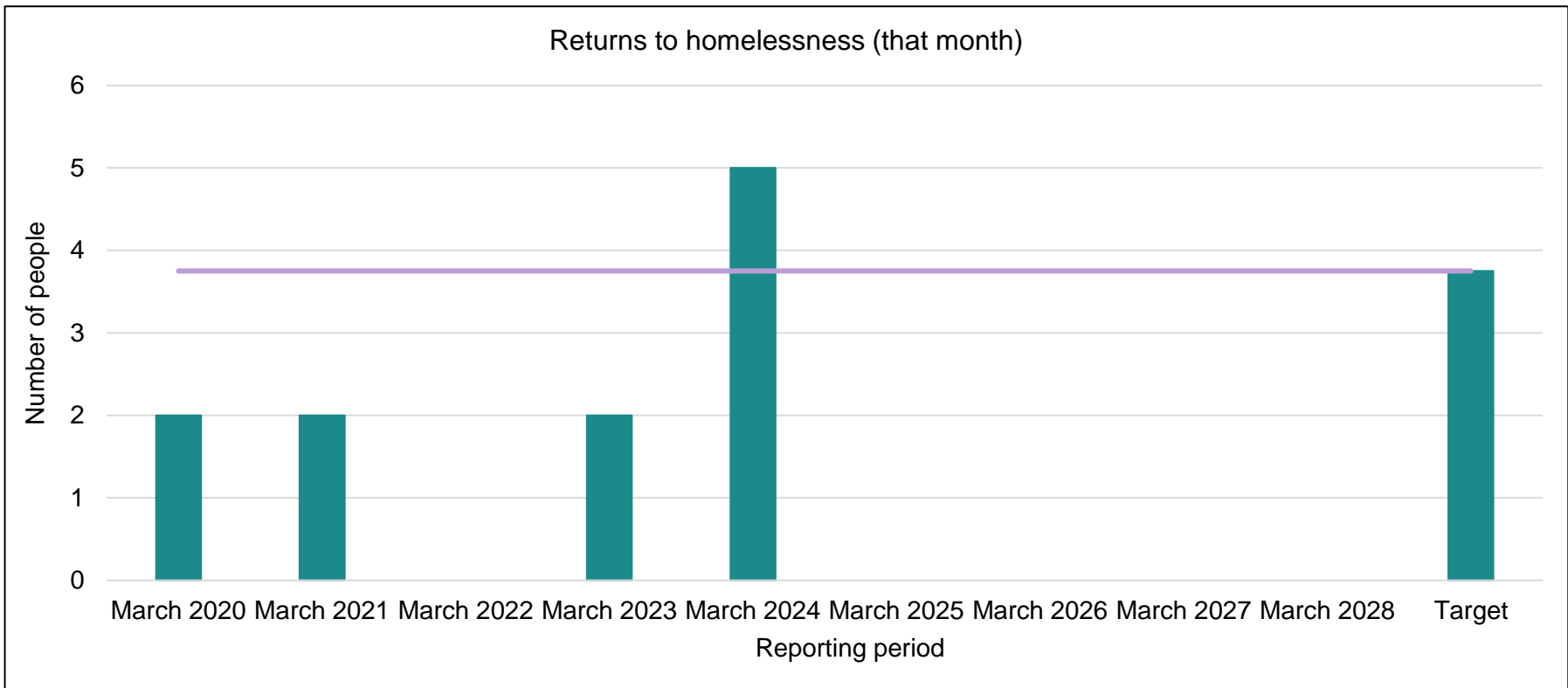
O#3(M)

What is your baseline year?	March 2024

Returns to homelessness will decrease by 25% between March 2024 and March 2028.

How was this Outcome generated?	Other process/tool

The outcome was generated by using the Quality By-Name List (BNL) reporting capabilities. The BNL is currently operated in an excel document.

Has the data you reported for this Outcome from March 2020 to March 2023 changed from your previous CHR?	No, none of the data has changed
Has the target you set changed from your previous CHR?	Yes, the target has changed
Was "N/A" was used for one or more data points?	No, N/A was not used for one or more data point

Please use the following comment box to provide context on your data.

d) The target has changed to 25% reduction in homelessness.

Outcome #4: Fewer Indigenous peoples experience homelessness (Indigenous homelessness is reduced)
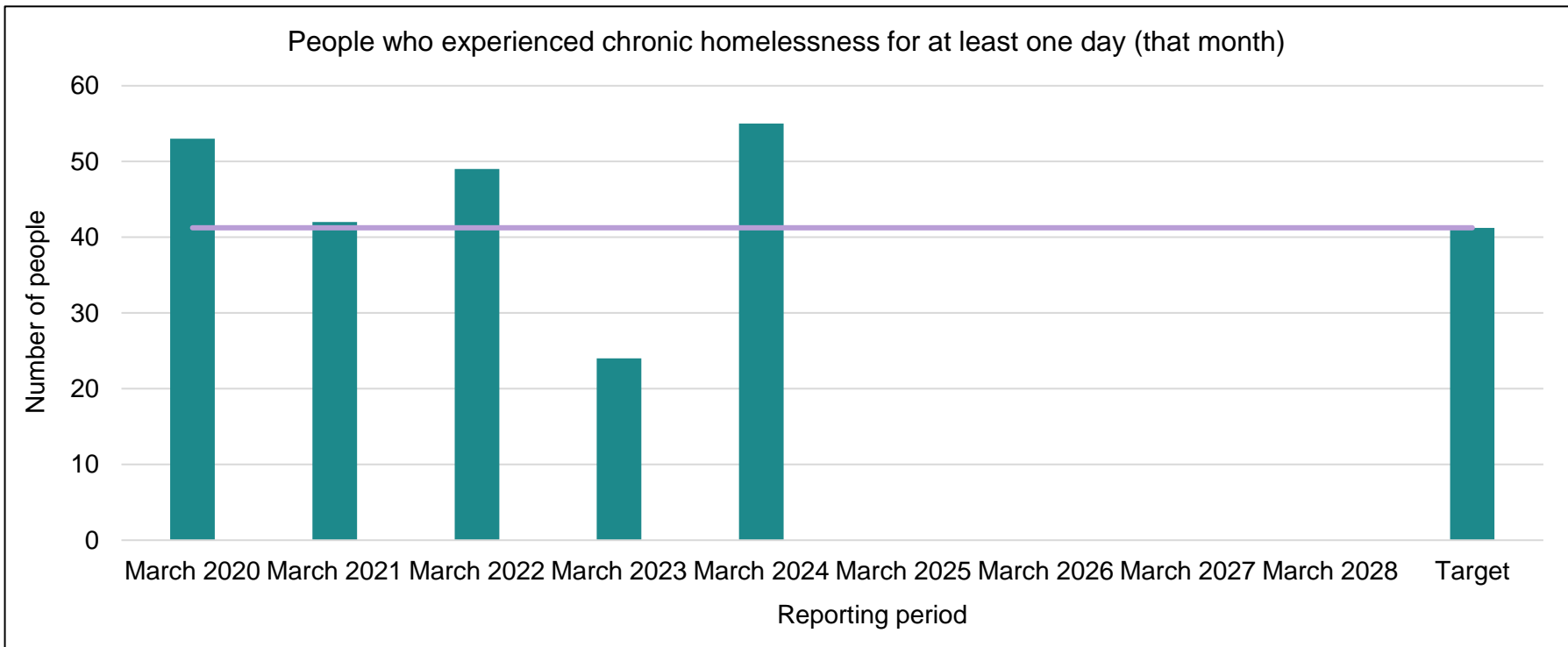
	March 2020	March 2021	March 2022	March 2023	March 2024	March 2025	March 2026	March 2027	March 2028	Target
Indigenous peoples who experienced homelessness for at least one day (that month)	45	31	44	20	45					33.75

Indigenous peoples who experienced homelessness for at least one day (that month)

O#4(M)	What is your baseline year?	March 2024

Indigenous homelessness will decrease by 25% between March 2024 and March 2028.

How was this Outcome generated?	Other process/tool

The outcome was generated by using the Quality By-Name List (BNL) reporting capabilities. The BNL is currently operated in an excel document.

Has the data you reported for this Outcome from March 2020 to March 2023 changed from your previous CHR?	No, none of the data has changed
Has the target you set changed from your previous CHR?	Yes, the target has changed
Was "N/A" was used for one or more data points?	No, N/A was not used for one or more data point
Were Indigenous partners engaged in the process of setting the baseline, setting the target, reporting on the outcome and/or interpreting the results?	Yes

Please use the following comment box to provide context on your data.

d) The target has changed to 25% reduction in homelessness. Wood Buffalo Wellness Society runs the Centralized Intake Program, which operates and adminsters the By-Name List. The CAB was also engaged in reviewing and finalizing the document.

Outcome #5: Fewer people experience chronic homelessness (chronic homelessness is reduced)

	March 2020	March 2021	March 2022	March 2023	March 2024	March 2025	March 2026	March 2027	March 2028	Target
People who experienced chronic homelessness for at least one day (that month)	53	42	49	24	55					41.25

People who experienced chronic homelessness for at least one day (that month)

O#5(M)	What is your baseline year?	March 2024
	Chronic homelessness will decrease by 25% between March 2024 and March 2028.	
	How was this Outcome generated?	Other process/tool
	The outcome was generated by using the Quality By-Name List (BNL) reporting capabilities. The BNL is currently operated in an excel document.	
	Has the data you reported for this Outcome from March 2020 to March 2023 changed from your previous CHR?	No, none of the data has changed
	Has the target you set changed from your previous CHR?	Yes, the target has changed
	Was "N/A" was used for one or more data points?	No, N/A was not used for one or more data point
	Please use the following comment box to provide context on your data.	
	d) The target has changed to 25% reduction in homelessness.	
	f) What definition of "chronic homelessness" does your community use to calculate this Outcome?	
	Our community calculates chronicity using the Provincial definition: continuously homeless for a year or longer or have had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years; sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation (e.g., on the street) and/or in an emergency shelter.	

Section 4. Community-Level Outcomes and Targets – Annual

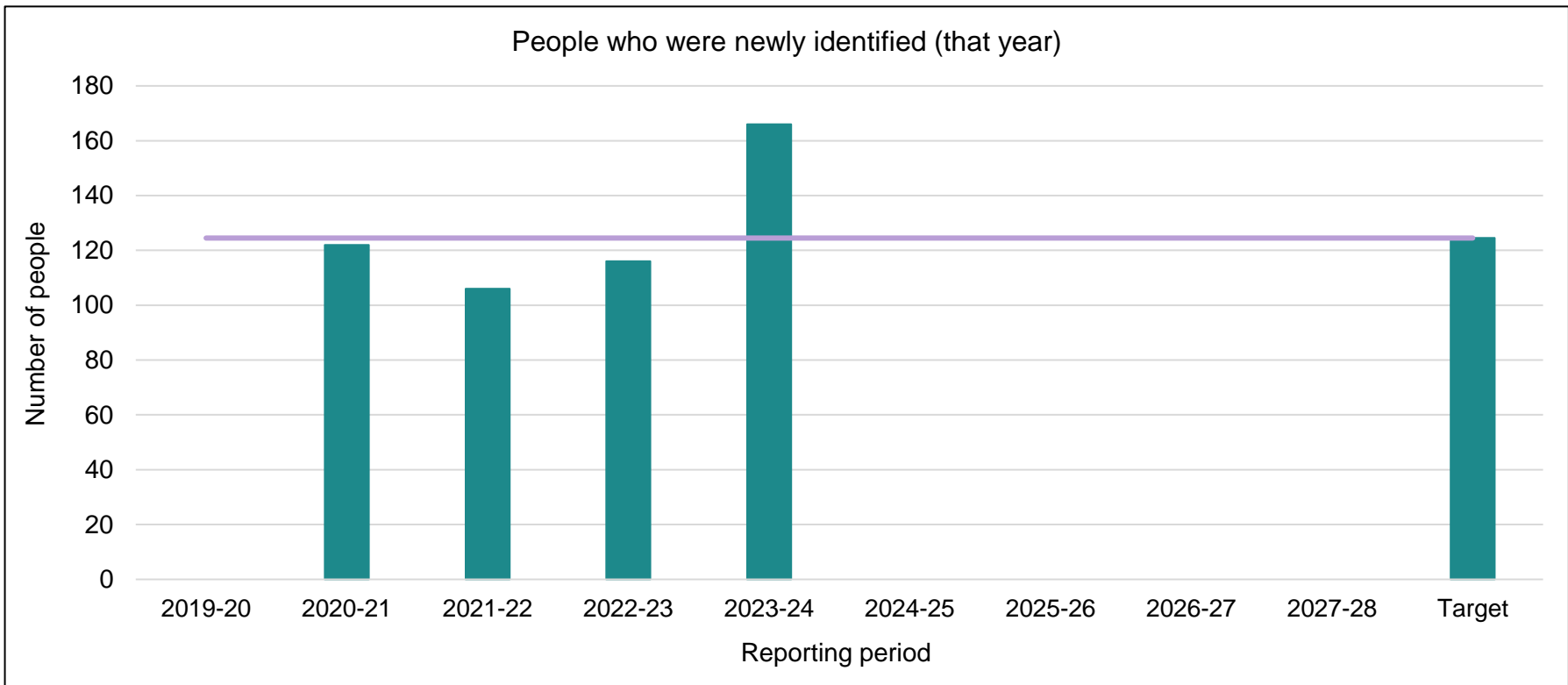## Outcome #1: Fewer people experience homelessness (homelessness is reduced overall)

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	Target
People who experienced homelessness for at least one day (that year)		170	226	197	258					193.5

People who experienced homelessness for at least one day (that year)
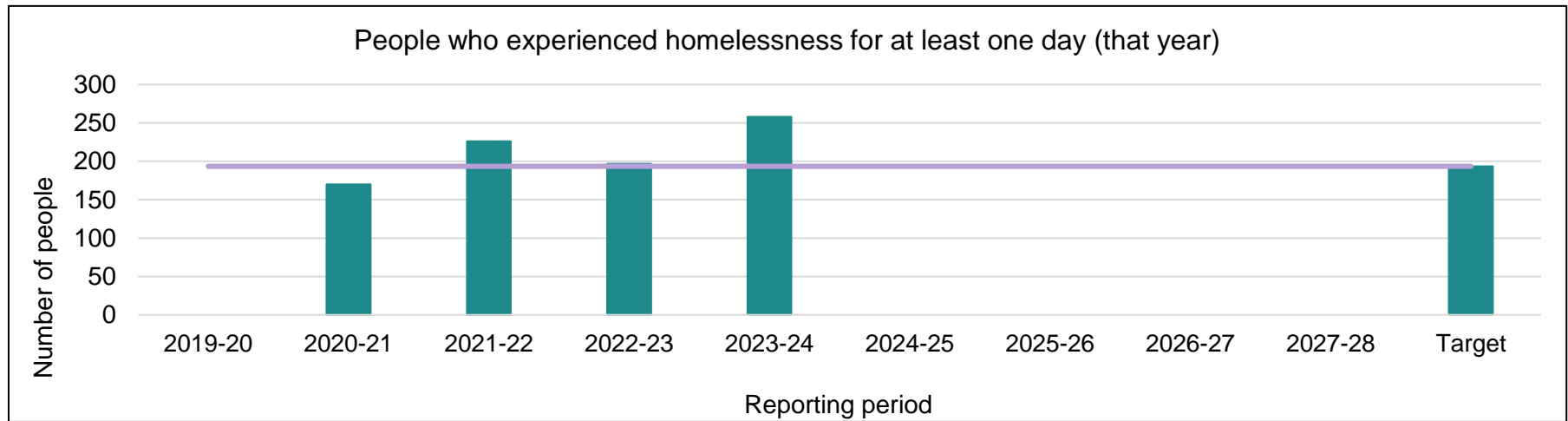
O#1(A)

What is your baseline year?	2023-24

Overall homelessness will decrease by 25% between 2023-24 and 2027-28.

How was this Outcome generated?	Other process/tool

The outcome was generated by using the Quality By Name List (BNL) reporting capabilities. The BNL is currently operated in an excel document.

Has the data you reported for this Outcome from 2019-20 to 2022-23 changed from your previous CHR?	No, none of the data has changed
Has the target you set changed from your previous CHR?	Yes, the target has changed
Was "N/A" was used for one or more data points?	No, N/A was not used for one or more data point

Please use the following comment box to provide context on your data.

d) The target has changed to 25% reduction in homelessness.

Outcome #2: Fewer people were newly identified (new inflows to homelessness are reduced)

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	Target
People who were newly identified (that year)		122	106	116	166					124.5

People who were newly identified (that year)

O#2(A)	What is your baseline year?	2023-24

New inflows to homelessness will decrease by 25% between 2023-24 and 2027-28.

How was this Outcome generated?	Other process/tool

The outcome was generated by using the Quality By-Name List (BNL) reporting capabilities.
The BNL is currently operated in an excel document.

Has the data you reported for this Outcome from 2019-20 to 2022-23 changed from your previous CHR?	No, none of the data has changed
Has the target you set changed from your previous CHR?	Yes, the target has changed
Was "N/A" was used for one or more data points?	No, N/A was not used for one or more data point

Please use the following comment box to provide context on your data.

d) The target has changed to 25% reduction in homelessness.

Outcome #3: Fewer people return to homelessness (returns to homelessness are reduced)
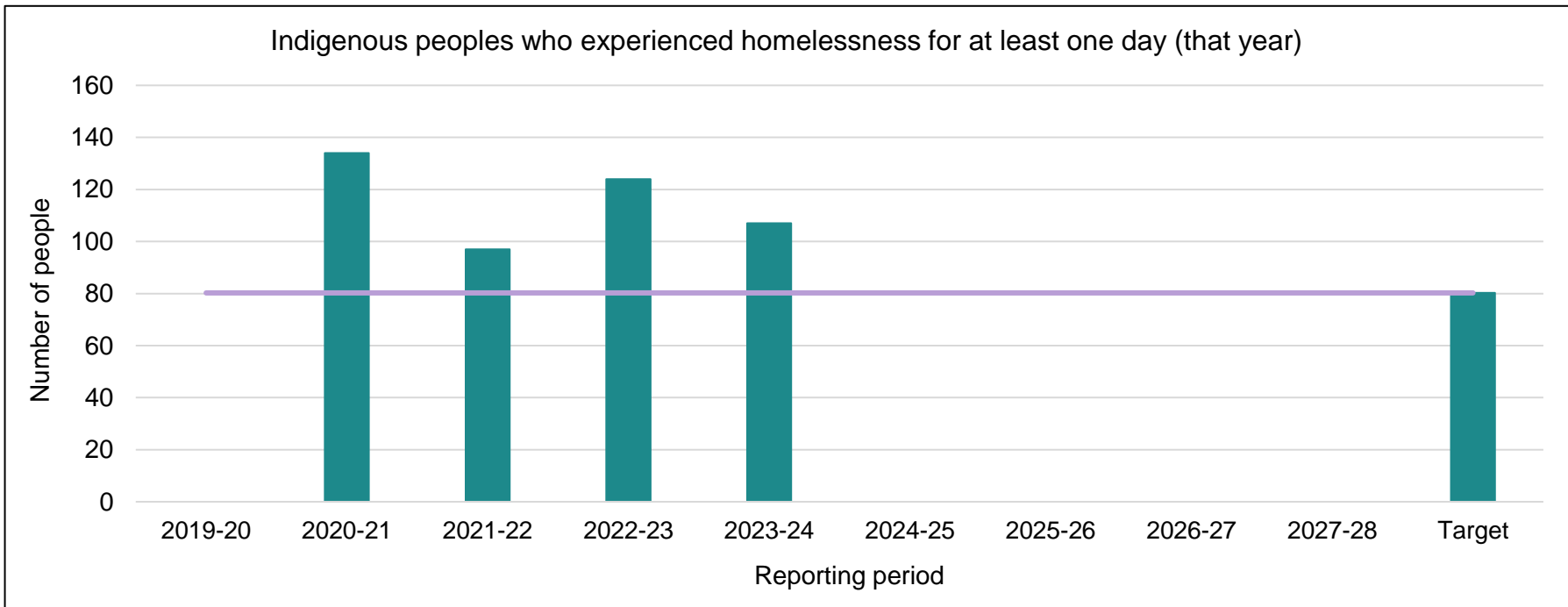
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	Target
Returns to homelessness (that year)		49	27	38	92					69

Returns to homelessness (that year)
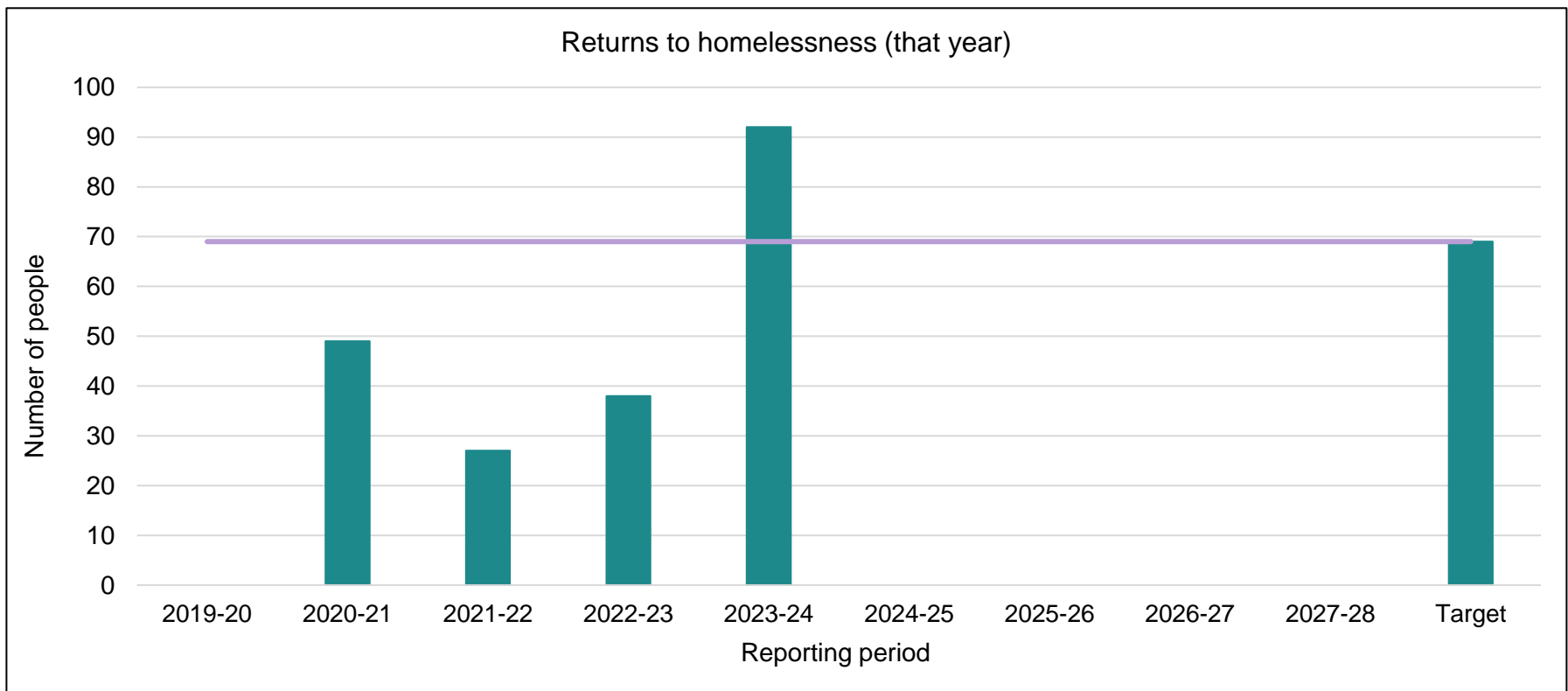
O#3(A)	What is your baseline year?	2023-24
	Returns to homelessness will decrease by 25% between 2023-24 and 2027-28.	
	How was this Outcome generated?	Other process/tool
	The outcome was generated by using the Quality By-Name List (BNL) reporting capabilities. The BNL is currently operated in an excel document.	
	Has the data you reported for this Outcome from 2019-20 to 2022-23 changed from your previous CHR?	No, none of the data has changed
	Has the target you set changed from your previous CHR?	Yes, the target has changed
	Was "N/A" was used for one or more data points?	No, N/A was not used for one or more data point
	Please use the following comment box to provide context on your data.	
	d) The target has changed to 25% reduction in homelessness.	

Outcome #4: Fewer Indigenous peoples experience homelessness (Indigenous homelessness is reduced)
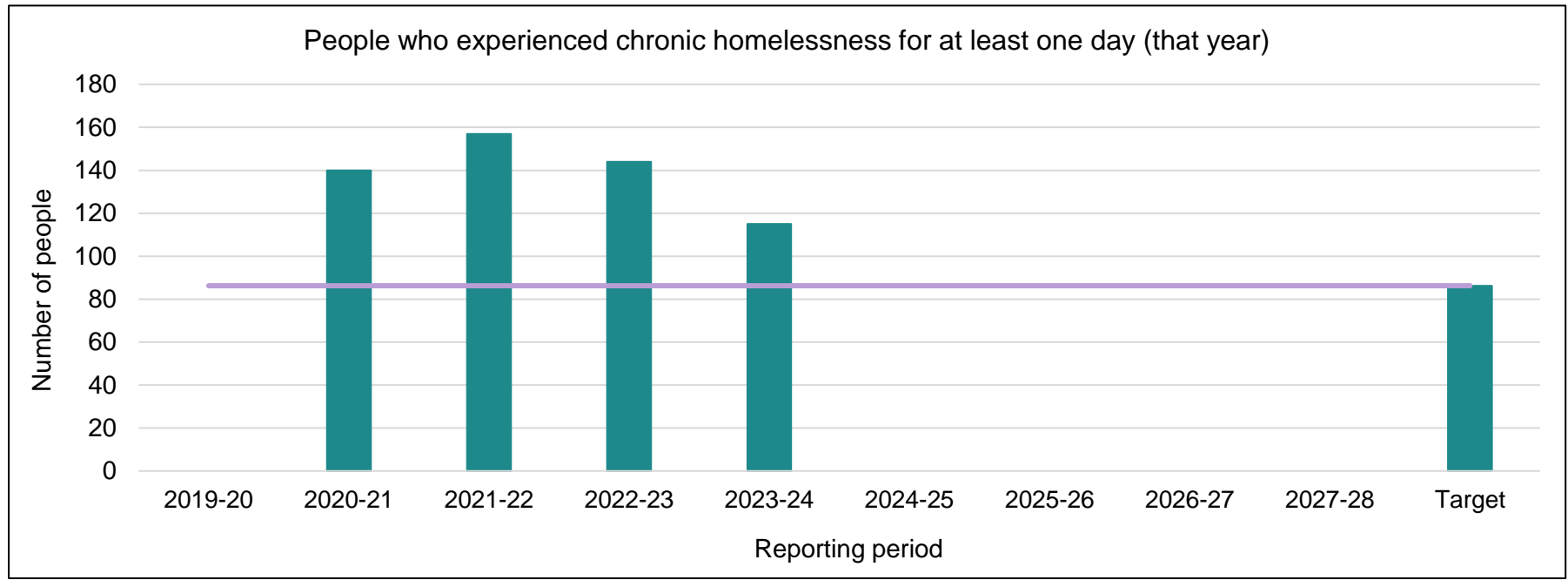
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	Target
Indigenous peoples who experienced homelessness for at least one day (that year)		134	97	124	107					80.25

Indigenous peoples who experienced homelessness for at least one day (that year)

O#4(A)	What is your baseline year?	2023-24
	Indigenous homelessness will decrease by 25% between 2023-24 and 2027-28.	
	How was this Outcome generated?	Other process/tool
	The outcome was generated by using the Quality By-Name List (BNL) reporting capabilities. The BNL is currently operated in an excel document.	
	Has the data you reported for this Outcome from 2019-20 to 2022-23 changed from your previous CHR?	No, none of the data has changed
	Has the target you set changed from your previous CHR?	Yes, the target has changed
	Was "N/A" was used for one or more data points?	No, N/A was not used for one or more data point
	Were Indigenous partners engaged in the process of setting the baseline, setting the target, reporting on the outcome and/or interpreting the results?	Yes
	Please use the following comment box to provide context on your data.	
	d) The target has changed to 25% reduction in homelessness. Wood Buffalo Wellness Society runs the Centralized Intake Program, which operates and adminsters the By-Name List. The CAB was also engaged in reviewing and finalizing the document.	

Outcome #5: Fewer people experience chronic homelessness (chronic homelessness is reduced)

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	**Target**
People who experienced chronic homelessness for at least one day (that year)		140	157	144	115					86.25

People who experienced chronic homelessness for at least one day (that year)

O#5(A)

What is your baseline year?	2023-24

Chronic homelessness will decrease by 25% between 2023-24 and 2027-28.

How was this Outcome generated?	Other process/tool

The outcome was generated by using the Quality By-Name List (BNL) reporting capabilities. The BNL is currently operated in an excel document.

Has the data you reported for this Outcome from 2019-20 to 2022-23 changed from your previous CHR?	No, none of the data has changed

Has the target you set changed from your previous CHR?	Yes, the target has changed

Was "N/A" was used for one or more data points?	No, N/A was not used for one or more data point

Please use the following comment box to provide context on your data.

d) The target has changed to 25% reduction in homelessness.

What definition of "chronic homelessness" does your community use to calculate this Outcome?

Our community calculates chronicity using the Provincial definition: continuously homeless for a year or longer or have had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years; sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation (e.g., on the street) and/or in an emergency shelter.