

Families

Family progression through homeless services: 2016– 2018 families

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August 2019



Feidhmeannacht um Dhaoiné ar Easpa
Dídine Réigiún Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin Region Homeless Executive

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List of Abbreviations

AHB	Approved Housing Body
DRHE	Dublin Region Homeless Executive
EA	Emergency Accommodation
HAP	Housing Assistance Payment
LA	Local Authority
PASS	Pathway Accommodation and Support System

01



Introduction

From January 2016 to December 2018 a total of 2,990 families accessed homeless accommodation in the Dublin Region for the first time. In the context of increasing numbers of families presenting to homeless services, this report follows on from previous Dublin Region Homeless Executive (DRHE) family homelessness reports¹ to examine not only the key drivers for family homelessness in the Dublin Region but also patterns of service use and the rate at which families move through homeless services and exit to tenancy.

1.1 New family presentations: 2016–2018

Table 1 presents the number of families presenting to homeless services on a month by month basis for 2016, 2017 and 2018. It also demonstrates the upward trend in the average number of new families presenting each month over the three year period. In 2016 there was an average of 75 new families presenting each month. The monthly average increased to 81 new families per month in 2017 and peaked at an average of 93 new families per month in 2018.

1. H, Morrin (2019), A profile of families experiencing homelessness in the Dublin Region: 2016–2018. Dublin Region Homeless Executive; H, Morrin & B, O'Donoghue Hynes (2018), A report on the 2016 and 2017 families who experienced homelessness in the Dublin Region. Dublin Region Homeless Executive.

Introduction (continued)

06

New family presentations/year	2016 families	2017 families	2018 families
January	125	87	109
February	83	62	102
March	84	77	82
April	74	67	90
May	64	79	79
June	72	78	92
July	97	99	122
August	72	102	113
September	65	89	88
October	67	88	89
November	60	85	96
December	39	63	50
Total	902	976	1,112
Average no. of new families per month	75	81	93

Table 1: Number of new families accessing homeless accommodation: 2016–2018

Figure 1 illustrates the seasonal patterns in new family presentations, with a low number of new family presentations each December followed by a peak in presentations in January after the Christmas period. There are also increases in the number of new presentations in the summer months of July and/or August across all years.

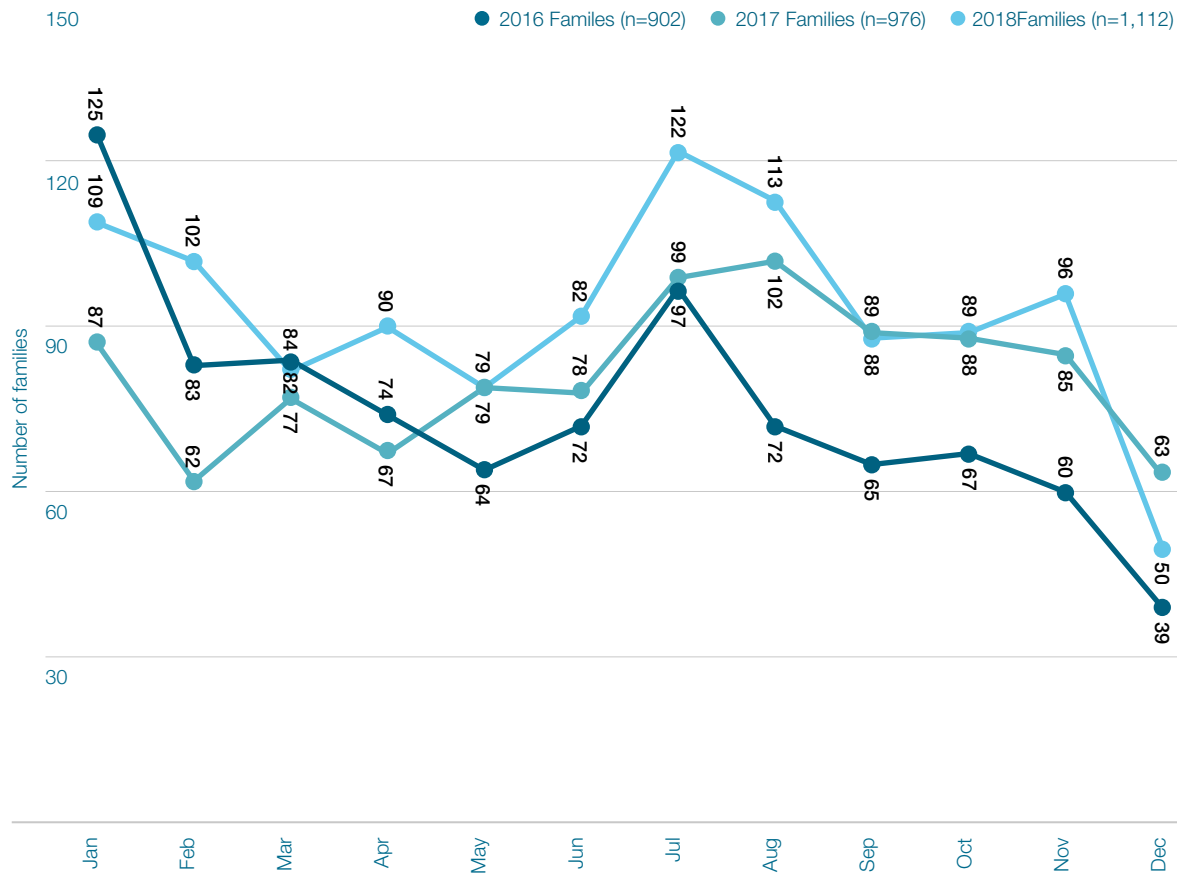


Figure 1: Trend in number of families new to homelessness each month in the Dublin Region: 2016–2018

It is important to note that these figures represent the families that present to homeless services and enter emergency accommodation (EA). There are also a number of families who present to homeless services at risk of homelessness but never use accommodation. Their existing tenancy is either sustained, through family mediation or a rent uplift, or they directly rehoused. In 2017 and 2018 1,997 families moved directly to prevention tenancies, the majority of which were homeless Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) tenancies.

1.2 Objective

Since 2014 there has been a steady overall increase in the number of families accessing homeless accommodation in the Dublin Region. Despite this upward trend there has been a slowdown in the rate of overall growth.² Previous reports³ have looked at the trends relating to the number of families experiencing homelessness, their reasons for homelessness and the demographic profiles. This report, however, aims to add further context to the dynamics of family homelessness by exploring the move on's and exits from EA. Overall, it looks at the duration of time families spend in homeless accommodation and highlights emerging patterns of service use. The findings aim to inform both operational and policy developments relating to homeless families in the Dublin Region.

1.3 Methodology

This report was compiled using Pathway Accommodation and Support System (PASS) data. PASS is the national bed and case management system for all Section 10⁴ funded homeless services. All bookings in and out of EA and exits to tenancy are administered through PASS. It provides real-time information for homeless presentation and bed occupancy. Upon presentation to homeless services a PASS record with a unique ID is created.

The sample included all families who presented to homeless services for the first time in 2016, 2017 and 2018 (n=2,990). A family was deemed new to homelessness when they had no previous PASS record or accommodation history as a family unit with dependent children.

The analysis entailed using PASS ID's to review the accommodation status of the families and to determine the number of exits from homeless accommodation and the type of exit. Three main categories were identified: families no longer using EA with a reported departure to tenancy, families no longer using EA who had given no reason for their departure and families still in EA. A fourth smaller category encompasses 'other' departure reasons which include; returned to family and friends, no longer

2. Dublin Region Homeless Protocol Report Quarter 4 2018

3. H, Morrin (2019), A profile of families experiencing homelessness in the Dublin Region: 2016–2018. Dublin Region Homeless Executive; H, Morrin & B, O'Donoghue Hynes (2018), A report on the 2016 and 2017 families who experienced homelessness in the Dublin Region. Dublin Region Homeless Executive.

4. The relevant statutory provisions regarding homelessness are provided under Section 10 of the Housing Act 1988 <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1988/act/28/section/10/enacted/en/html>

accommodated as a family, no longer accommodated in the Dublin Region and relocation to another country. Insufficient data was available for a small number of families.

The accommodation status of the families was reviewed at bi-annual intervals, January 1st and July 1st, to expand on a point in time analysis and explore progression over time. Varying time frames were selected to ensure a greater observation period for all families admitted to EA for the first time between 2016 and 2018. The accommodation status of the 2016 families was reviewed at six intervals as more time has elapsed since these families first presented, the 2017 families at four intervals and the 2018 families at two intervals.

Data on the number of exits and type of exits were recorded as well as cumulative days using EA during the observation period to determine duration accessing accommodation prior to exit. All stays in EA where the gap from exit to entry is less than 30 days was considered to be part of one episode to take temporary respites from EA into account.

The nature of a point in time analysis doesn't allow for a complete examination of every entry and exit from homeless accommodation. However, the use of multiple time points strengthens the analysis and aims to capture the changes that occur over time. Overall, the data raises key insights into patterns of service use among families experiencing homelessness and the rate at which families move through homeless services depending on their type of exit.

1.4 Outline

Section 1 introduces the research and its objectives. Section 2 examines the trends in the accommodation status of homeless families over time, January 2017 to July 2019. It presents the data at bi-annual intervals to explore the rate at which the families new to homelessness in 2016, 2017 and 2018 moved through homeless services. Section 3 presents a detailed analysis of the accommodation status of the families as of July 2019. It first looks at how many families have exited EA to tenancy, the tenancy types and the durations accessing EA prior to departure. It also details the number of families still accessing EA and the number of families leaving EA without giving a reason for their departure. Section 4 summarises the findings of the report.

02



Family progression through homeless services: January 2017 to July 2019

This section presents time series data on the accommodation status of the families who first presented to homeless services in 2016, 2017 and 2018 (n=2,990). As demonstrated in Table 2 the accommodation status of the 2016 families was reviewed at six intervals as more time has elapsed since these families first presented, the 2017 families at four intervals and the 2018 families at two intervals. Each of the time points are six months apart.

Families new to homelessness	Jan-17	Jul-17	Jan-18	Jul-18	Jan-19	Jul-19
2016 families (n=902)						
Emergency accommodation	61%	45%	28%	23%	17%	11%
Exited to tenancy	19%	34%	52%	59%	64%	70%
No departure reason	16%	16%	15%	14%	14%	14%
Other	4%	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
2017 families (n=976)						
Emergency accommodation			64%	54%	44%	34%
Exited to tenancy			20%	29%	37%	46%
No departure reason			13%	14%	15%	16%
Other			3%	3%	4%	4%
Total			100%	100%	100%	100%
2018 families (n=1,112)						
Emergency accommodation					54%	42%
Exited to tenancy					28%	38%
No departure reason					16%	17%
Other					2%	3%
Total					100%	100%

Table 2: Accommodation status of homeless families at bi-annual intervals (from January 2017 to July 2019): 2016–2018 families

Family progression through homeless services: January 2017 to July 2019 (continued)

12 As would be expected the percentage of families accessing EA decreased as the time progressed while the percentage of families that moved to tenancy increased as time progressed. Notably, the percentage of families that depart without informing the local authority (LA) or service provider remained relatively stable. This pattern is consistent for the three cohorts of families.

A closer examination of Table 2 reveals varying rates of progression through services across the three cohorts of families. Overall it suggests that the 2018 families are moving to tenancy at a faster rate than the families who first presented in 2016 and 2017.⁵ This is particularly apparent when the accommodation status was reviewed at the same time point for each cohort of families (please refer to shaded sections in Table 2 above). In January 2017, 19% of the families who first presented in 2016 had exited EA to tenancy. In January 2018, 20% of the 2017 families had exited to tenancy. In comparison, in January 2019 28% of the families who first presented in 2018 had exited to tenancy. This would indicate that newly presenting families are spending less time in emergency accommodation prior to exit to tenancy. This is further explored in Section 2, where the accommodation status of the 2016, 2017 and 2018 families is reviewed and compared as of the most recent time point, July 1st 2019.

5. The Dublin City Council scheme of lettings changed as of May 2018. It continues to assess homelessness as defined in the 1988 Act but no longer prioritises offers of social housing to homeless families ahead of other households who have prior dates of application. The scheme of lettings in South Dublin County Council, Fingal County Council and Dún Laoghaire–Rathdown County Council continue to afford priority on the housing waiting list to homeless individuals and families.

03



Family progression through homeless services: July 2019

This section explores the rate of progression through homeless services by comparing the most recent accommodation status of the 2016, 2017 and 2018 families (n=2,990), i.e. where the families were accommodated as of July 1st 2019.

Accommodation status	No. of families	Percentage of families
Emergency accommodation	904	30%
Exited to tenancy	1,504	50%
No departure reason	466	16%
Other	74	2.5%
Unknown/insufficient information	42	1.5%
Total	2,990	100%

Table 3: Accommodation status overview (as of July 1st 2019): 2016–2018 families

As of July 1st 2019, 30% of the families were still accessing emergency accommodation, 50% of families had departed to tenancy and 16% of families were no longer accessing EA and had provided no departure reason to the LA or service provider. ‘Other’ departure reasons apply to 2.5% of families while insufficient information was available for the remaining 1.5%.

Accommodation status/year	2016 families	2017 families	2018 families
Emergency accommodation	11%	34%	42%
Exited to tenancy	70%	46%	38%
No departure reason	14%	16%	17%
Other	5%	4%	3%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Table 4: Accommodation status (as of July 1st 2019) by year of presentation: 2016–2018 families

Family progression through homeless services: July 2019 (continued)

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Table 4 provides a breakdown of accommodation status by year of first presentation, as of July 1st 2019. The percentage of families still accessing EA is much lower for the families who first presented in 2016, 11% compared to 35% of the 2017 families and 42% of the 2018 families. This can be attributed to the timeframe in which the families first presented, more time has elapsed for the 2016 families allowing for a higher rate of move on. Unsurprisingly, a higher percentage of the 2016 families had moved to tenancy as of July 2019. A slight increase can be seen in the number of families who left EA without providing a departure reason, however, some of the 2018 families who left with no departure reason may return to access services as time progresses.

3.1 Departure to tenancy

One thousand five hundred and four families had departed to tenancy as of July 1st 2019. These are broken down by type of tenancy in Table 5 below.

All departures to tenancy as of July 1st 2019

Tenancy type/year	2016 families	2017 families	2018 families
Housing Assistance Payment	239	222	333
Approved Housing Body	159	88	27
Local authority	229	138	69
Total	627	448	429

Table 5: Number and type of tenancy for families who departed (as of July 1st 2019): 2016–2018 families

As would be expected there were a higher number of exits to tenancy recorded for the families who first presented in 2016. Notably, the number of exits to tenancy were almost equal for the 2017 and 2018 families with 448 and 429 respectively. The number of families departing EA to homeless Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)⁶ tenancies increased across the three cohorts of families. The highest uptake was among the 2018 cohort with 333 homeless HAP tenancies as of July 1st 2019, despite less time having elapsed for these families compared to those who first presented in 2016 and 2017. Whereas, moves to AHB and LA tenancies are higher for the families who first presented in 2016. The variation in the tenancy types across the three years can be explained by looking at durations in EA prior to departure.

6. HAP is a social housing support that allows tenants source private rental accommodation. Under HAP, local authorities will make a monthly payment to a landlord, subject to terms and conditions including rent limits, on a HAP tenant's behalf. In return, the HAP tenant pays a weekly contribution towards the rent to the local authority.

3.1.1 Duration in emergency accommodation prior to departure to tenancy

Table 6 outlines the departures to homeless HAP tenancies as of the 1st July 2019 broken down by the period of time spent in EA prior to exit to tenancy. It is clear that the 2018 families are departing to HAP tenancies at a faster rate. A total of 272 of the 2018 families departed to HAP tenancies within 6 months of first presentation. This is double the number of the 2017 families (n=132) who departed to HAP within the same time frame.

The number of families who spent between 6 and 11 months in EA before exiting to HAP tenancies remains largely consistent between the three cohorts of families; 2016 (52 families exited during this timeframe), 2017 (50 families exited during this timeframe), and 2018 families (51 families exited during this timeframe). Notably, there are less exits to HAP for families in EA in excess of 12 months, indicating that families are more likely to move to HAP tenancies within a few months of their initial presentation to homeless services.

All departures to homeless Housing Assistance Payment tenancies as of July 1st 2019

Duration in emergency accommodation/ year	2016 families	2017 families	2018 families
Less than 6 months	164	132	272
6–11 months	52	50	51
12–17 months	12	32	10
18–23 months	4	4	-
24+ months	7	3	-
Total	239	221	333

Table 6: Duration in emergency accommodation prior to departure to HAP tenancies (as of July 1st 2019): 2016–2018 families

Family progression through homeless services: July 2019 (continued)

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Table 7 outlines the departures to AHB tenancies as of the 1st July 2019 broken down by the period of time spent in EA prior to exit to tenancy. In contrast to those exiting to HAP tenancies, families who exit to AHB's had longer durations in EA prior to departure. There is a notable difference in the total number of families moving to AHB tenancies across the three years. The 2016 families had the highest number of moves to AHB, the majority of which (n=131 or 82%) in accommodation in excess of 12 months prior to departure.

All departures to Approved Housing Body tenancies as of July 1st 2019

Duration in emergency accommodation/ year	2016 families	2017 families	2018 families
Less than 6 months	5	25	12
6–11 months	22	20	11
12–17 months	53	12	4
18–23 months	34	21	-
24+ months	44	10	-
Total	158	88	27

Table 7: Duration in emergency accommodation prior to departure to approved housing body tenancies (as of July 1st 2019): 2016–2018 families

Table 8 outlines the departures to LA tenancies as of the 1st July 2019 broken down by the period of time spent in EA prior to exit to tenancy. Departures to LA tenancies follow a similar pattern to AHB tenancies. The 2016 families have the greatest number of moves to LA, the majority (n=185 or 81%) of which were in accommodation in excess of 12 months prior to departure. This would indicate that those with longer stays in EA are more likely to move to LA tenancies. However, more time is needed to determine if moves to LA for the 2017 and 2018 families peak after 12 months accessing EA.

All departures to Local Authority tenancies as of July 1st 2019

Duration in emergency accommodation /year	2016 families	2017 families	2018 families
<6 months	15	35	28
6–11 months	29	33	38
12–17 months	79	23	3
18–23 months	59	30	-
24+ months	47	16	-
Total	229	137	69

Table 8: Duration in emergency accommodation prior to departure to local authority tenancies (as of July 1st 2019): 2016–2018 families

3.1.2 Average number of days in emergency accommodation prior to departure

Figure 2 presents the average number of days in EA prior to departure for the families who first presented to homeless services in 2016, 2017 and 2018. It shows the different rate of progression through services by tenancy type. On average, the families who departed to HAP tenancies spent 149 days in EA. In comparison, families who moved to AHB and LA tenancies spent an average of 394 and 385 days in EA, respectively,

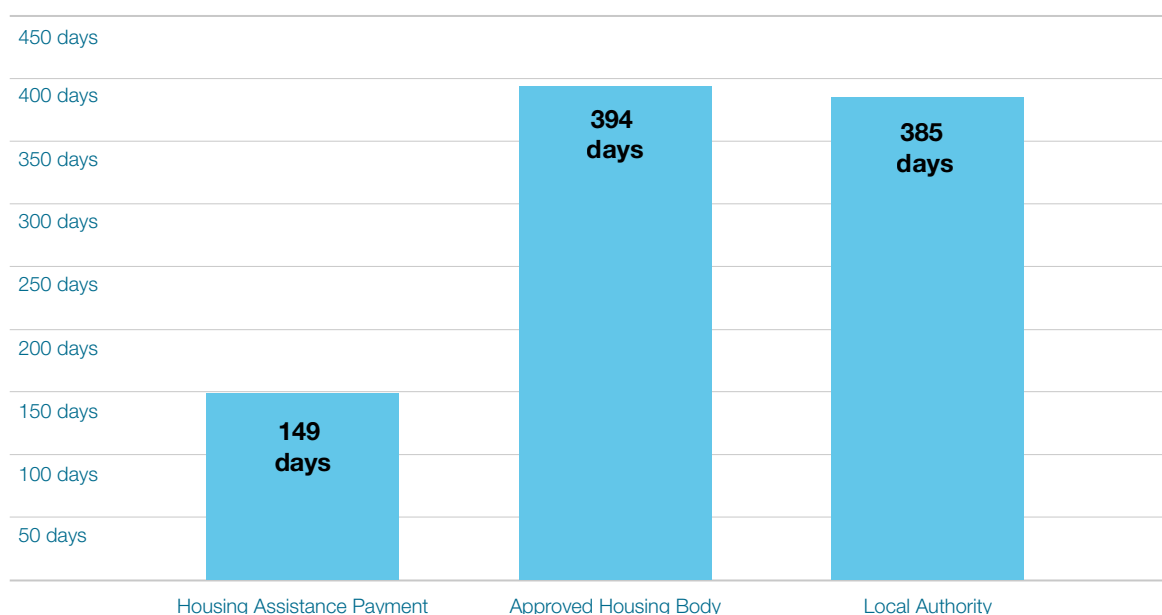


Figure 2: Average number of days in emergency accommodation prior to departure by tenancy type (as of July 1st 2019): 2016–2018 families

Family progression through homeless services: July 2019 (continued)

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Table 9 breaks down the average number of days spent in EA prior to departure by year of first presentation: 2016, 2017 and 2018. It looks at the average number of days at the same point in time, July of each preceding year, to account for different time periods having elapsed across the three years. The 2017 and 2018 cohorts of families have spent less time in EA overall before moving to tenancy when compared with the 2016 cohort, regardless of tenancy type. As outline in Table 9, the average number of days in EA for those moving to AHB and LA tenancies has significantly decreased across the three years.

Average number of days in emergency accommodation prior to departure to tenancy as of:	July 1st 2017	July 1st 2018	July 1st 2019
Tenancy type/ year	2016 families	2017 families	2018 families
Housing Assistance Payment	119 days	113 days	104 days
Approved Housing Body	311 days	182 days	209 days
Local Authority	318 days	183 days	205 days

Table 9: Average number of days in emergency accommodation prior to departure by tenancy type (as of July 2017, 2018 and 2019): 2016–2018 families

3.2 Accessing emergency accommodation

As of July 1st 2019 904 of the 2,990 families who first experienced homelessness between 2016 and 2018 were accessing homeless services. The majority of these families (n=821) had one episode of homelessness i.e. they have been accessing services consistently since their first presentation.⁷ The remaining 83 families had previous departures from EA but had since returned to access services for a second time. Nineteen of these families returned to EA after an un-sustained move to tenancy while 64 families returned to services after previously leaving EA without giving a departure reason.

Families accessing emergency accommodation as of July 1st 2019

Number of families accessing emergency accommodation/year	2016 families	2017 families	2018 families	Total 2016–2018 families
Emergency accommodation one episode	73	304	444	821 (91%)
Emergency accommodation second episode: un-sustained tenancy	9	9	1	19 (2%)
Emergency accommodation second episode: previous no departure reason	22	23	9	64 (7%)
Total	104	336	464	904

Table 10: Number of families accessing emergency accommodation by year of first presentation (as of July 1st 2019): 2016–2018 families

7. All stays in EA where the gap from exit to entry is less than 30 days was considered to be part of one episode to take temporary respites from EA into account. One episode does not refer to one accommodation type, families may have moved between different services during their time accessing EA.

Family progression through homeless services: July 2019 (continued)

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Table 11 details the duration accessing EA for the 904 families in accommodation as of the first of July 2019. It includes the families who have been in EA consistently since their first presentation and the cumulative duration in EA for the families who have had two episodes. In total, 208 families have spent over 2 years in EA. This represents 7% of the total families who first accessed EA over the three year period, 2016–2018.

Families accessing emergency accommodation as of July 1st 2019

Duration in emergency accommodation /year	2016 families	2017 families	2018 families	2016–2018 families	
				No. of families	Percentage of families
Less than 6 months	3	5	11	19	2%
6–11 months	3	10	230	243	27%
12–17 months	2	11	224	237	26%
18–23 months	11	186	-	197	22%
24+ months	84	124	-	208	23%
Total	103	336	465	904	100%

Table 11: Duration accessing emergency accommodation (as of July 1st 2019): 2016–2018 families

3.3 No departure reason

Of the 2,990 families who first presented to homeless services between 2016 and 2018, 465 (16%) families departed EA without active engagement with support services. In other words, one in six families did not inform the LA or the service provider of a reason for their departure; as such no departure reason was recorded on PASS.

As demonstrated in Table 12, a significant percentage of the families who left with no departure reason (n=198 or 41%) were accessing EA for less than a month. Thirty five percent of families (n=162) were accessing EA for between one and five months and the remaining 24% (n=105) were accessing for six months or more prior to their departure.

All departures (no departure reason) as of July 1st 2019		
Duration in emergency accommodation	2016–2018 families	
	Number	Percentage
Less than a week	123	25%
1–4 weeks	76	16%
1–5 months	162	35%
6–11 months	56	12.5%
12+ months	49	11.5%
Total	466	100%

Table 12: Duration in emergency accommodation prior to departure- no departure reason (as of July 1st 2019): 2016–2018 families

3.4 Other

A review of PASS data revealed ‘other’ departure reasons for 74 (2.5%) families:

- Thirty four families were no longer accessing services as a family unit with dependent children;
- Twenty families had returned to live with family or friends, although, it is expected that this number is much higher and may include many of the families who departed with no reported reason;
- Seventeen families were no longer accommodated in the Dublin Region, i.e. their housing need is being assessed in a local authority outside of Dublin;
- Three families relocated to another country.

3.5 Insufficient information

Insufficient information was available for 42 families, in these instances tracking was not possible due to incorrect PASS ID’s.

3.6 Summary

Accommodation status of the families who became homeless in 2016, 2017 & 2018 as of July 2019

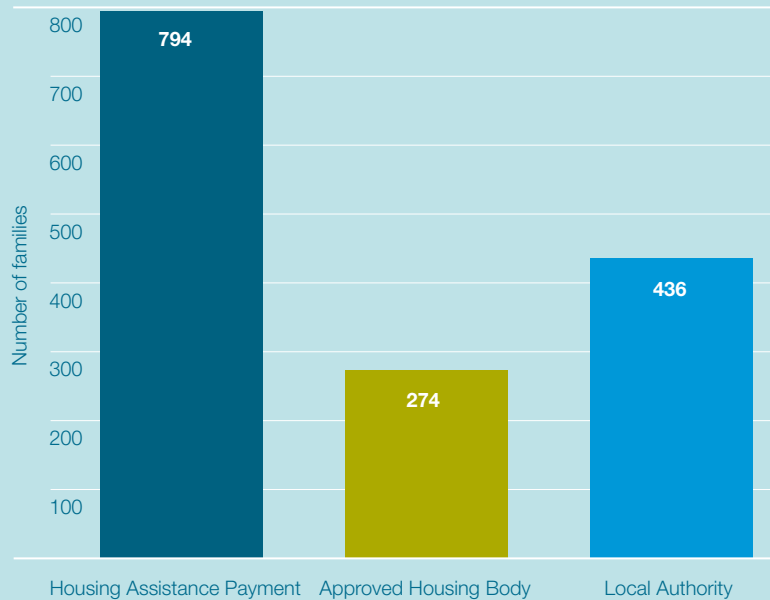
24

Departed to Tenancy



50%

of the 2,990 families have departed emergency accommodation to tenancy



Types of tenancy

Average number of days accessing emergency accommodation prior to departure to tenancy



HAP

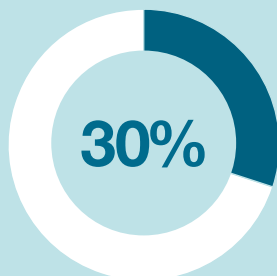


AHB

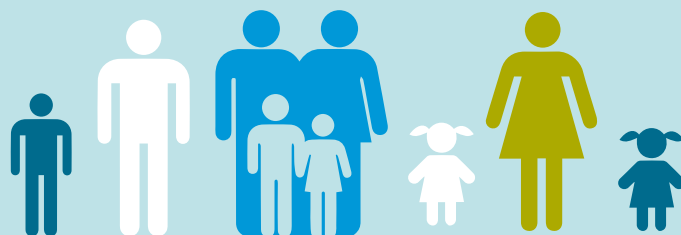


LA

Accessing Emergency Accommodation



30% (n=904) of the 2,990 families were still accessing emergency accommodation



821 families had been accessing services since their first presentation

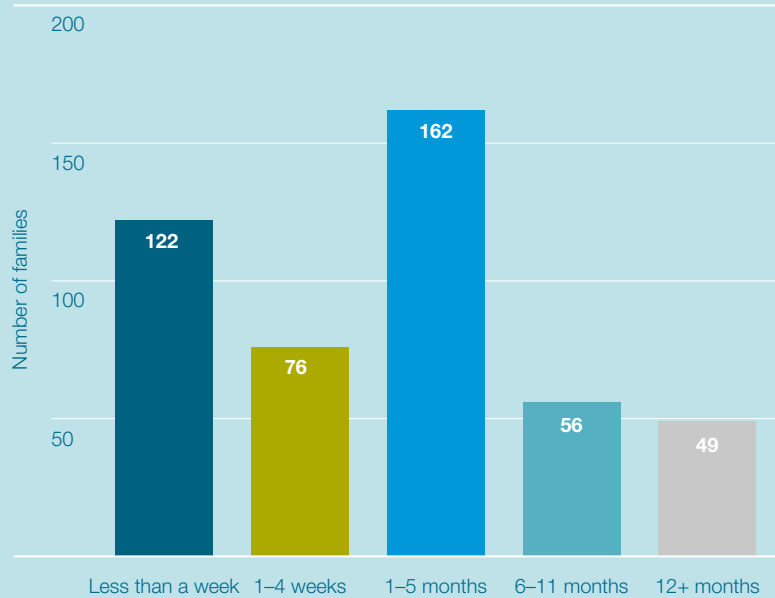
83 families returned to homeless services after a previous un-sustained departure

No Departure Reason

16%

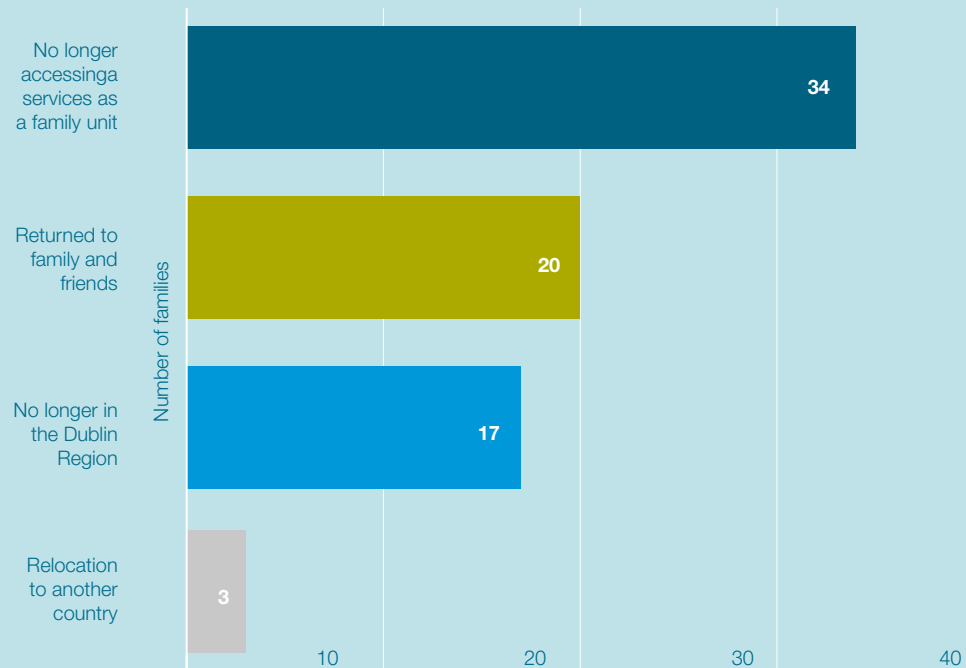
465 of the 2,990 families departed emergency accommodation providing no reason for their departure

41% (n=198) of families with no departure reason left within a month of first accessing services



Duration accessing EA prior to departure (no departure reason)

Other Departure Reasons



2.5%

Other departure reasons apply to 2.5% (n=74) of the 2,990 families

Insufficient information was available for 42 families (1.5%)

04



Conclusion

From January 2016 to December 2018 a total of 2,990 families accessed homeless accommodation in the Dublin Region for the first time. The average number of new families presenting to homeless services and accessing EA increased from 75 per month in 2016 to an average of 93 new families per month in 2018. In the context of increasing numbers of families presenting to homeless services, the objective of this report was to add to previous research⁸ on family homelessness and understand the way in which families access EA in the Dublin Region, the number and type of exits from EA over time and the length of time in EA prior to exit.

The methodology used in this report utilised PASS data to review the accommodation status of the families who accessed EA for the first time in 2016 (n=902), 2017 (n=976) and 2018 (n=1,112). The accommodation status of the families was reviewed at bi-annual intervals from January 2017 to July 2019, the 2016 families at six intervals as more time has elapsed since these families first presented, the 2017 families at four intervals and the 2018 families at two intervals. Three main categories were identified:

1. Families no longer using EA with a reported departure to tenancy;
2. Families no longer using EA who had given no reason for their departure;
3. Families still in homeless accommodation.

A fourth smaller category encompasses 'other' departure reasons which include; returned to family and friends, no longer accommodated as a family, no longer accommodated in the Dublin Region and relocation to another country.

The time series data explored the rate of progression through homeless services by tracking the families over time, January 2017 to July 2019. As would be expected the percentage of families accessing EA decreased as time progressed while the percentage of families that moved to tenancy increased as time progressed. Notably, the percentage of families that depart without informing the LA or service provider

8. H, Morrin (2019), A profile of families experiencing homelessness in the Dublin Region: 2016–2018. Dublin Region Homeless Executive; H, Morrin & B. O'Donoghue Hynes (2018), A report on the 2016 and 2017 families who experienced homelessness in the Dublin Region. Dublin Region Homeless Executive.

Conclusion (continued)

28 remained relatively stable. This pattern is consistent for the three cohorts of families. However a closer examination would suggest that the 2018 families are departing to tenancy at a faster rate than the families who first presented in 2016 and 2017.

Section 3 presented a detailed analysis of the accommodation status of the families as of July 2019. Of the 2,990 families, 50% (n=1,504) had departed to tenancy, 16% (n=466) had departed EA but did not inform the LA or the service provider of a reason for their departure and 30% (n=904) were accessing emergency accommodation as of July 1st 2019. 'Other' departure reasons apply to 2.5% (n=74) of families while insufficient information was available for the remaining 1.5%. It moved on to look at how many families have exited EA to tenancy, the tenancy types and the durations accessing EA prior to departure. It also detailed the number of families still accessing EA and the number of families leaving EA without giving a reason for their departure.

Departures to tenancy as of July 1st 2019: As would be expected there were a higher number of exits to tenancy (n=627) recorded for the families who first presented in 2016. Notably, the number of exits to tenancy were almost equal for the 2017 (n=448) and 2018 (n=429) families despite different time frames having elapsed since the families first presented. The data also revealed the variation in rates of departure depending on the type of exit i.e. HAP, AHB or LA housing. Seventy two percent of the 2016–2018 families (n=568) departing to homeless HAP spent less than six months in EA. This would indicate that families are more likely to move to HAP tenancies within a few months of their initial presentation to homeless services. In comparison, the majority of exits to AHB (65% or n=178) and LA (59% or n=257) tenancies occurred after the families had spent 12 plus months in EA. The average number of days accessing EA prior to departure also confirms this trend. On average, the families who departed to HAP tenancies spent 149 days in EA. In comparison, families who moved to AHB and LA tenancies spent an average of 394 and 385 days in EA, respectively.

Accessing emergency accommodation as of July 1st 2019: 904 of the families who first experienced homelessness between 2016 and 2018 were still accessing homeless services as of July 2019. The majority of these families (n=821) had one episode of homelessness i.e. they have been accessing services consistently since their first presentation. The remaining 83 families had previous departures from EA but had since returned to access services for a second time. Nineteen of these families returned to EA after an un-sustained move to tenancy while 64 families returned to services after previously leaving EA without giving a departure reason. A look at the families cumulative durations in EA confirms that 208 families have spent over 2 years in EA. This represents 7% of the total families who first accessed EA over the three year period, 2016–2018.

No departure reason as of July 1st 2019: Notably, 16% of families or one in six (n=465) departed EA and did not inform the LA or the service provider of a reason for their departure. Just over 40% of these families were accessing EA for less than a month prior to leaving. This would indicate that there is a cohort of families with lower support needs, they use homeless services for a short period of time and depart without the support of the LA or service provider. As mentioned above, only a small number of families returned to services after previously leaving without giving a reason for their departure (n=64).

Overall, the report raises key insights into the differential patterns by which families progress through homeless services depending on their type of exit. It highlights that there has been an increase in the number of families exiting to tenancy which can largely be attributed to the homeless HAP scheme. However, the number of new families presenting to homelessness has also increased and to successfully address the issue of family homelessness there needs to be an increase in housing supply.

