

Glasgow Winter Night Shelter: end of project report for HOPE Foundation

May 2020

We are very grateful to the HOPE Foundation Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons for your generous support of the Glasgow Winter Night Shelter.

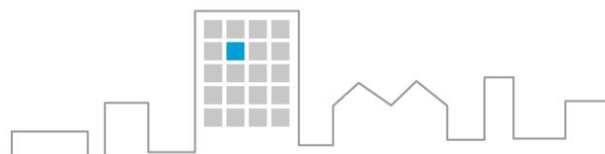
Your donation of £5,000 has enabled people at risk of street homelessness to access vital healthcare, including nurses and GPs which. They would not have had access to this care without the intervention of the night shelter



Nurses from the NHS homelessness team at Hunter Street attend the night shelter five mornings a week. The night shelter staff do a handover with the nurses as they are coming off shift, letting the nurses know the health needs of our guests. This season we changed the shift pattern so our staff came off shift at 8.15am rather than 8am to enable a more detailed handover, which worked well.

Guests grow to trust our staff and feel safe within the night shelter, so being able to provide this service in the same space means the guests are more likely to make the most of the nurses being there. The nurses are also able to encourage those guests who need to see a GP to go to Hunter Street, which is just round the corner. Staff from partner agency Simon Community Scotland are on hand to walk with our guests to Hunter Street.

We realised that one lady who came to the night shelter this year was heavily pregnant. Her case was complex and she had no legal right to remain in the UK. Working with our city centre project, we were able to support her, get her into accommodation so she only had to use the night shelter for one night, and get her the medical attention she needed. Her baby was delivered safely and she continues to be supported by Glasgow City Mission during lockdown.



Staff and regular volunteers receive comprehensive training before the night shelter season begins in topics such as first aid, dealing with overdose and suicide awareness.

One evening three of our guests took unwell at the same time, and all three were unresponsive. The team knew how to handle each situation thanks to their training and looked after those guests until paramedics arrived.



This year, we had to use naloxone five times, a significant reduction on last year which saw us use it 17 times. We did, however, see an increase in the use of legal highs. This was a new challenge for the team. We called 999 for an ambulance 19 times, and nine of these calls were for guests who were unresponsive or had a poor response due to having taken a legal high before entering the night shelter. Thanks to the training the team had received, they were able to handle each situation well. Other ambulance call outs were for situations including a guest vomiting blood in his sleep, seizures and a bad foot injury. If these situations had occurred while the guests were on the streets, they could have had very different outcomes.

Overview of this year's service

This season the night shelter opened early, on 28 November, due to particularly cold weather. In total, 606 people stayed at the night shelter this season for more than 3,200 bed nights. We were once again based at the Lodging House Mission on East Campbell Street.

In mid-March, we took the decision to wind down the night shelter early and to press for the Council to house our guests in suitable accommodation where they could safely self-isolate. However, this was accelerated when one guest and one staff member tested positive for Covid-19. The night shelter's last night of operation for this season was therefore Wednesday 18 March. Staff were outside the closed night shelter to help anyone who turned up. We had six people come, and thanks to the hard work of Glasgow City Mission and our partner Shelter, accommodation was found for each of those guests. Night shelter guests have been included amongst a larger group of individuals the Glasgow City Mission Project Team are phoning to help them see they are not



alone and to find out how we can support them with their individual needs.

Key Statistics for 2019/20

- 606 unique guests stayed for 3,265 bed nights.
- Average occupancy was 29 per night.
- An average of 5.4 bed-nights per guest.
- 81% of guests were recorded as moving into positive outcomes.
- Night shelter capacity was reached on 15 nights.
- 84% of guests were male.
- The average age was 38.
- 61% identified as Scottish with a further 12% as other British.

The night shelter has a 40-bed capacity. We reached this limit on 15 nights of the year but on these occasions we were able to open the foyer, which allows space for an additional four people to sit in the warmth with a hot drink.

The night shelter is not a solution – it is an emergency response to rough sleeping. Therefore, enabling our guests to quickly find appropriate accommodation continues to be a key focus. This year we're delighted that, working closely with our partners, more than 80 per cent of guests moved onto a positive outcome, including temporary flats and residential rehab.

This year we increased the support available to staff and volunteers. Marion Carson, Pastoral Care Coordinator for Glasgow City Mission, was available to talk to. Professional counsellors, Healing for the Heart, provided a new phone-in service each morning. Healing for the Heart also increased their service for our guests from two to four nights a week, providing an essential listening service at the tables.

Thank you once again for your support which has enabled us to provide this lifeline service to some of the most vulnerable people in Glasgow. We continue to be very grateful for your partnership with us.

