

The European End Street Homelessness Campaign



CR Zero 2020 Connections Week – Full Data Report

CR Zero 2020

Croydon has the eight highest numbers of people sleeping rough in the UK, and that number is rising. CR Zero 2020 is a campaign led by Evolve Housing + Support, Crisis, Expert Link, Homeless Link, Thames Reach, and endorsed by Croydon Council, to end chronic rough sleeping in Croydon by 2020.

Despite the availability of homelessness support services in Croydon, chronic rough sleeping is a rising problem in our borough. In 21st century Croydon, the fastest growing economy in the UK, we believe that no one should be sleeping on the streets and it's time to find new ways to help our rough sleepers, so we can end chronic street homelessness for good.

CR Zero 2020 is part of the European End Street Homelessness Campaign, which is being developed by Building and Social Housing Foundation (BSHF) and FEANTSA - the European federation of national organisations working with homeless. It is a pan European movement of cities, working together to permanently house Europe's most vulnerable people and end chronic street homelessness by 2020. The campaign supports cities across Europe in a growing movement that aims to gain public support and mobilise action to end street homelessness.

Croydon is one of the two Local Authority areas in London that are early adopters of the campaign in the UK. There are several local organisations working in partnership on the CR Zero 2020 campaign including Crisis, Evolve Housing + Support, Expert Link, Homeless Link and Thames Reach.

We will be delivering the campaign under the name of 'CR Zero 2020' to reflect our aim of ending chronic rough sleeping in Croydon by the year 2020.

Our principles

We believe the time has come for the whole community to work together and take action to end homelessness. Although there are unforeseen events in people's lives which mean they sleep on the streets, no one should be trapped in an endless cycle of homelessness. Therefore, the aim is to end long term, chronic street homelessness. Past and current campaigns in America, and other initiatives in Europe, are proving that with concerted action, this is possible.

We see chronic homelessness as an issue that affects entire communities, not just those sleeping rough. As such, the campaign is focused on involving as much of the wider community as possible in identifying the problem, and the solution. The campaign will be formed around a community coalition of the willing, working together to improve the community that we live and work in.

The campaign in practice

There are two key aspects to the campaign. Firstly, and crucial to the success of the campaign, is to understand Croydon's unique set of strengths and challenges through the use of a City Self-Assessment Tool, created as part of the wider European campaign.

We will get to know every homeless person in Croydon by name, by going onto the streets to find them and to assess their needs. This should help us to target specific practices or policies for improvement, and track our progress over the life of the campaign.

We undertook 'connections week,' which began on Tuesday 30 August 2016 and ended on Thursday 1 September 2016, where over 90 volunteers from the community gathered information on who's out there, what their needs are, and what options are available to get them into accommodation.

In total, 64 people were engaged, 42 of whom agreed to complete a survey. To put this figure into context, the most recent rough sleeping figure from the last street count conducted was 53, so while we know that there were people we didn't manage to engage, we are confident that the final surveyed figure of 42 is consistent with Croydon's rough sleeping figures and gives us sufficient data to apply to phase 2 of the campaign.

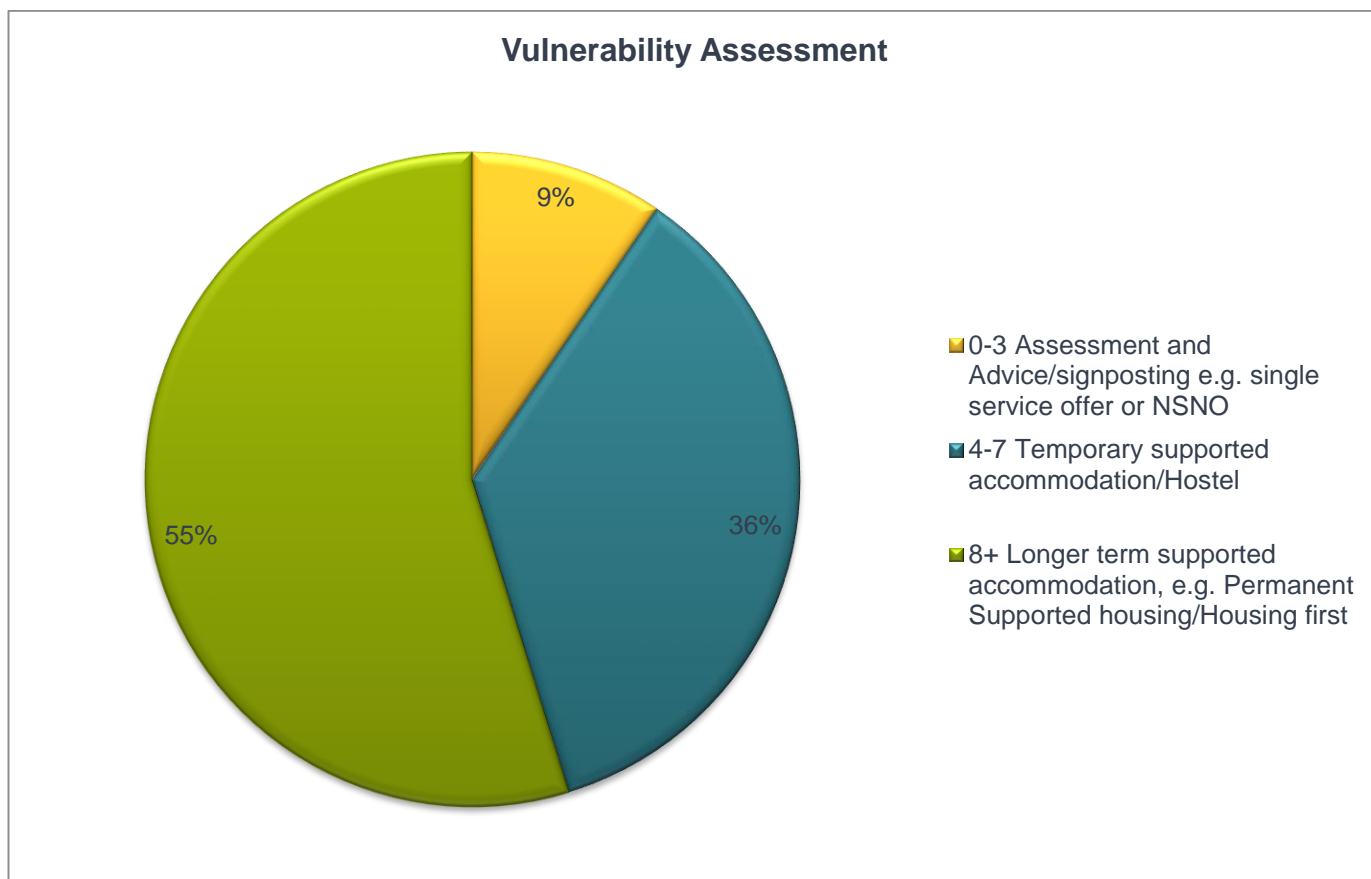
The data gathered was then presented to the community on Saturday 3 September 2016. As well as a large number of volunteers, we had representatives from the local faith based organisations, the local MP for Croydon Central, Gavin Barwell, who is also the Minister for Housing & Planning, the Mayor of Croydon and the Cabinet Member for Housing.

Executive Summary

- 64 people engaged
- 42 surveys completed
- 55% score as 8+ on the vulnerability/complexity score
- 5% over the age of 60
- 7% aged 18
- 60% without stable accommodation for longer than 6 months
- 21% have been off the street, only to end up back on them, in the last 12 months
- 12% have been to A&E 5 or more times in the last 6 months
- 52% report having been attacked while sleeping rough
- 71% reported that they had posed no threat of harm to themselves or others in the last 12 months
- 31% reported that they are engaged in any activity that makes them feel happy and fulfilled
- 36% report having a chronic physical health issue
- 36% report having lost accommodation due to drug or alcohol use
- 17% report having lost accommodation due to a mental health issue
- 17% presented with tri-morbidity

- 64% identified the UK as their country of origin
- 59% identified as an EU Citizen
- 14% surveyed were women; two of who report being pregnant, one of whom also reported being attacked.
- 83% were male

Detailed Summary of the Data Collected



The Pan-European data tool used includes a scoring systems that concludes with an overall score indicating the level of vulnerability and complexity of each individual.

The vulnerabilty/complexity is defined as as score of 0-3 being low, 4-7 being medium and 8+ as being high. Each catagory has a recommendation for the most likely successfull intervention to address the individuals rough sleeping.

55% scored 8+, indicating that a longer term supported housing solution was the most suitable intervention for these 23 people. Ten scored 10+, with the highest score being 14. This is in comparison to 12% in Barcelona, 24% in Valencia and 27% in Westminster.

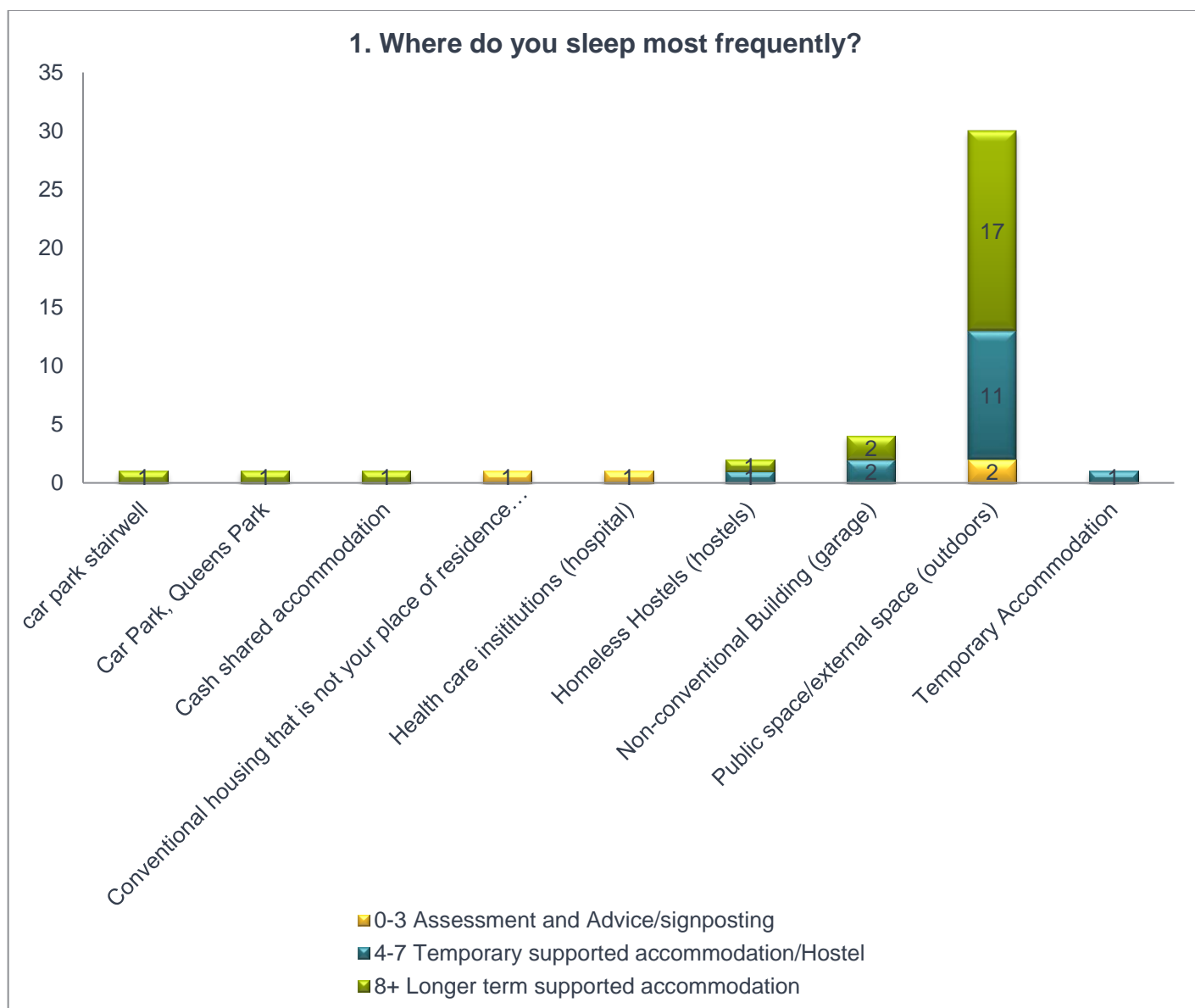
However, a further nine people had been on the streets for longer than 6 months who scored between 4-7, meaning that they are chronically homeless, but less complex.



Only two people scored in the pre-question which looks at vulnerability due to age, both being over the age of 60. The oldest person surveyed was 67 years of age.

However, neither of these people score as 8+ in the vulnerability assessment, suggesting that existing supported accommodation should be suitable to meet their needs, despite the fact that the 67-year-old reported having been without stable accommodation for 2 years, so is chronically homeless.

Three people reported being aged 18, one of whom scored 10+ on the assessment of vulnerability.

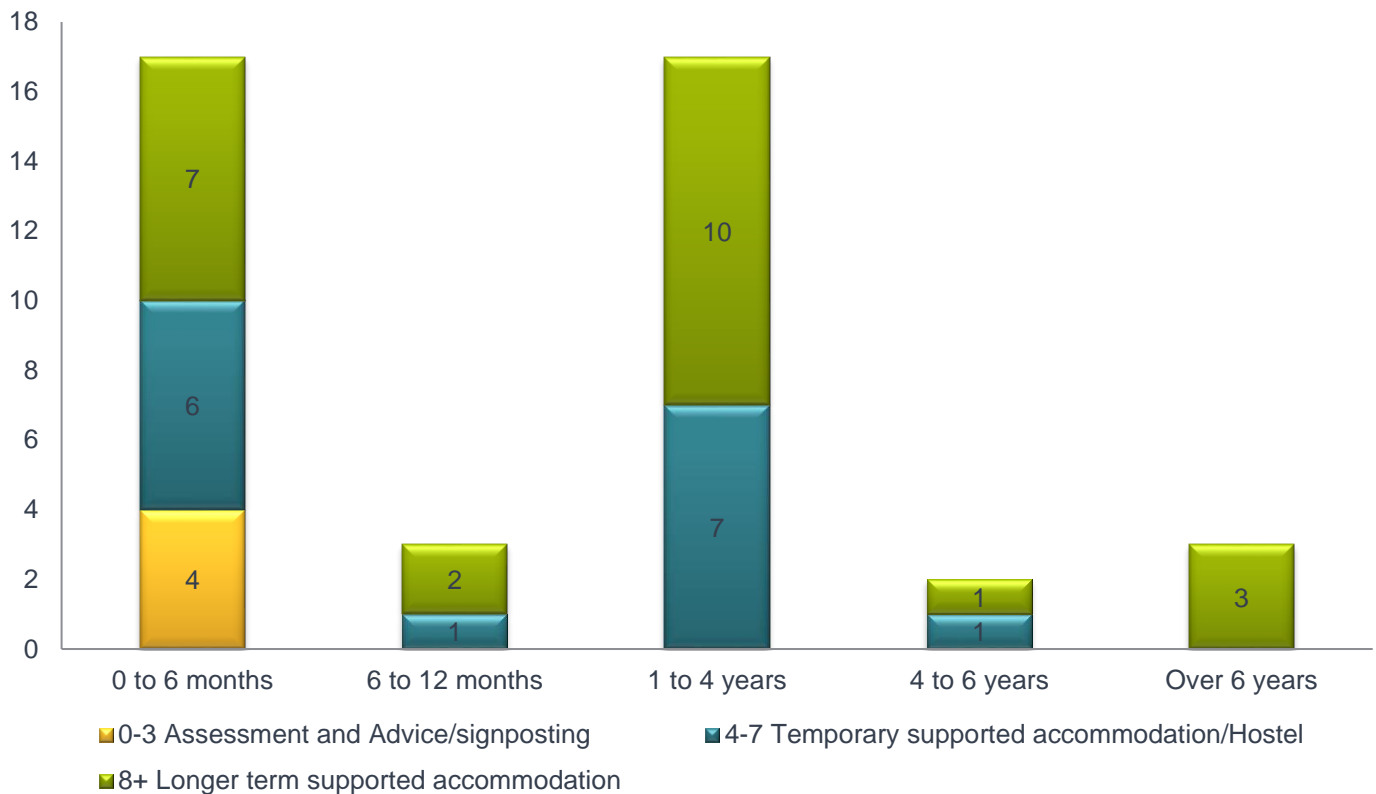


By far the largest reported regular sleeping place was public or external spaces, with 71% people reporting this as being their most regular sleeping place.

However, 14% (6 people) were found sleeping in non-conventional buildings (garages), or more specifically, public multi-story car parks. This initially resulted in a score of zero for vulnerability in relation to housing. However, considering the public nature of these buildings, we changed this to scoring one, as is consistent with the scoring for public spaces, to ensure that their vulnerability was not underrepresented.

91% of those scoring 8+ reported sleeping in a public space, with only two being accommodated in some form already.

2. How long has it been since you lived in permanent stable housing?



40% of people reported having been without permanent stable housing for less than 6 months. However, of these, 41% fell in to the 8+ group, meaning a higher probability of remaining on the streets past the 6-month point.

The percentage of 8+ group individuals increases in the 6 month to 1-year bracket, up to 67%.

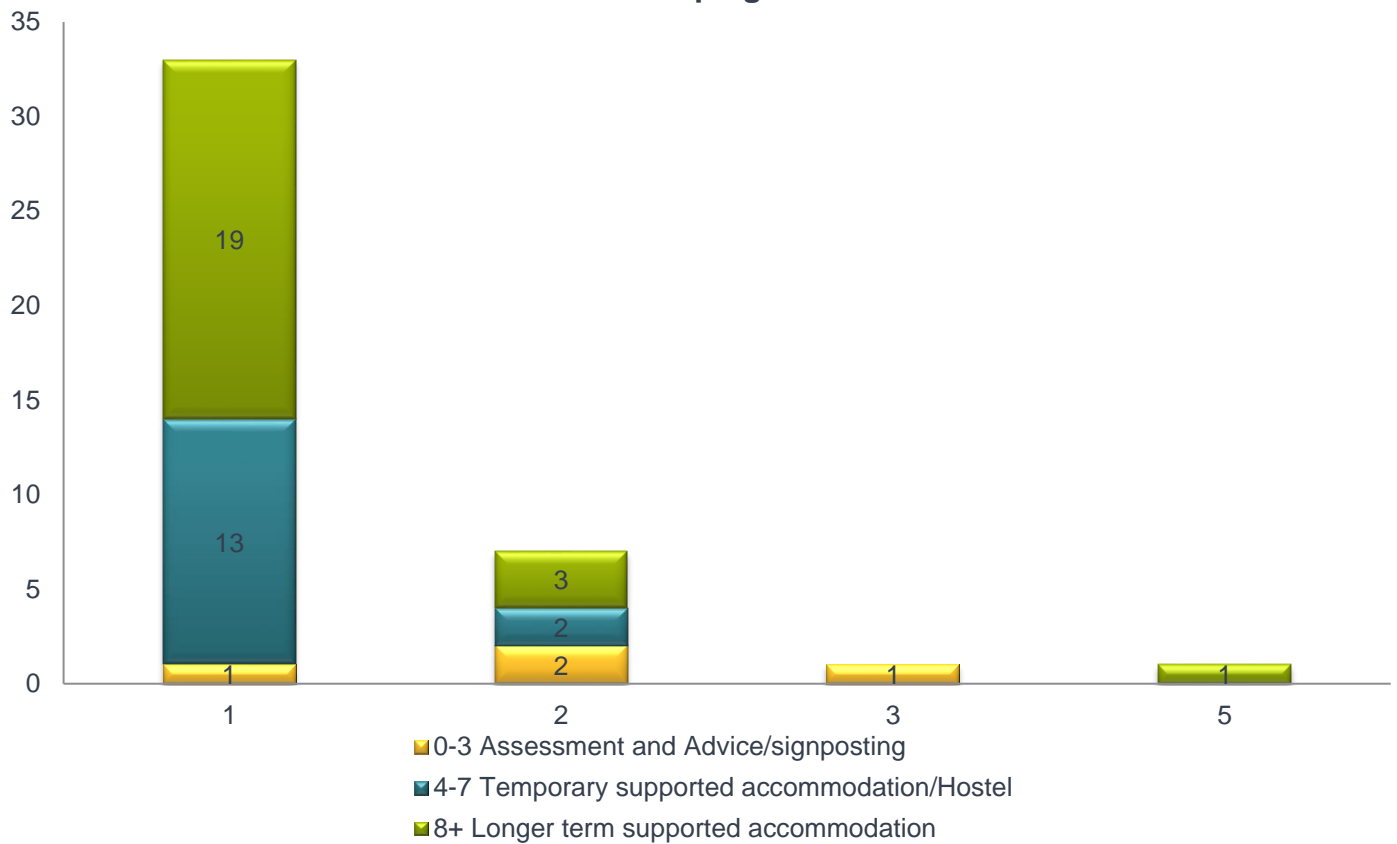
40% people reported having been permanent stable housing for between 1 and 4 years, 59% of who fell in to the 8+ category.

6% reported having been permanent stable housing for between 4 and 6 years, of which 50% (1 person) scored 8+. However, the person scoring 4-7 was aged 67, so should be viewed with a higher vulnerability.

14% reported having been permanent stable housing for over 6 years, 100% of whom scored 8+.

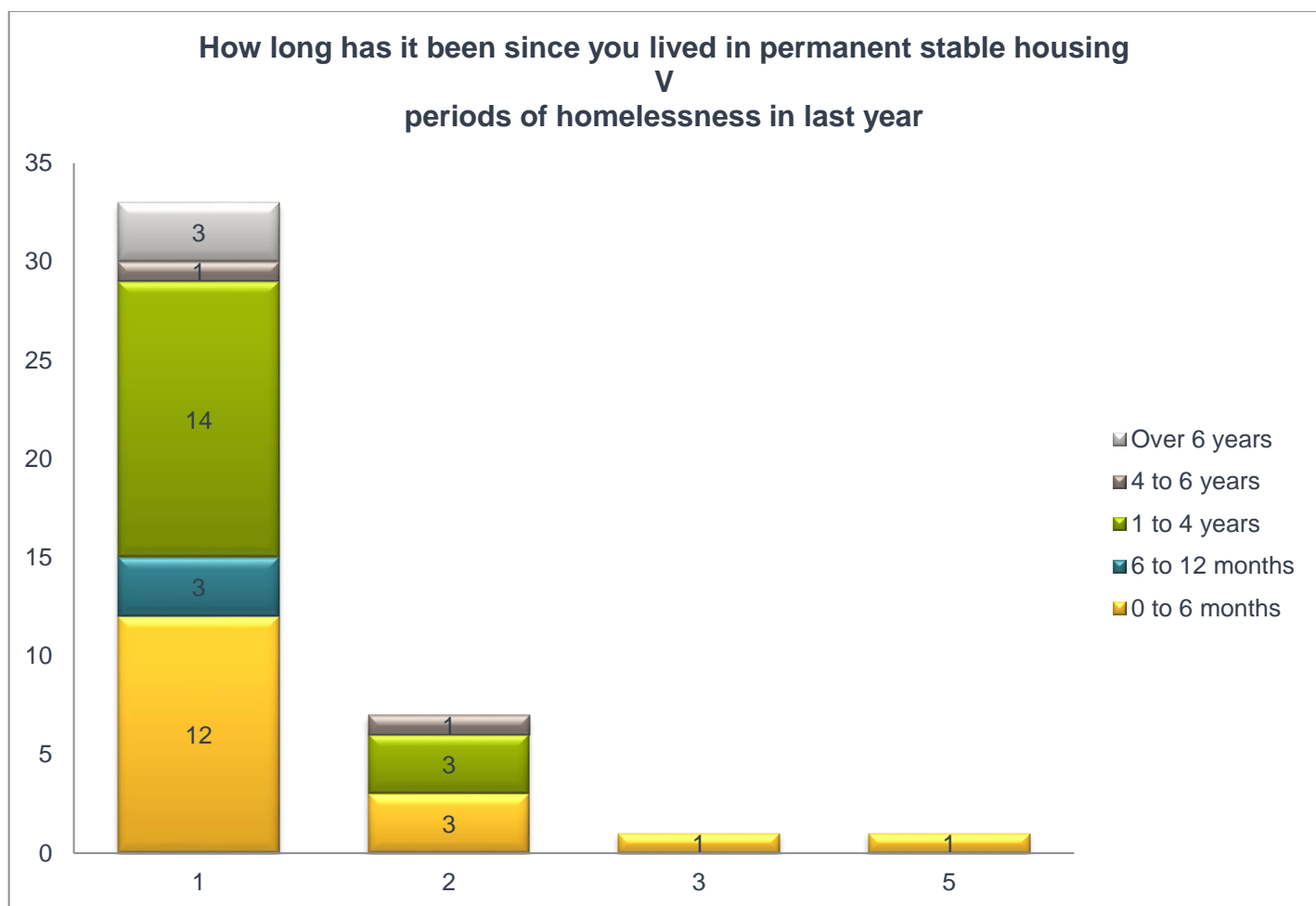
Of the 60% who reported having been without stable accommodation for longer than 6 months, 36% scored between 4-7, making them chronically homeless though less complex.

3. In the last year, how many times have you been homeless or rough sleeping?



79% of people reported just one single episode of homelessness in the last 12 months, with 58% of those falling into the 8+ bracket.

21% of people reported multiple episodes of homelessness over the last 12 months, and 44% of those fell in to the 8+ bracket. This would seem to indicate that there are some aspects of existing services that are problematic for those with a lower level of need as well.

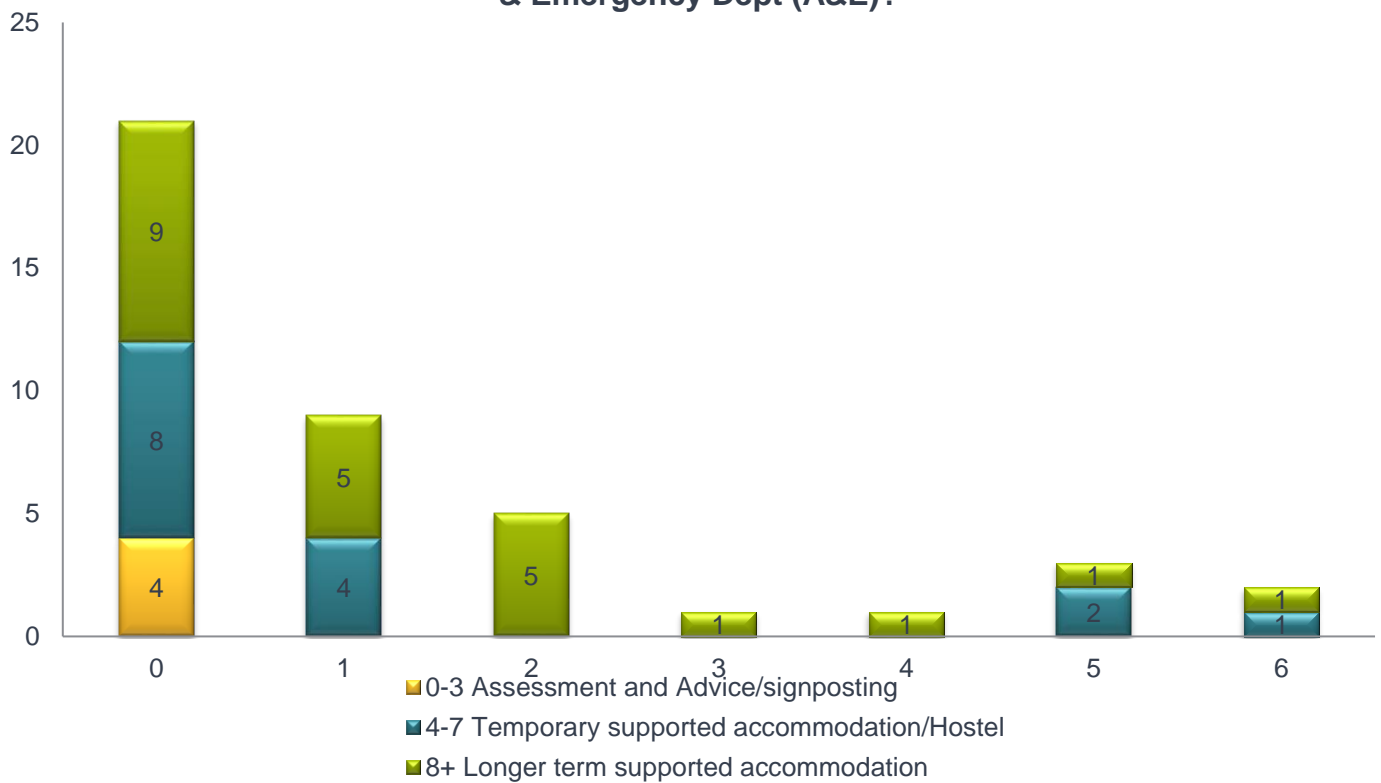


100% of the people who reported having been without stable accommodation for over 6 years also reported that this consisted of a single episode in the last 12 months.

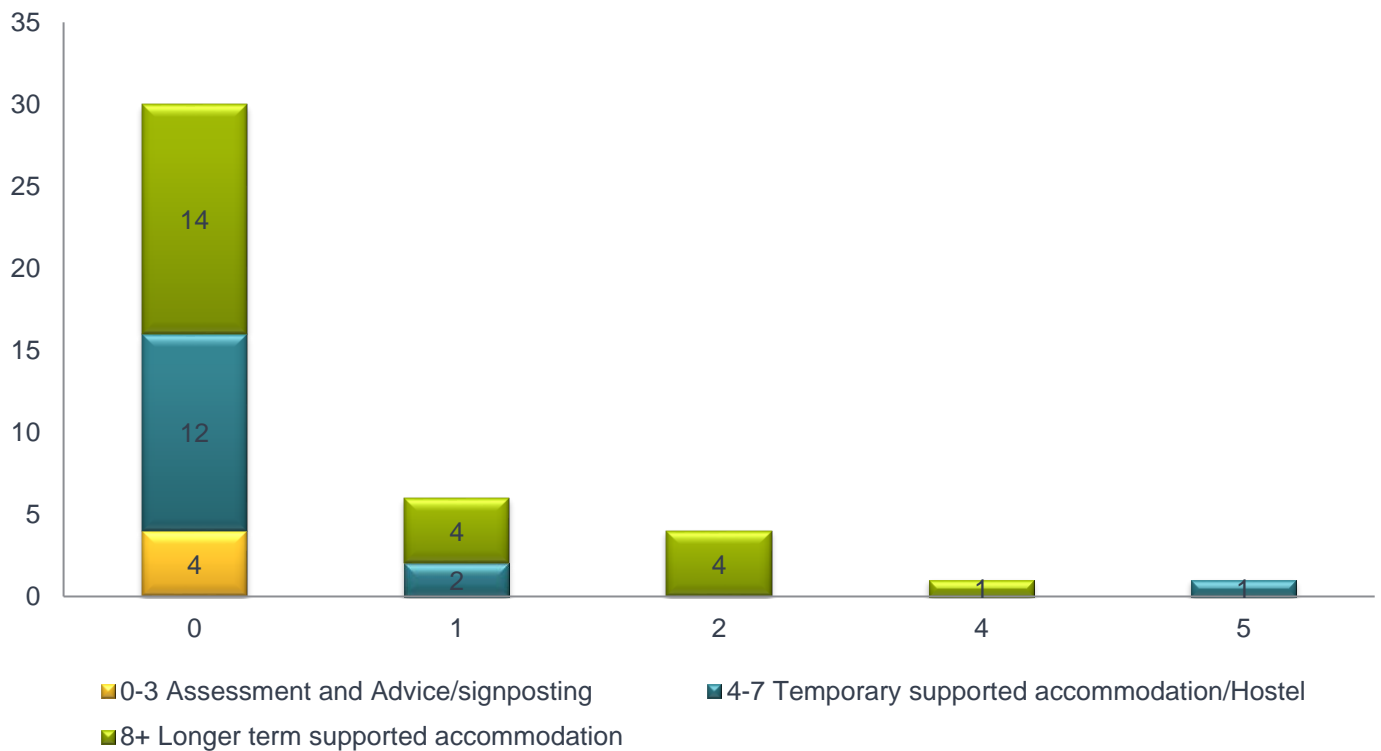
50% of the group who had reported being without stable accommodation for between 4 and 6 years also reported that this consisted of a single episode in the last 12 months. The other 50% of that group had been housed within the last 12 months, but had returned to the streets.

The person reporting being without stable accommodation for between 4 and 6 years, and having been accommodated once in the last 12 months, reported also that they had never lost accommodation due to mental health, physical health or substance misuse issues, so the reason for returning to the streets remains unclear.

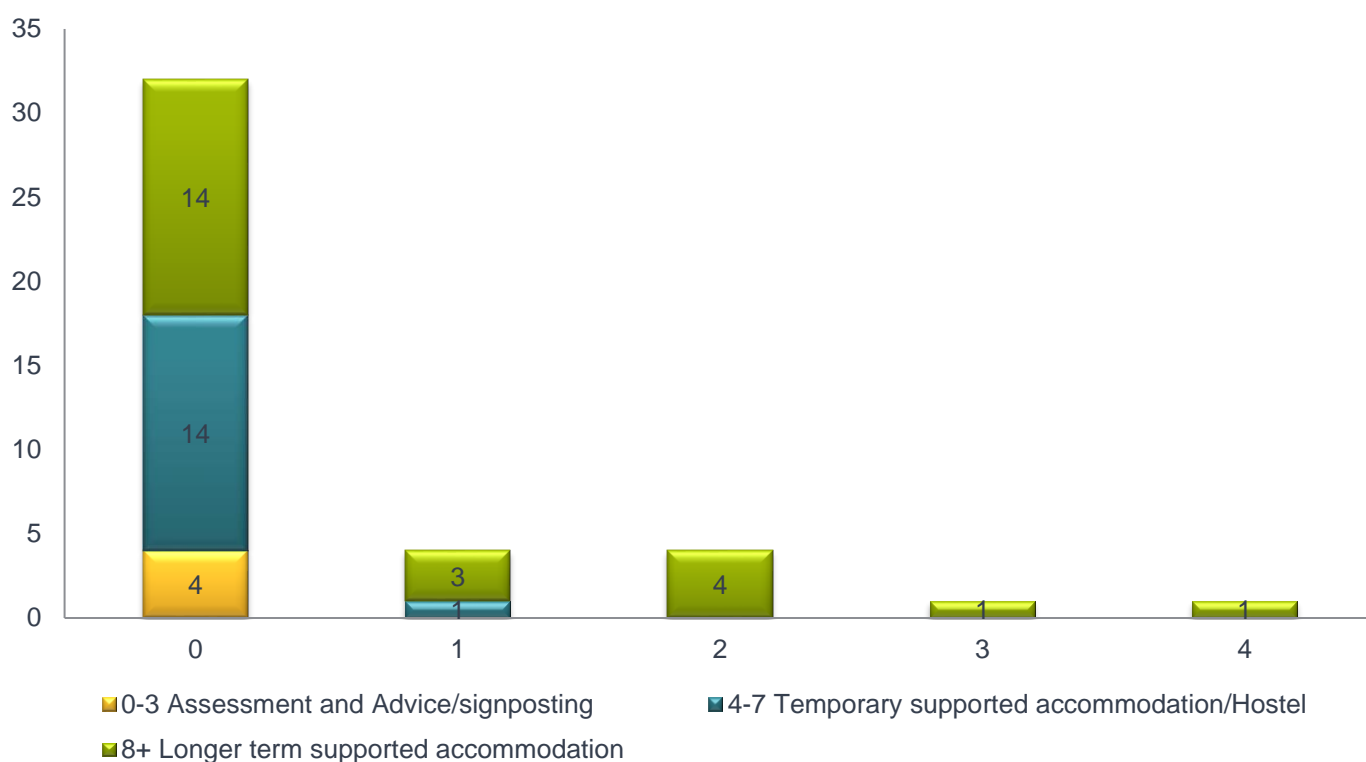
4a. In the past six months, how many times have you attended Accident & Emergency Dept (A&E)?



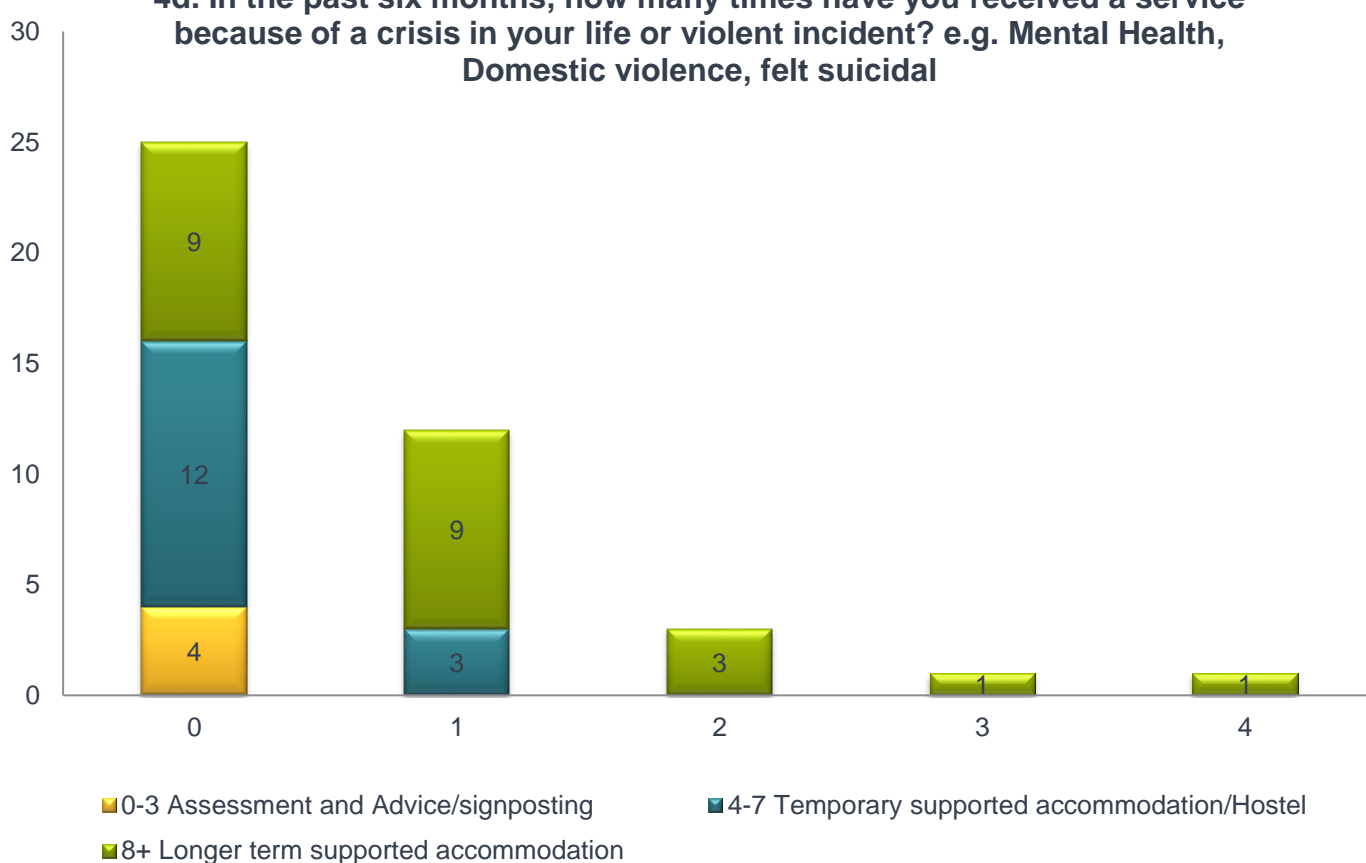
4c. In the past six months, how many times have you been in hospital as an inpatient?



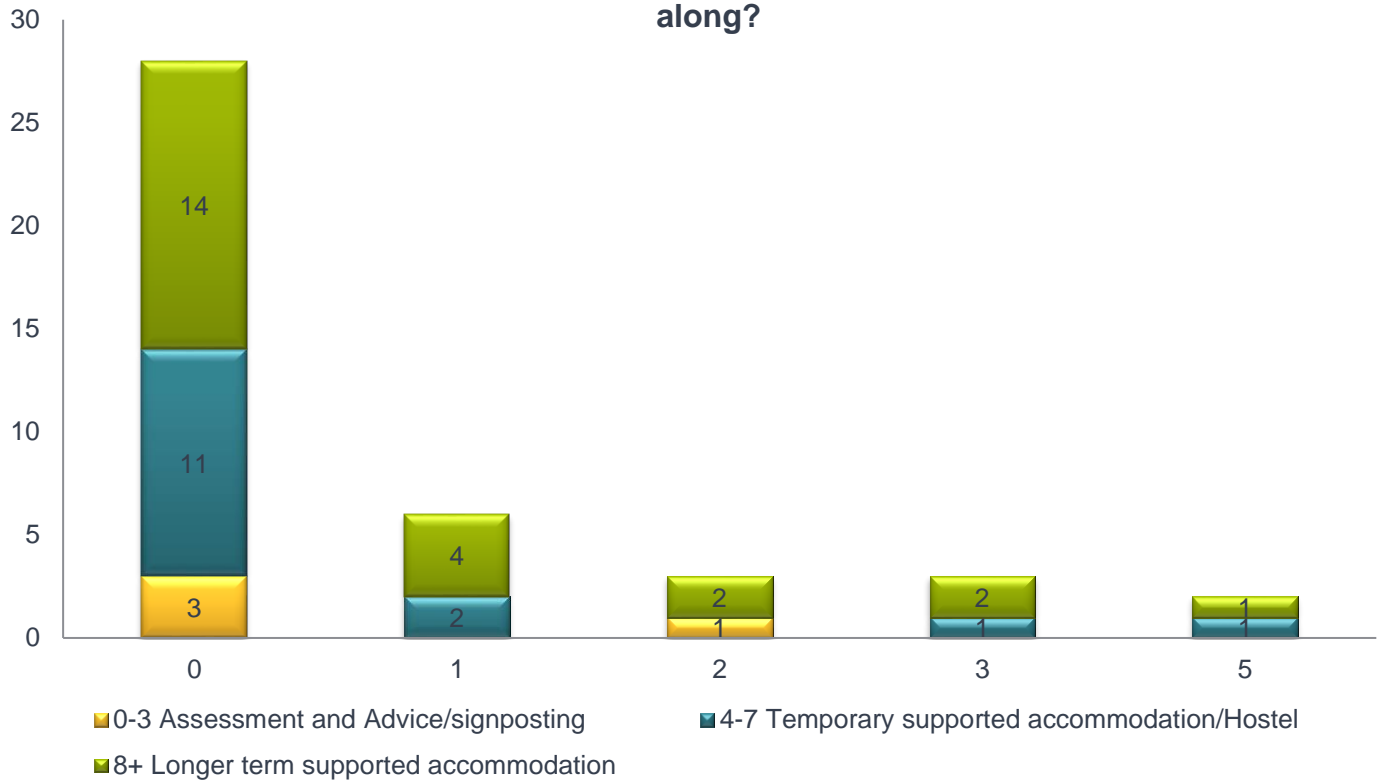
4b. In the past six months, how many times have you taken an ambulance to the hospital?



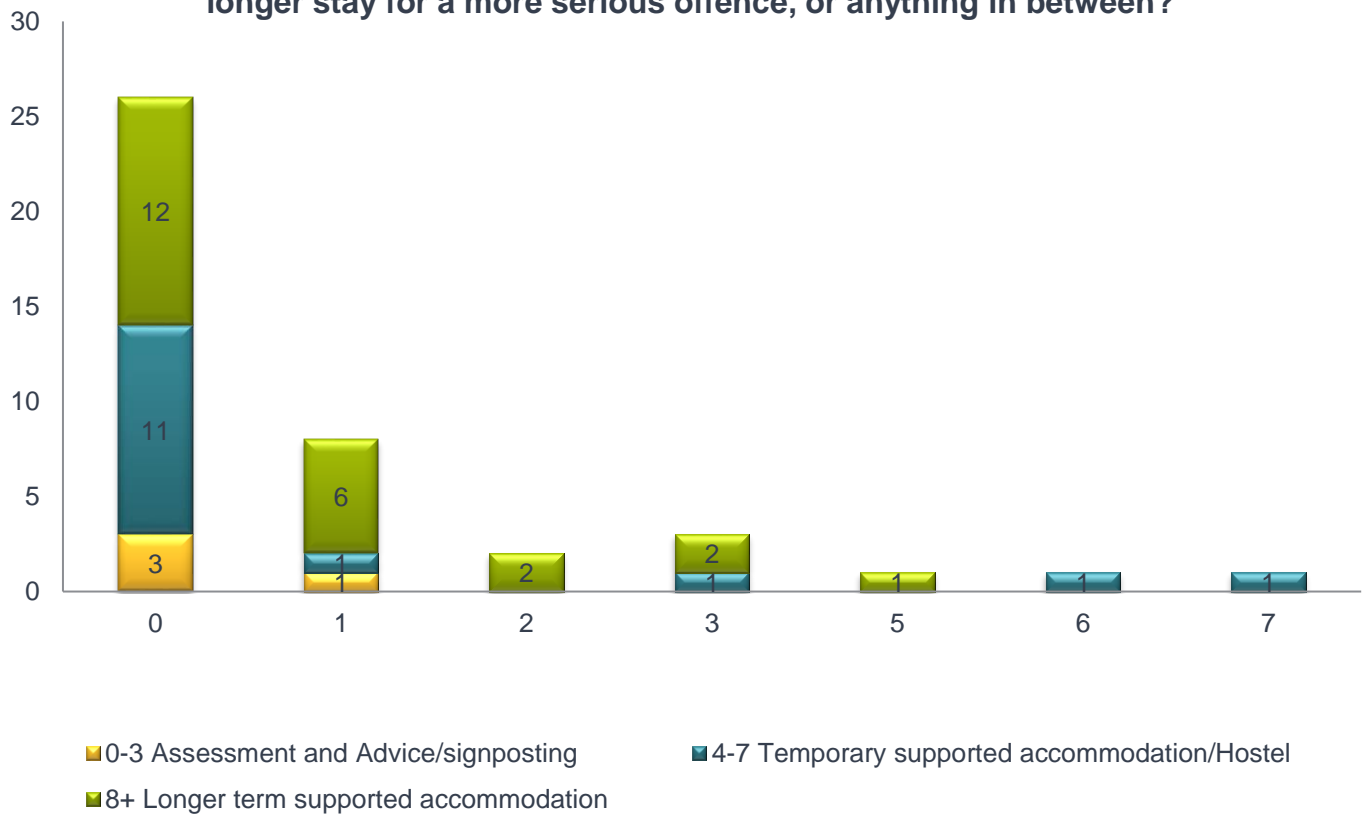
4d. In the past six months, how many times have you received a service because of a crisis in your life or violent incident? e.g. Mental Health, Domestic violence, felt suicidal



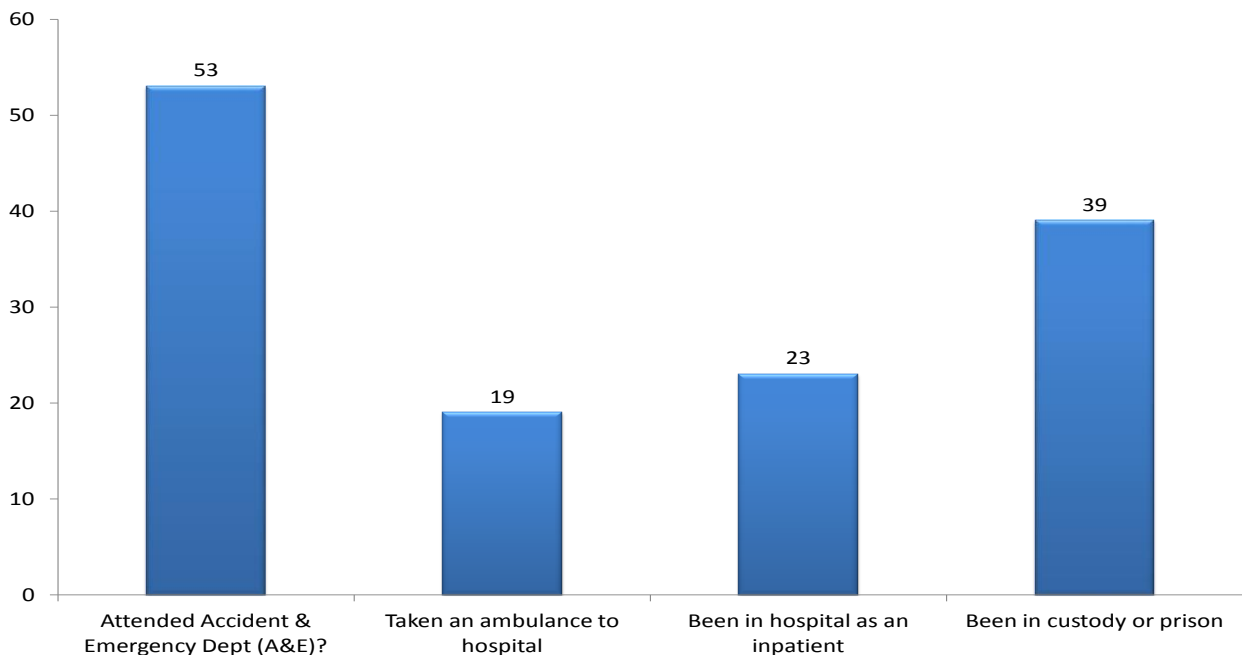
4e. In the past six months, how many times have you talked to the police because you witnessed a crime, were the victim of a crime or the alleged perpetrator of a crime or because the police told you that you must move along?



4f. In the past 6 months, how many times have you stayed one or more nights in police custody or prison, whether that was a short-term stay, a longer stay for a more serious offence, or anything in between?



In the past 6 months, how many times have people...



Similar patterns of increased use of statutory services can be seen in relation to health and criminal justice system use.

Generally, use of these services increases with both score on the vulnerability assessment, and length of time without stable accommodation.

50% people reported using A&E in the last 6 months, and 62% of these had used A&E multiple times. 7% reported having used A&E five times, and 5% six times. 61% of the people in the 8+ category had used A&E in the last 6 months, and 64% of these had used A&E multiple times.

28% of people reported having been an in-patient in the last 6 months. 50% of these had been an inpatient multiple times, with 83% of these falling into the 8+ category.

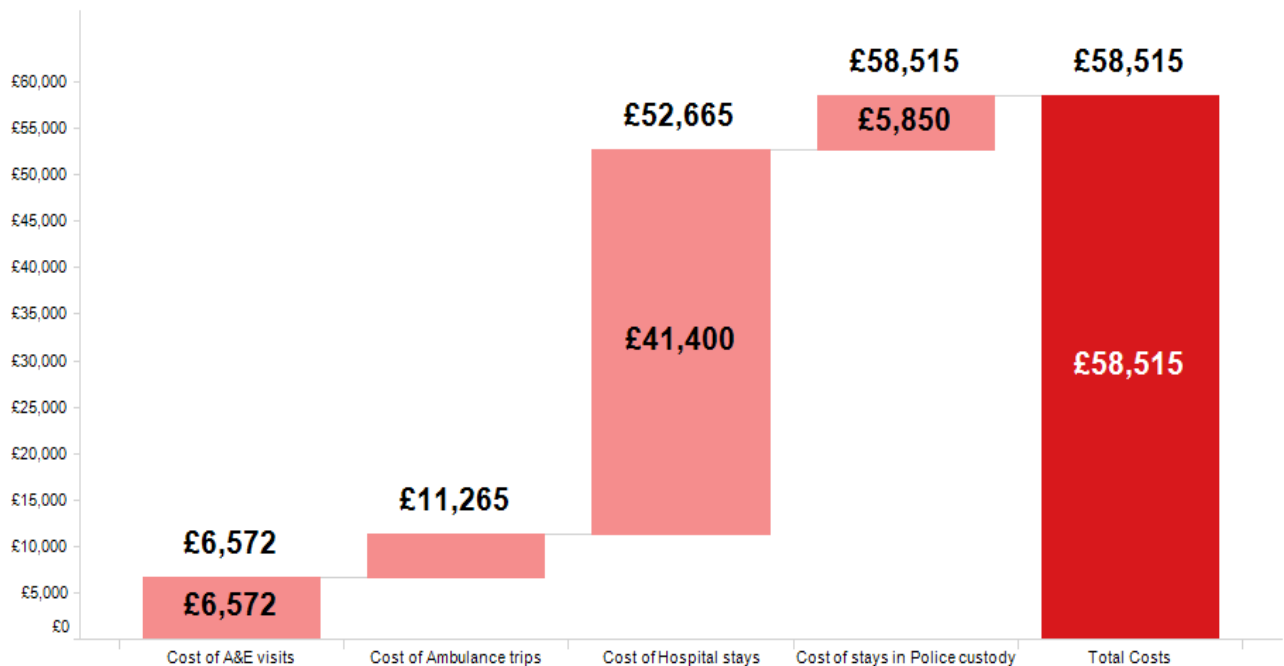
24% of people reported having used the London Ambulance Service in the last 6 months. 60% had used the service more than once, and 100% of those fell into the 8+ category.

40% of people reported having used a service due to a crisis. 29% of those reported multiple crisis', with 100% of these falling in to the 8+ category.

33% of people reported having had some form of contact with the police in the last 6 months. 57% of these had had multiple contacts, with 63% of these falling in to the 8+ category.

And 38% of people reported having spent at least one night in police custody. 50% of these had been in custody multiple times, with 63% of these falling in to the 8+ category.

› Costs breakdown in last 6 months

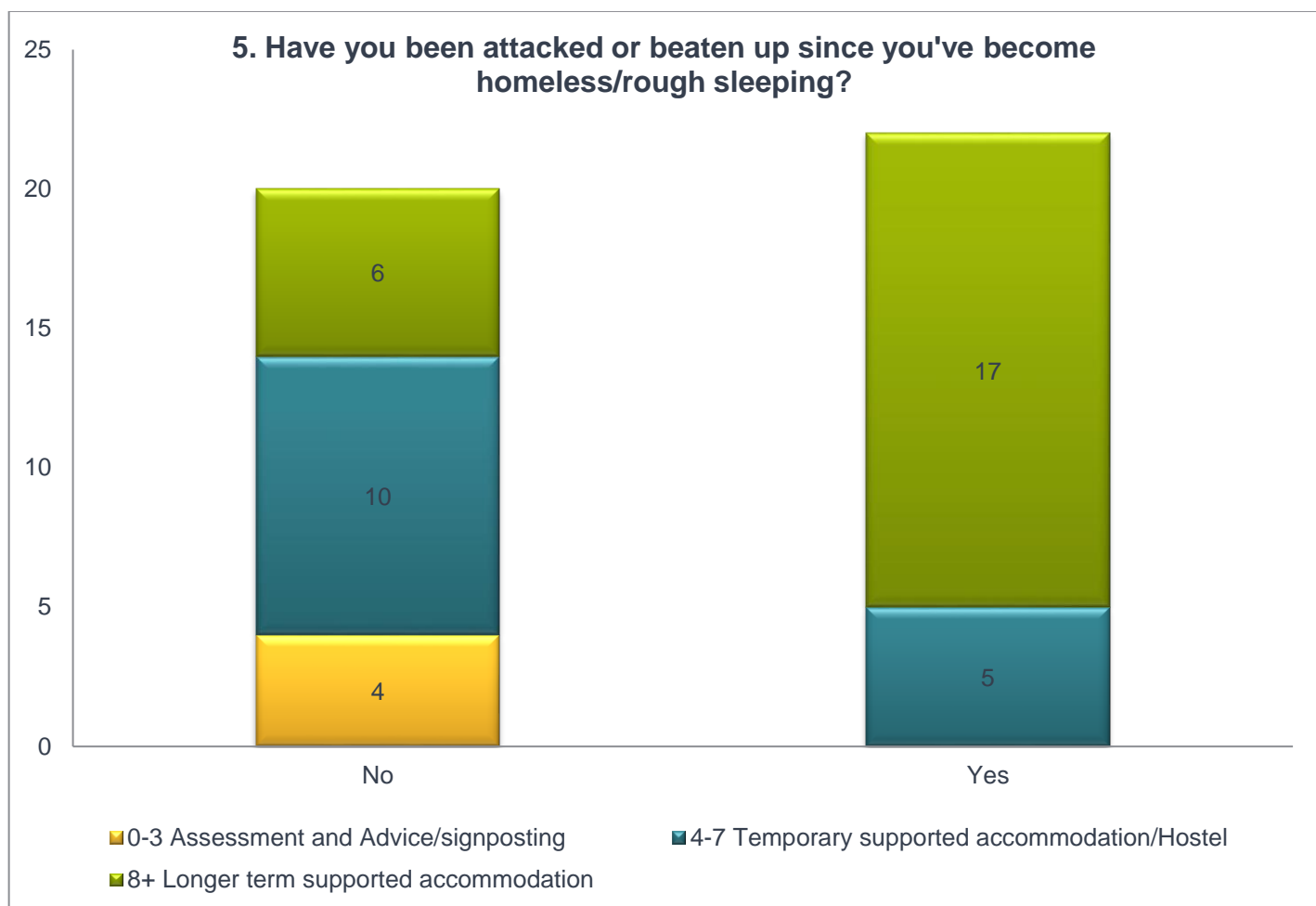


In total, in a six-month period, there were:

- 53 A&E visits
- 19 ambulance journeys
- 23 in patient episodes (length of admission unknown)
- 39 instances of people being taken in to custody

This comes with a significant cost to public finances, totalling to around £58,515 over the 6-month period, if you look at the average cost of use of these.

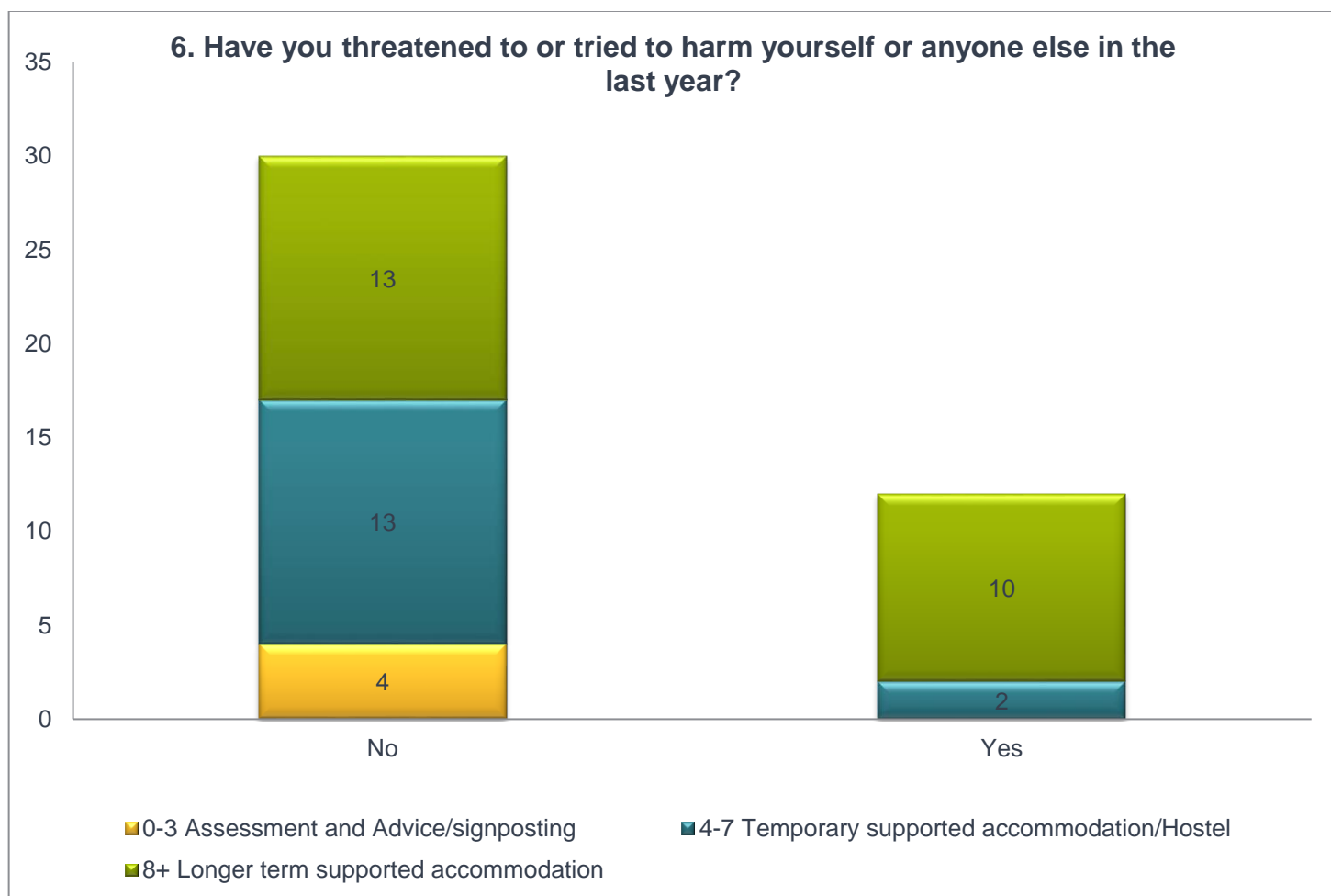
While these costs are based on assumptions as to length of engagement, and estimated costs of delivery, it is clear that chronic rough sleeping has a financial consequence for these statutory services at a time when they are already facing increasing pressure.



52% of people reported having been attacked since becoming homeless.

100% of those who reported being attacked scored 4+, with 77% scoring 8+.

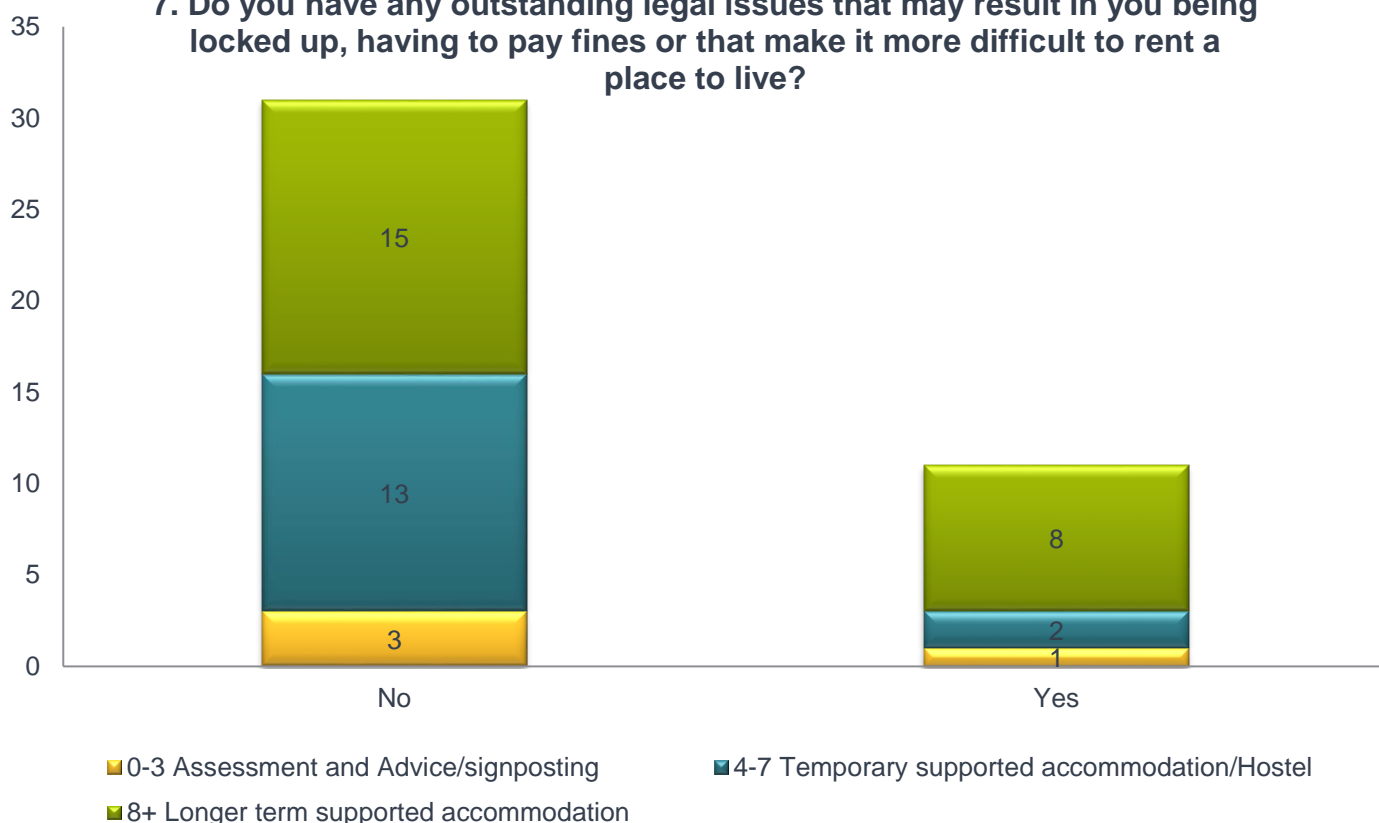
66% of the women surveyed reported having been attacked. This included one woman who reported being pregnant.



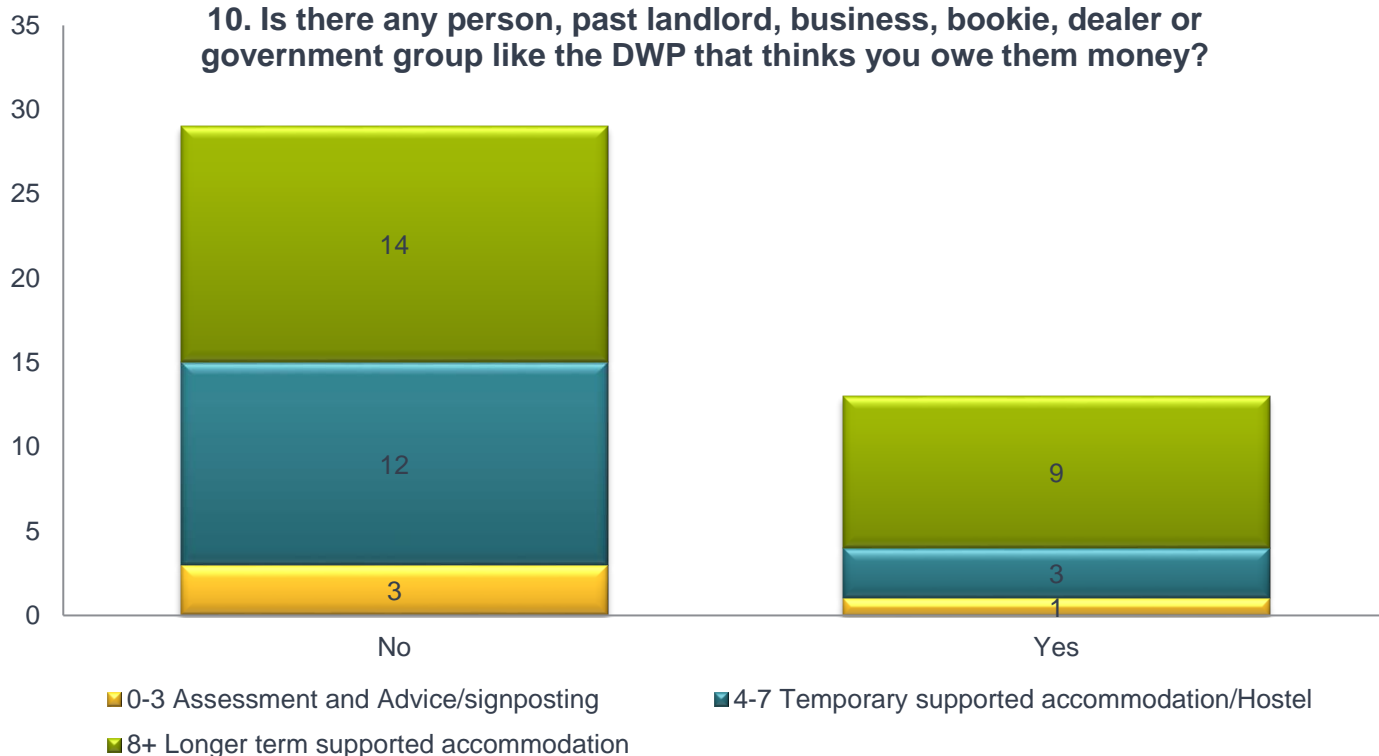
71% of people reported that they had posed no threat of harm to themselves or others in the last 12 months, including 100% of those scoring 0-3 on the vulnerability assessment.

However, 29% reported that they did, and of those, 83% scored 8+.

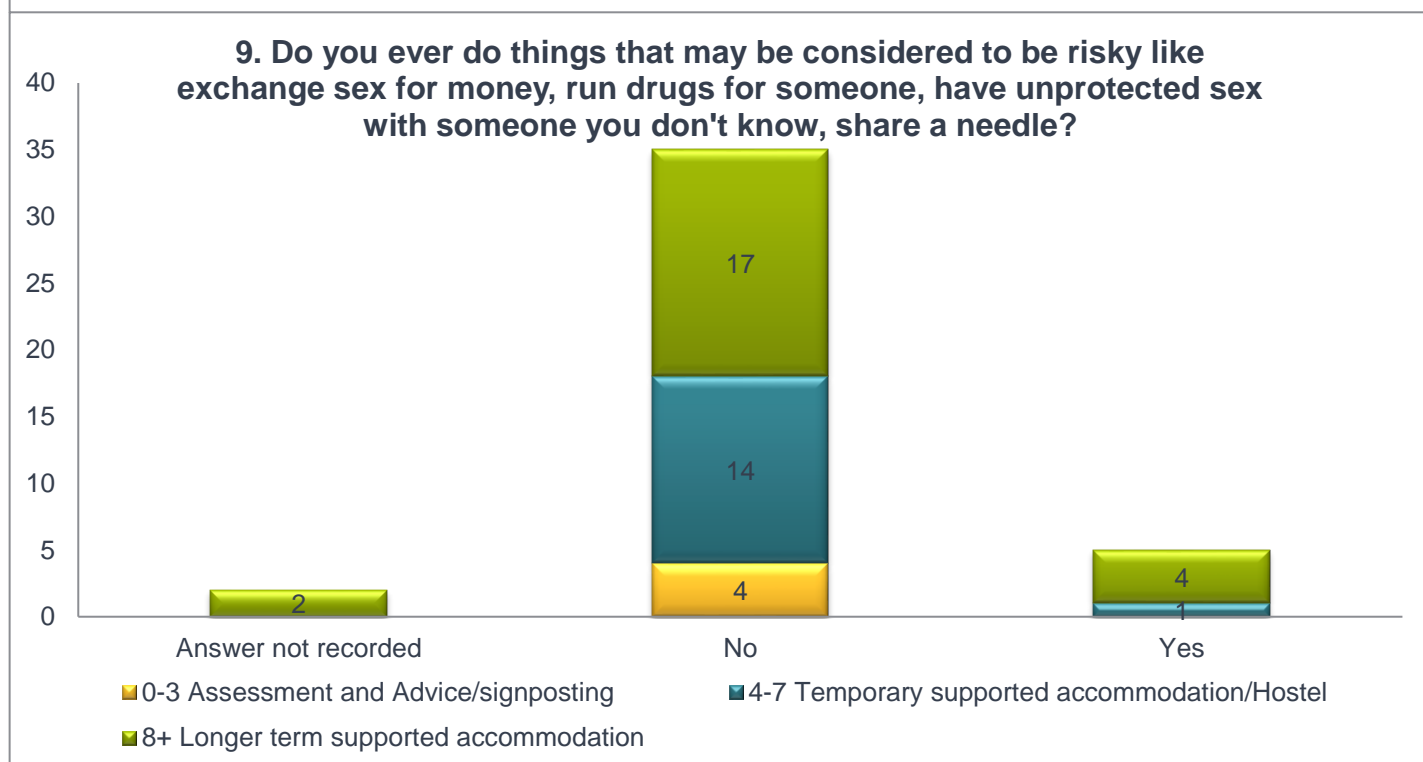
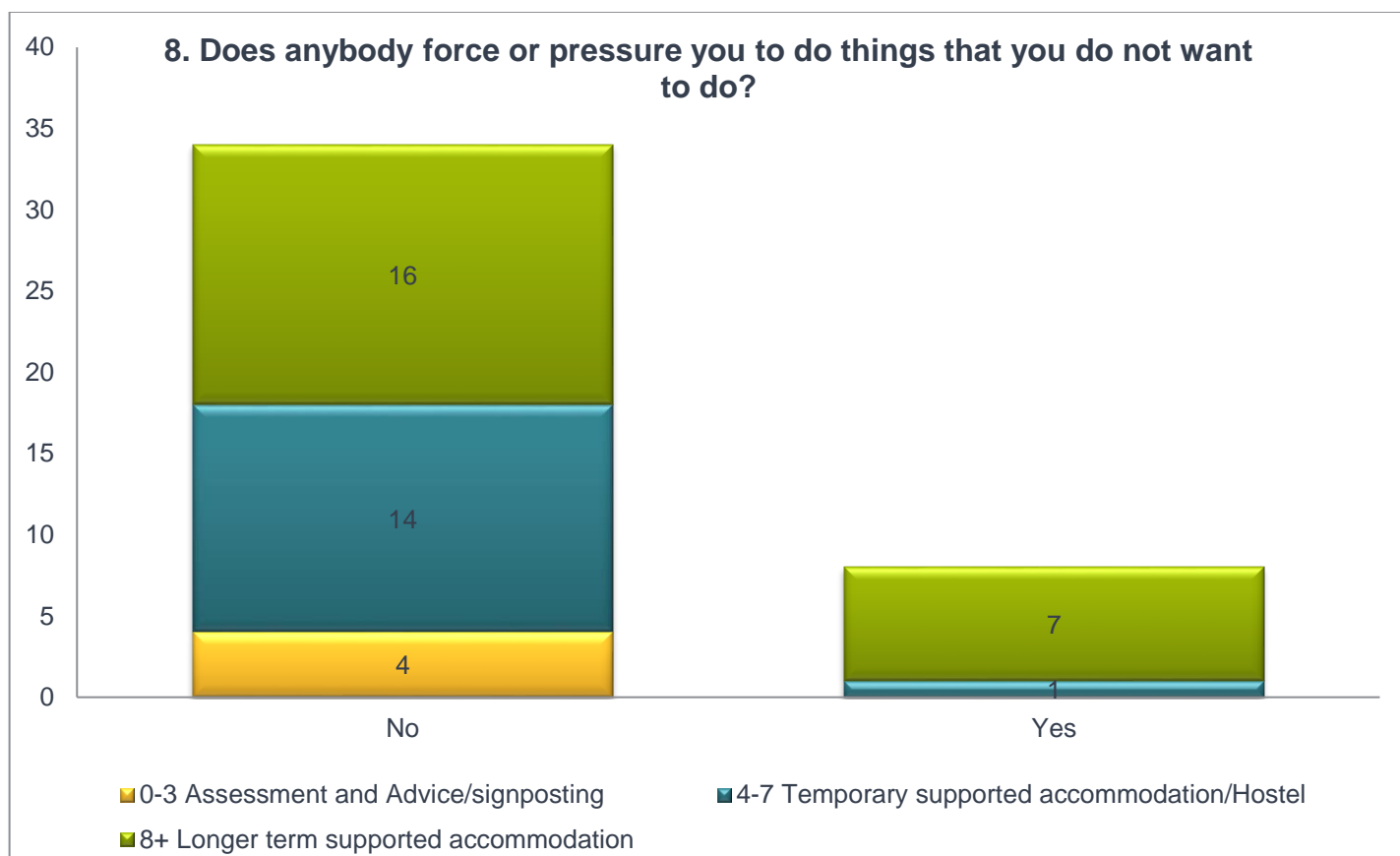
7. Do you have any outstanding legal issues that may result in you being locked up, having to pay fines or that make it more difficult to rent a place to live?



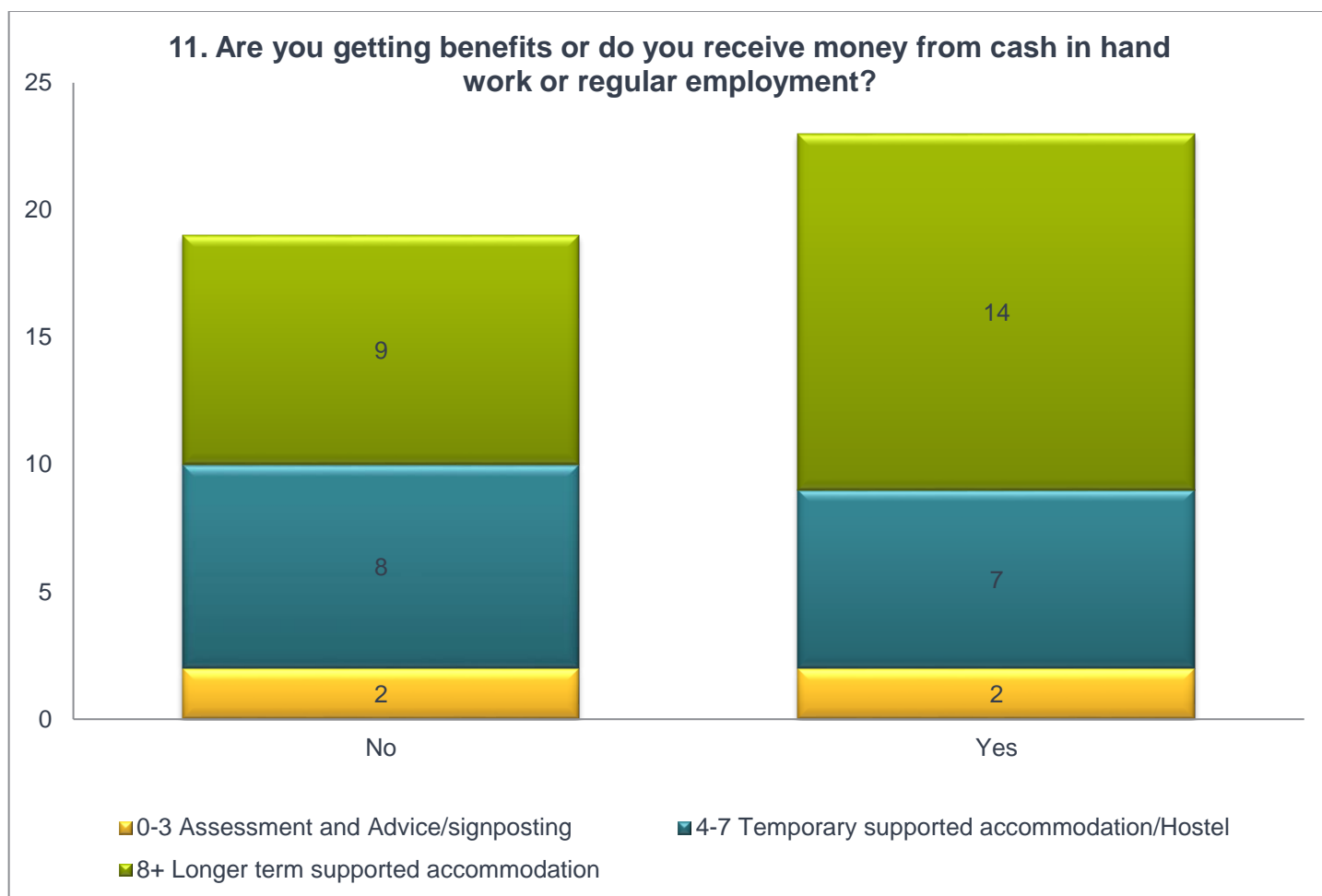
10. Is there any person, past landlord, business, bookie, dealer or government group like the DWP that thinks you owe them money?



Similar numbers of respondents reported either having an outstanding legal issue, or outstanding debt. 26% reported a legal issue of who 73% scored 8+, to 30% reporting an outstanding debt of who 69% who scored 8+.



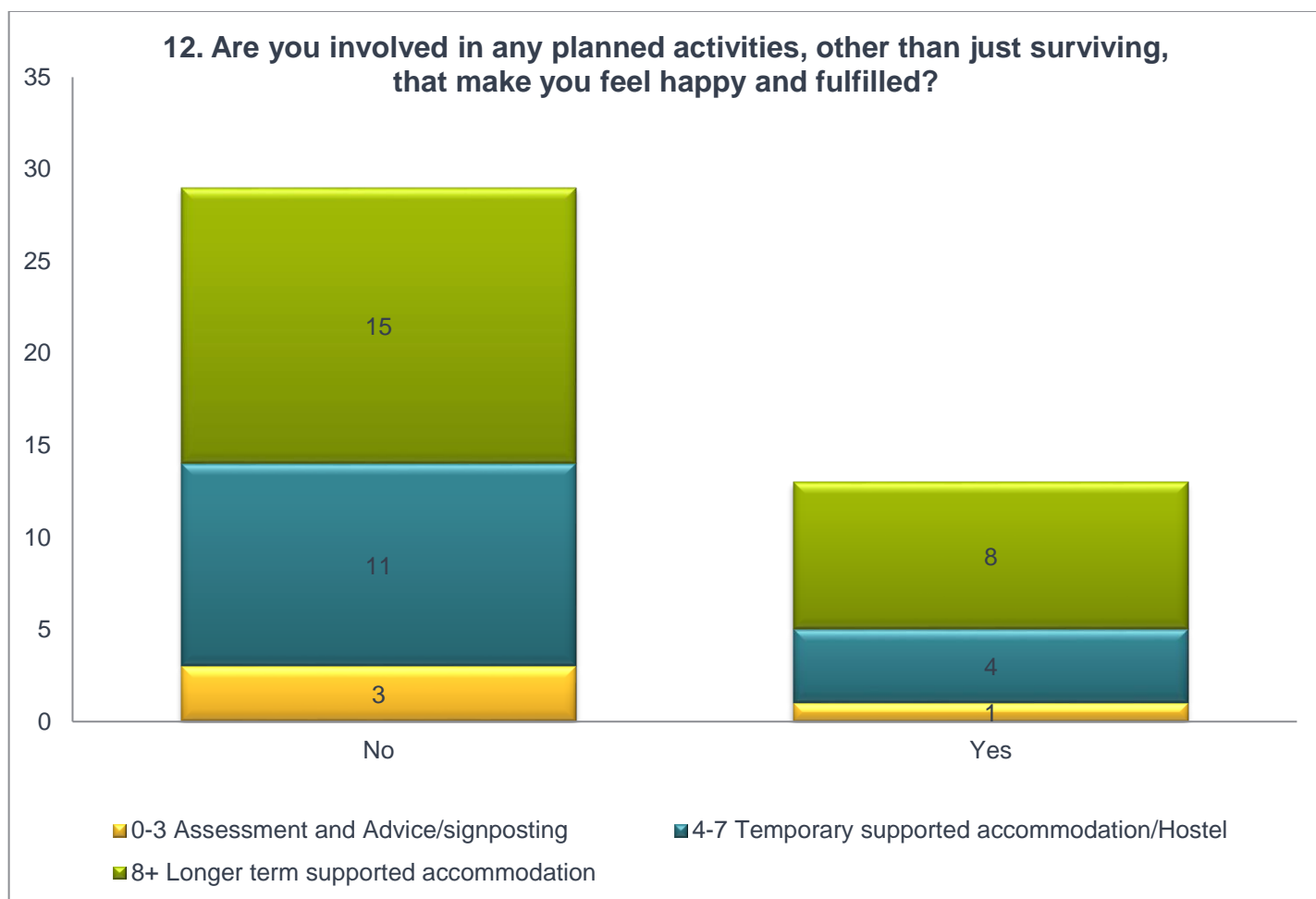
The vast majority of respondents report not being at risk through abuse or unsafe practices. However, those that do are mostly those within the 8+ group, with 88% of those who report being forced to do things, and 80% of those who report engaging in risky behaviour falling into this category.



This question, and what it tells us, has caused some confusion. The question poses two potential options, but the response is either yes or no.

So of the 54% who responded "Yes", we are unable to differentiate as to whether this is via benefits or employment.

However, it does seem to indicate that 46% of those who responded are not either in work or in receipt of welfare payments.

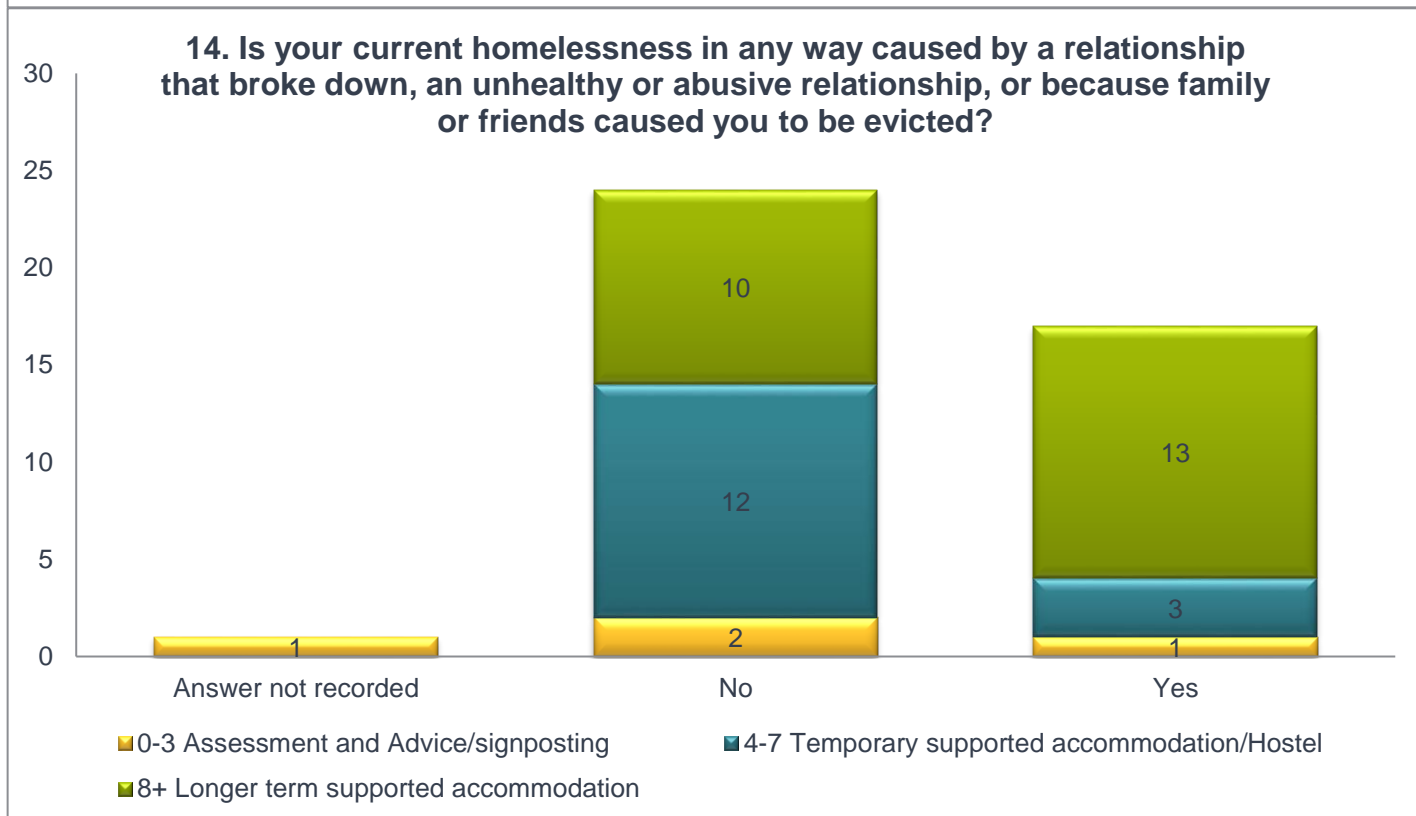
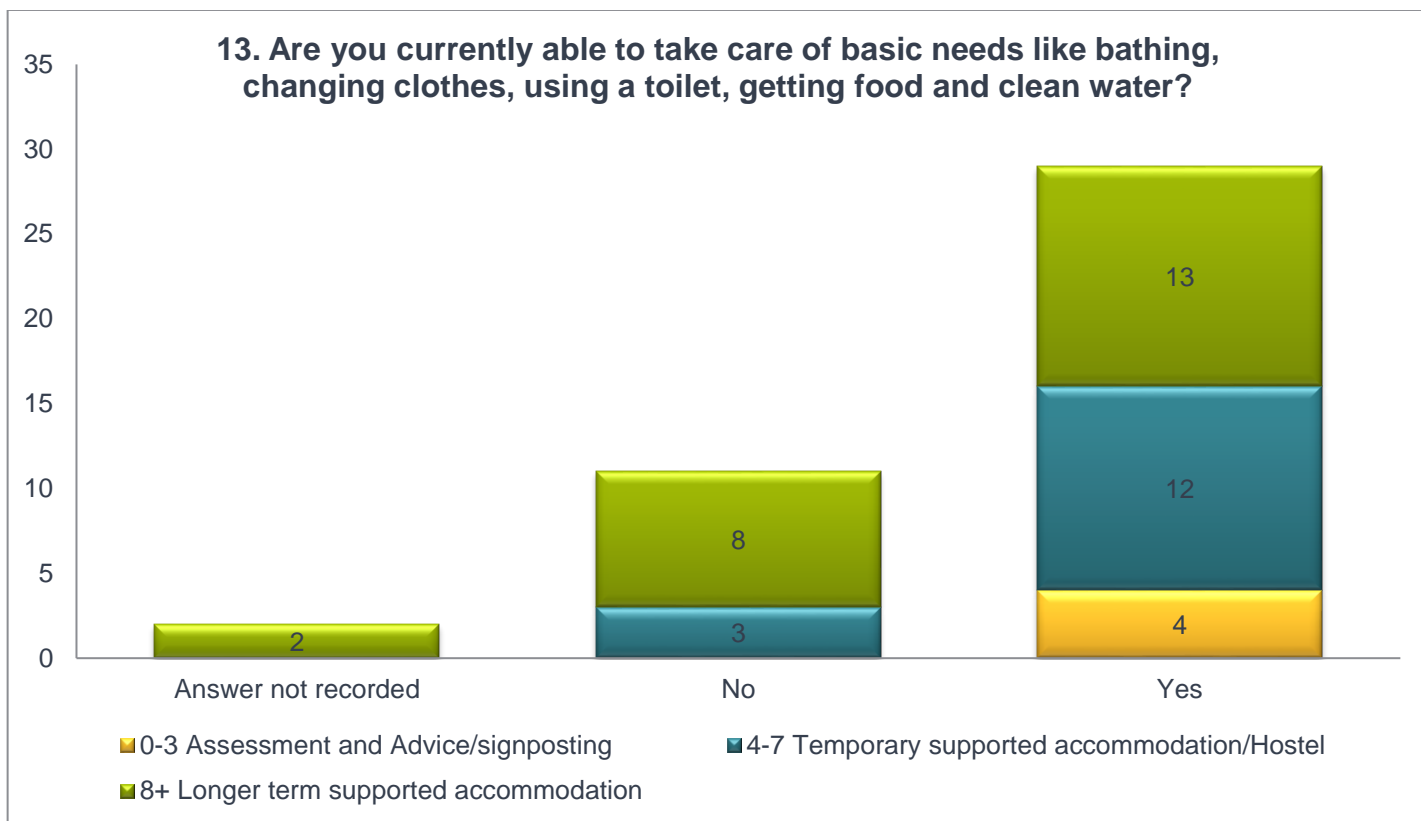


Only 31% people reported that they are engaged in any activity that makes them feel happy and fulfilled.

This means that 29 people for whom there is nothing but simply surviving that occupies their time.

As part of our survey, we asked people what their hopes and aspirations were for the future. While there were a number of people who had clear hopes for the future, including getting back in to housing and employment, there were others for who 'hope' seemed a distant prospect.

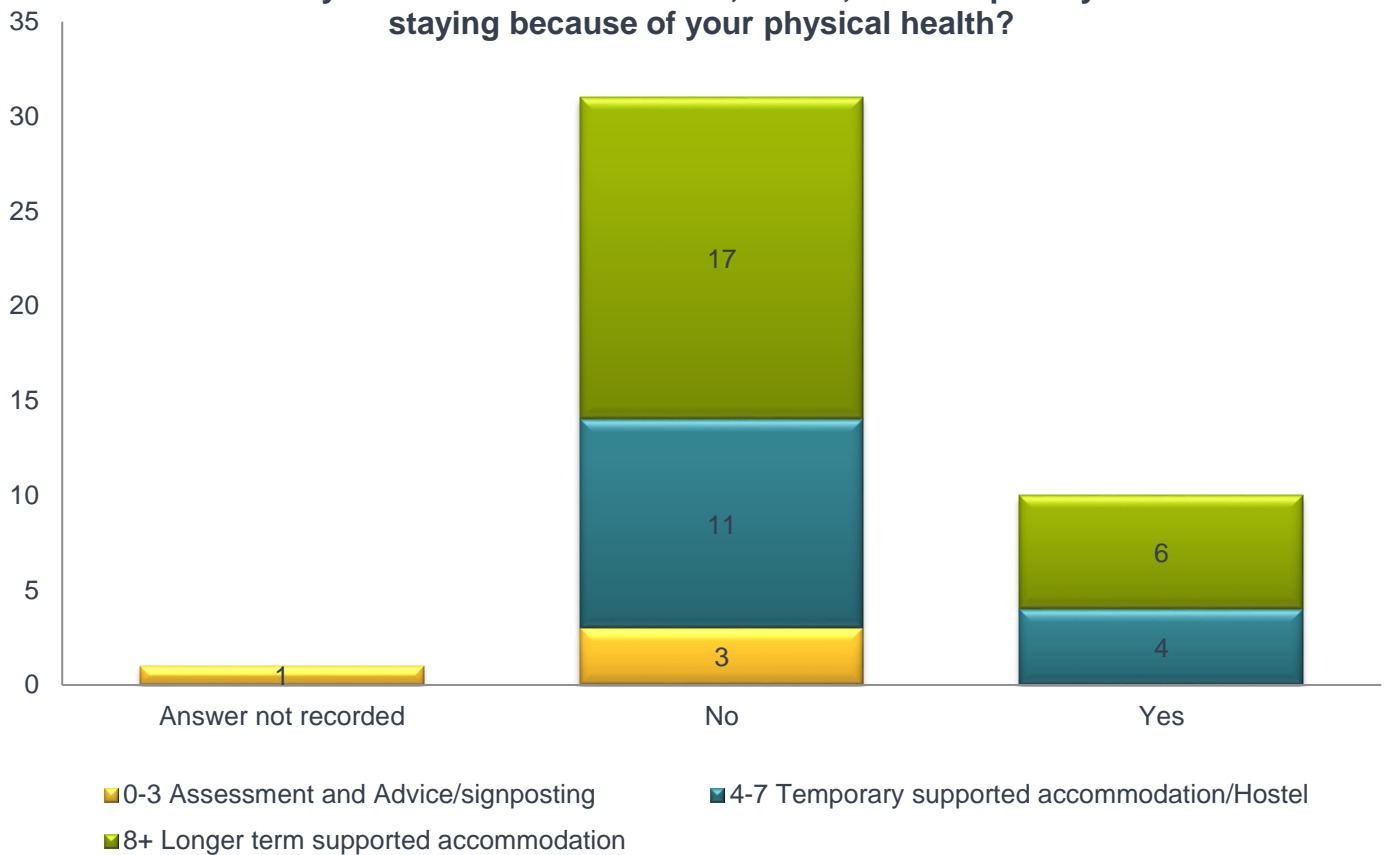
One quote that was particularly impactful and disturbing was "I just want to die".



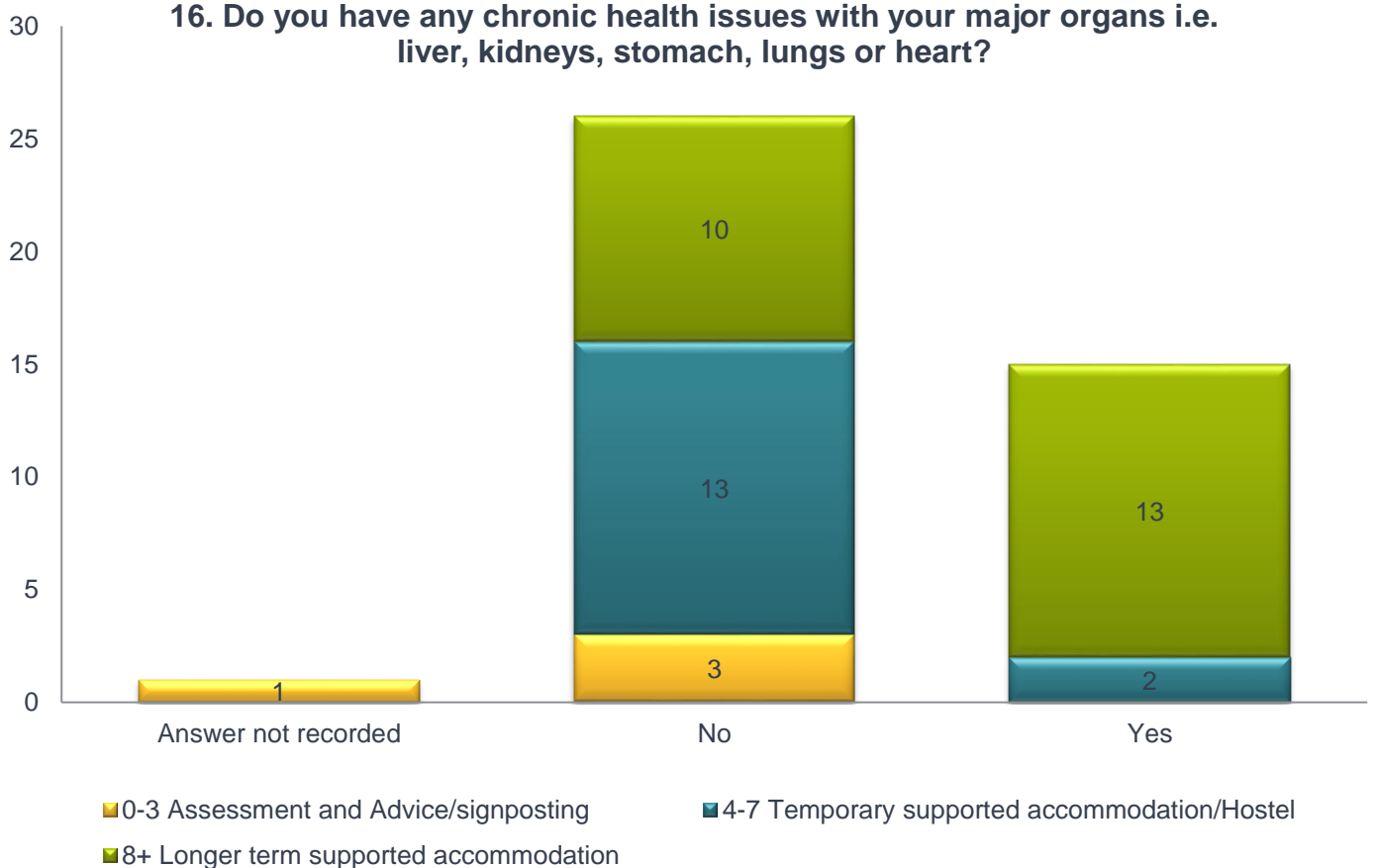
26% people were not able to meet their basic hygiene needs, 45% of who score 8+.

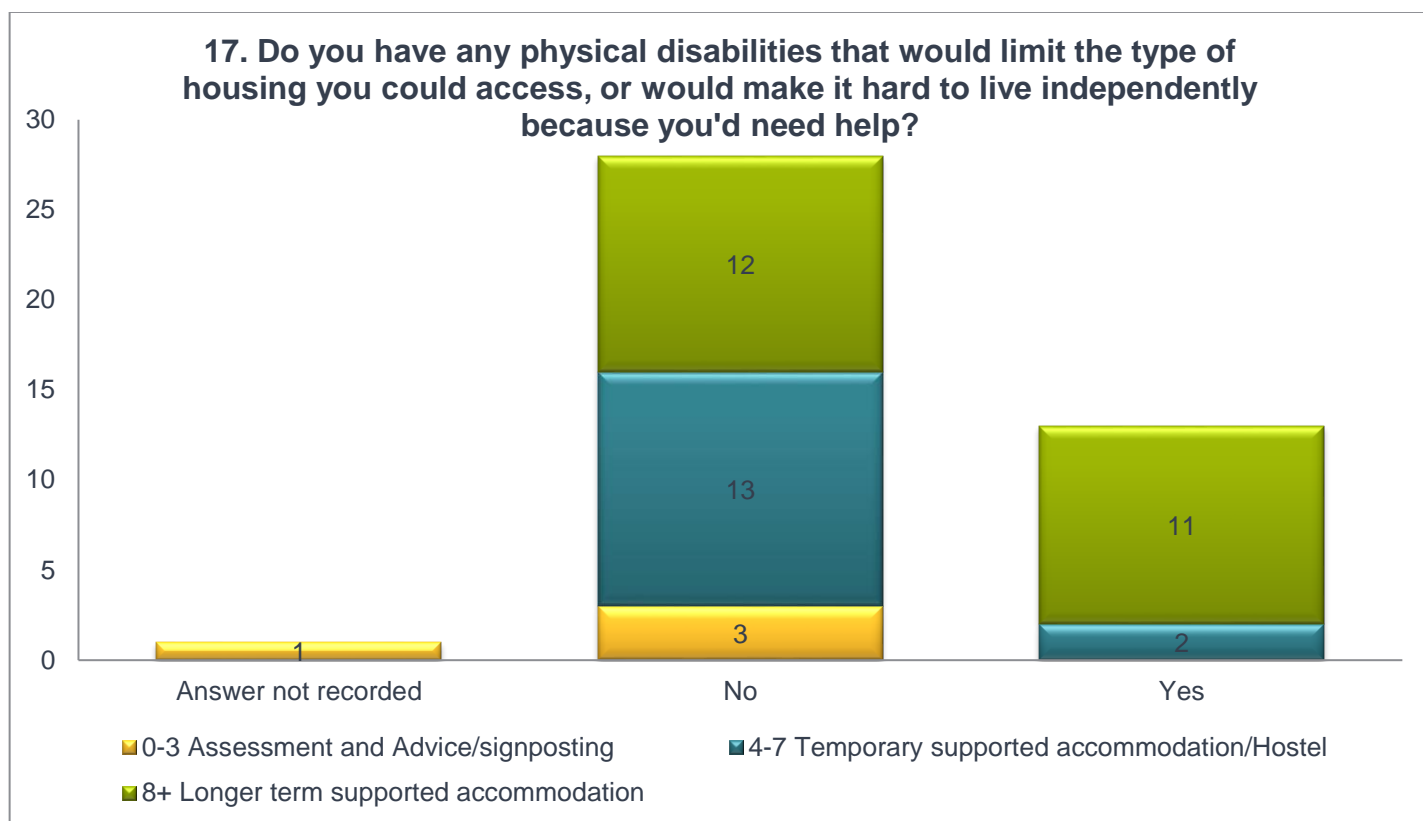
40% people reported being homeless due to a relationship breakdown, 76% of who fall in to the 8+ category.

15. Have you ever had to leave a flat, hostel, or other place you were staying because of your physical health?



16. Do you have any chronic health issues with your major organs i.e. liver, kidneys, stomach, lungs or heart?



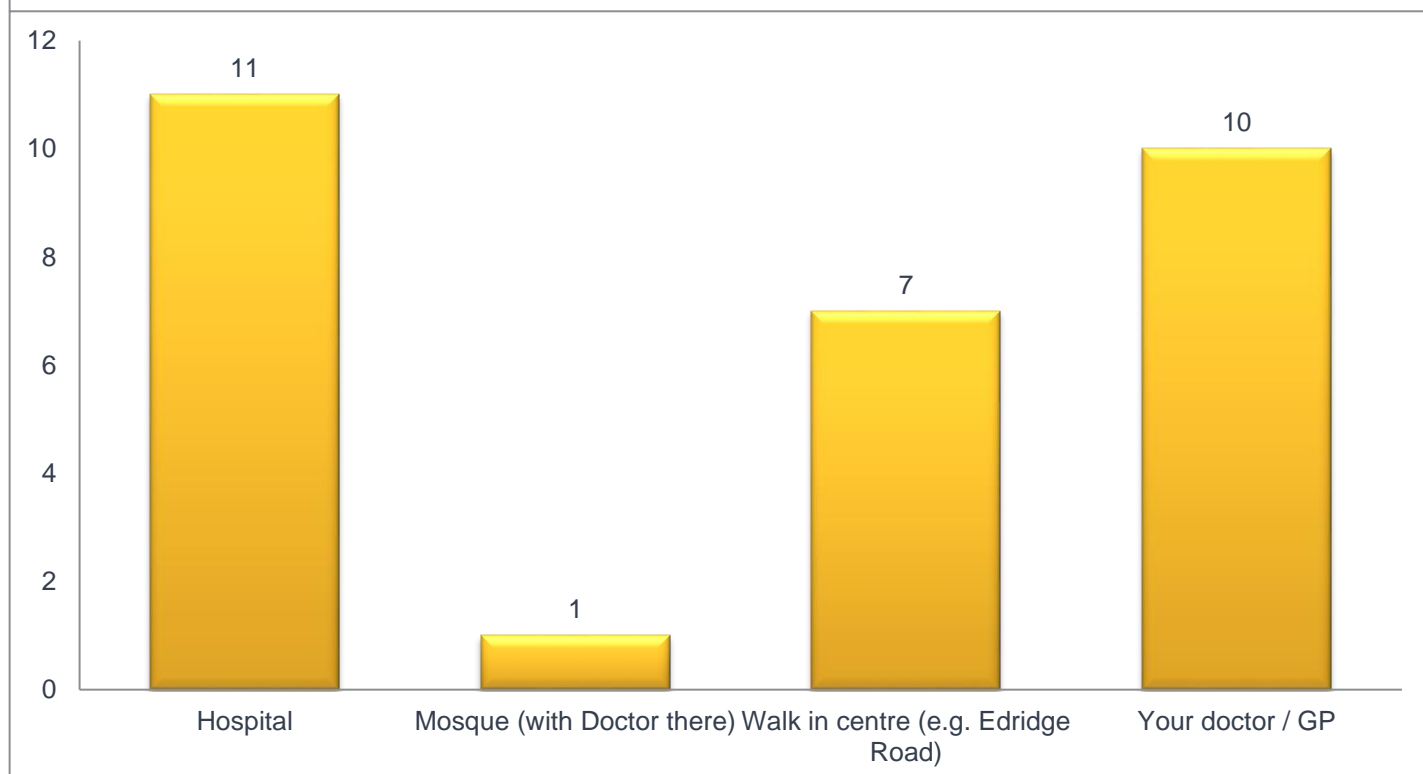
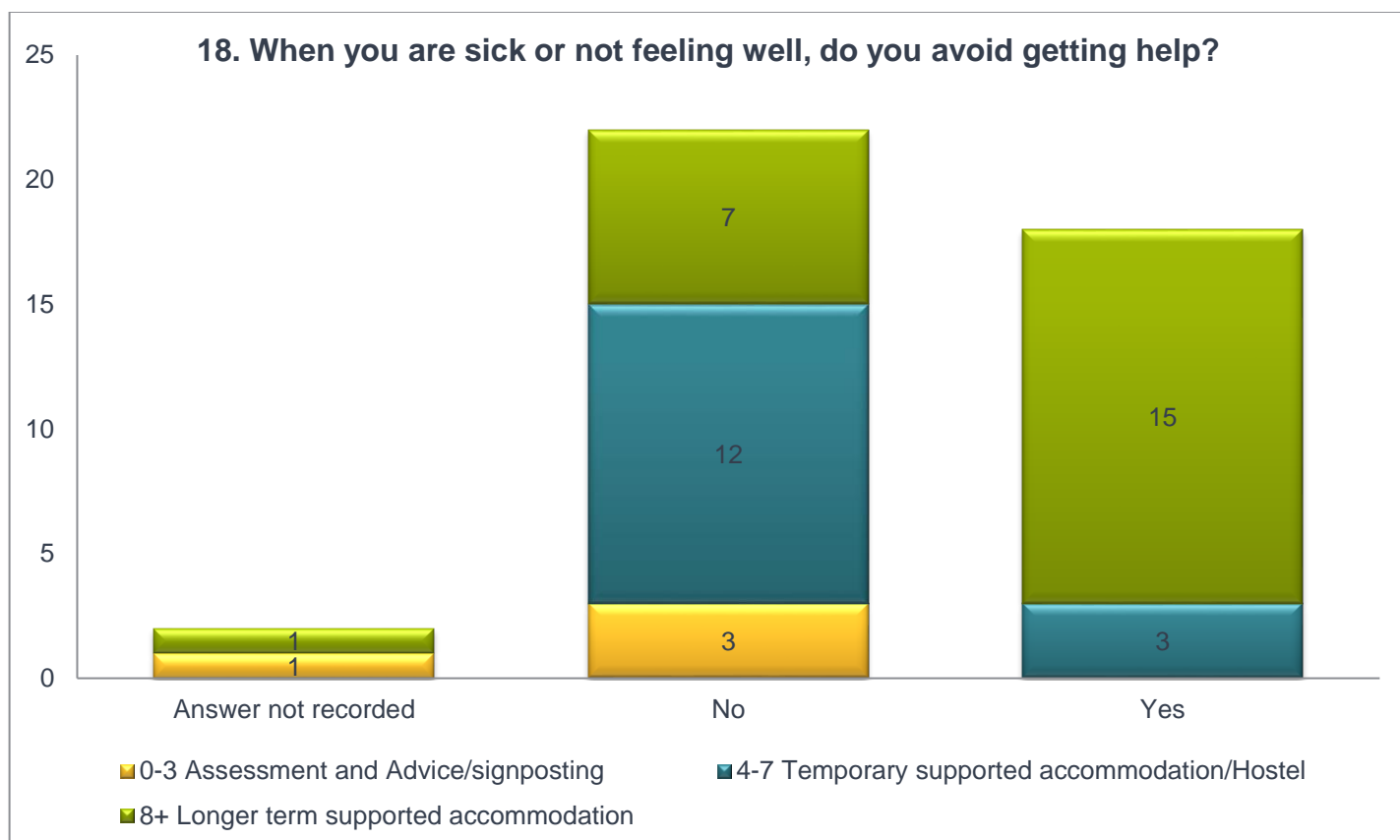


36% people report having a chronic physical health issue, 87% of who fall within the 8+ category. This is compared to 25% in Westminster, 22% in Barcelona and 27% in Valencia.

However, only 29% of people report having lost accommodation due to physical health, 60% of who fall within the 8+ category.

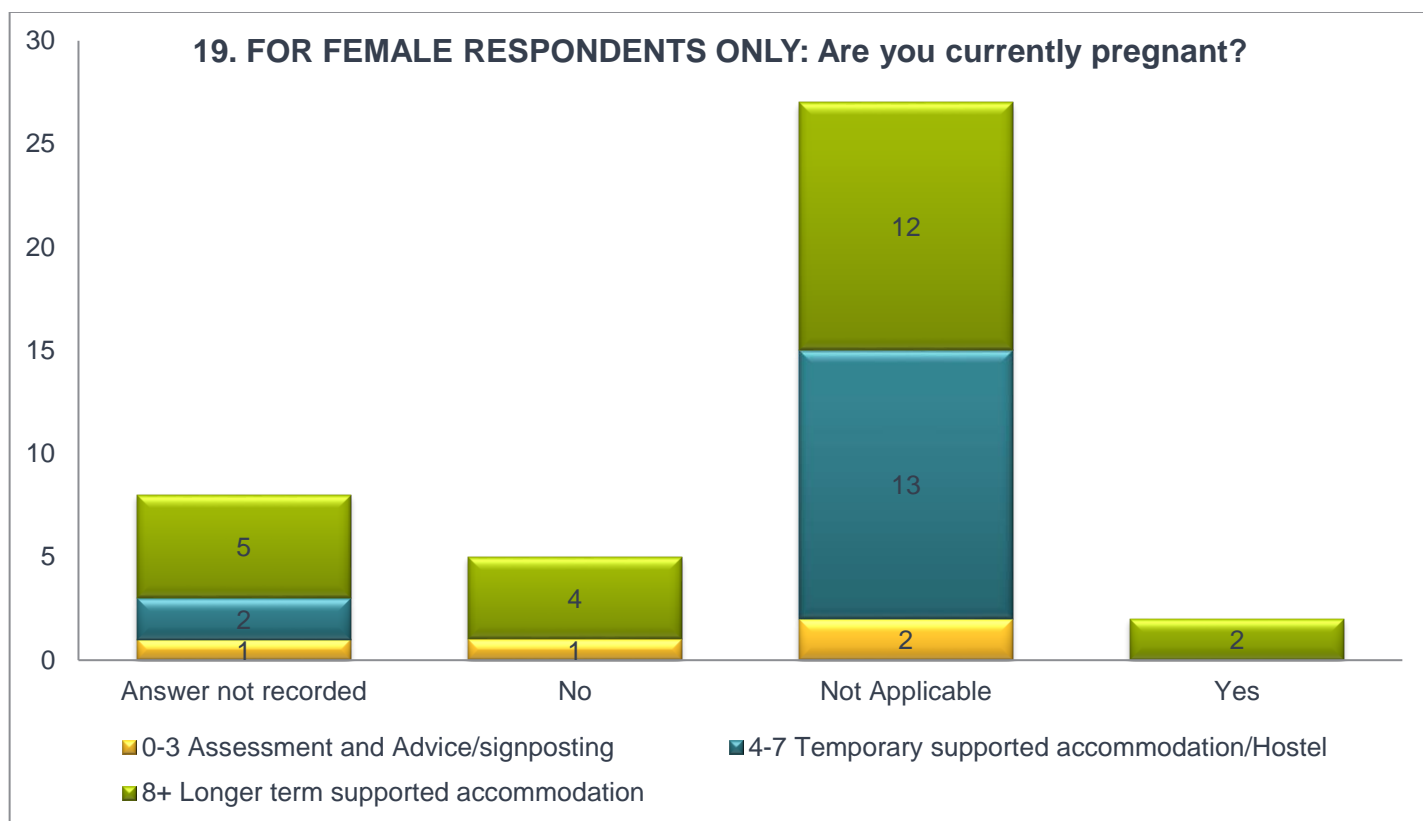
31% report having a physical disability that in some way limits they type of housing they would need and 85% of those are in the 8+ bracket, meaning that their level of complexity would make access to traditional care problematic. This is another area where the proportion of Croydon rough sleepers reporting positively to this question is higher than in other participating cities, with the next highest proportion being Valencia with 14%.

However, without access to further information on the nature of the disability, it is difficult to ascertain the nature of the barriers to access.



43% (18 people) respondents reported not seeking medical help when required, and 83% of those fall within the 8+ group.

However, 69% of people reported going to a health facility when in need when asked “where do you go when you need medical help?”, meaning that only 31% responded “nowhere” when asked a second time.



33% of female respondents reported that they were pregnant; one of whom also reported being physically attacked while sleeping rough.

Both of the pregnant women fall within the 8+ group.

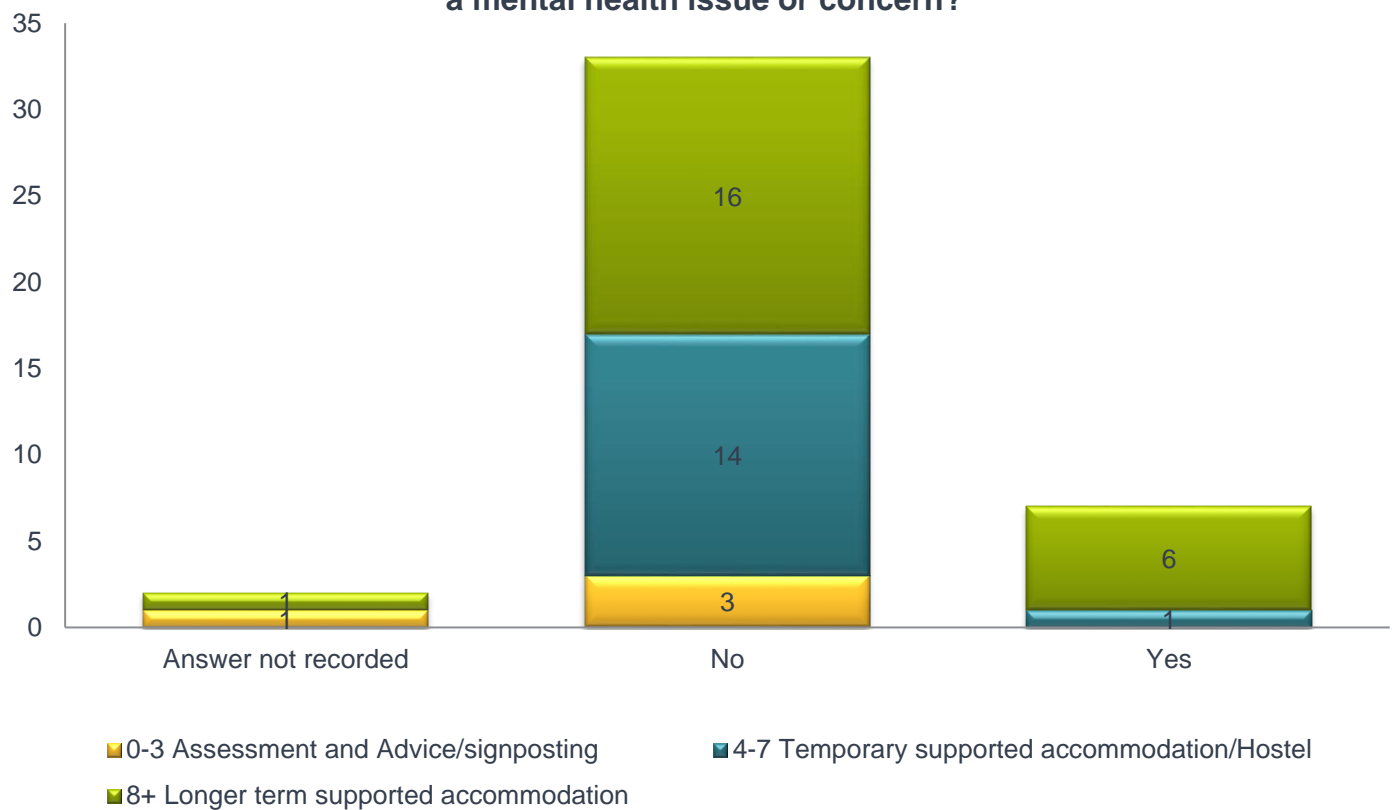
One man kindly confirmed that he was not pregnant.



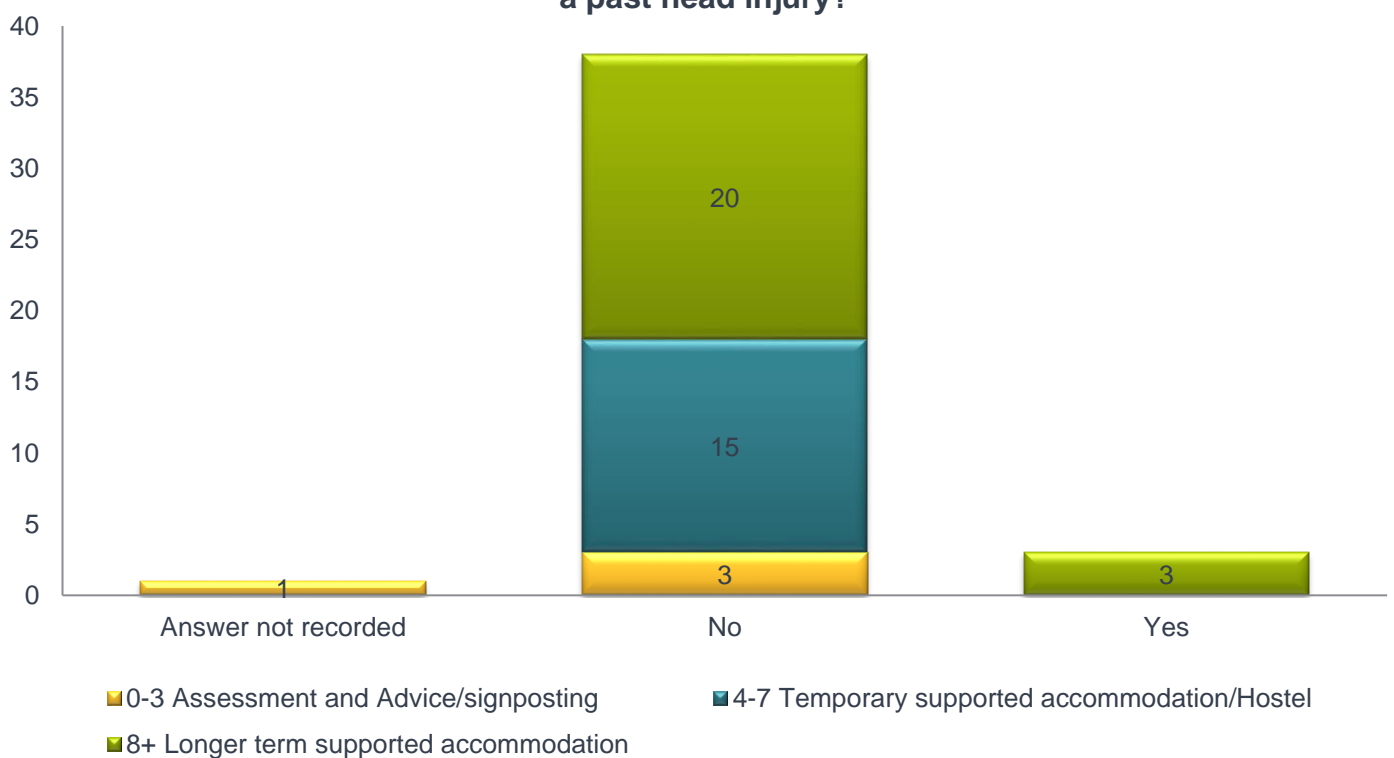
36% of people report having lost accommodation due to drug or alcohol use, 67% of who are in the 8+ group. However, only 10% report the financial implications of this use would impact on their ability to afford future accommodation. Again, proportionally, Croydon rough sleepers responded to this question at a much higher percentage, with the next highest positive response rate being Valencia where 15% responded positively.

This could suggest that the majority of lost accommodation through drink or drug use is due to behaviours associated with it, rather than due to falling in arrears as a result.

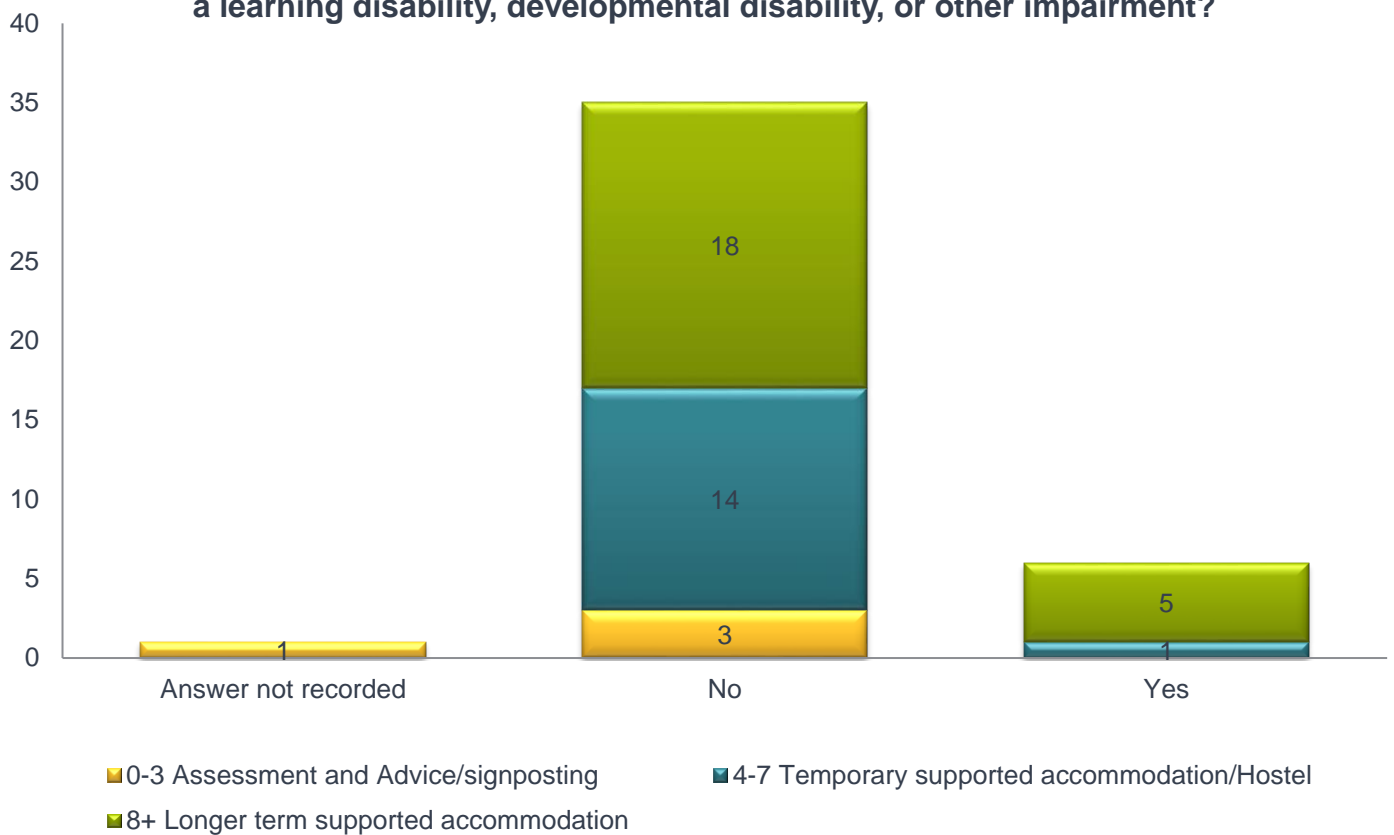
22a. Have you ever had trouble maintaining your housing, or been evicted from accommodation or other place you were staying because of a mental health issue or concern?



22b. Have you ever had trouble maintaining your housing, or been evicted from accommodation or other place you were staying because of a past head injury?



22c. Have you ever had trouble maintaining your housing, or been evicted from accommodation or other place you were staying because of a learning disability, developmental disability, or other impairment?

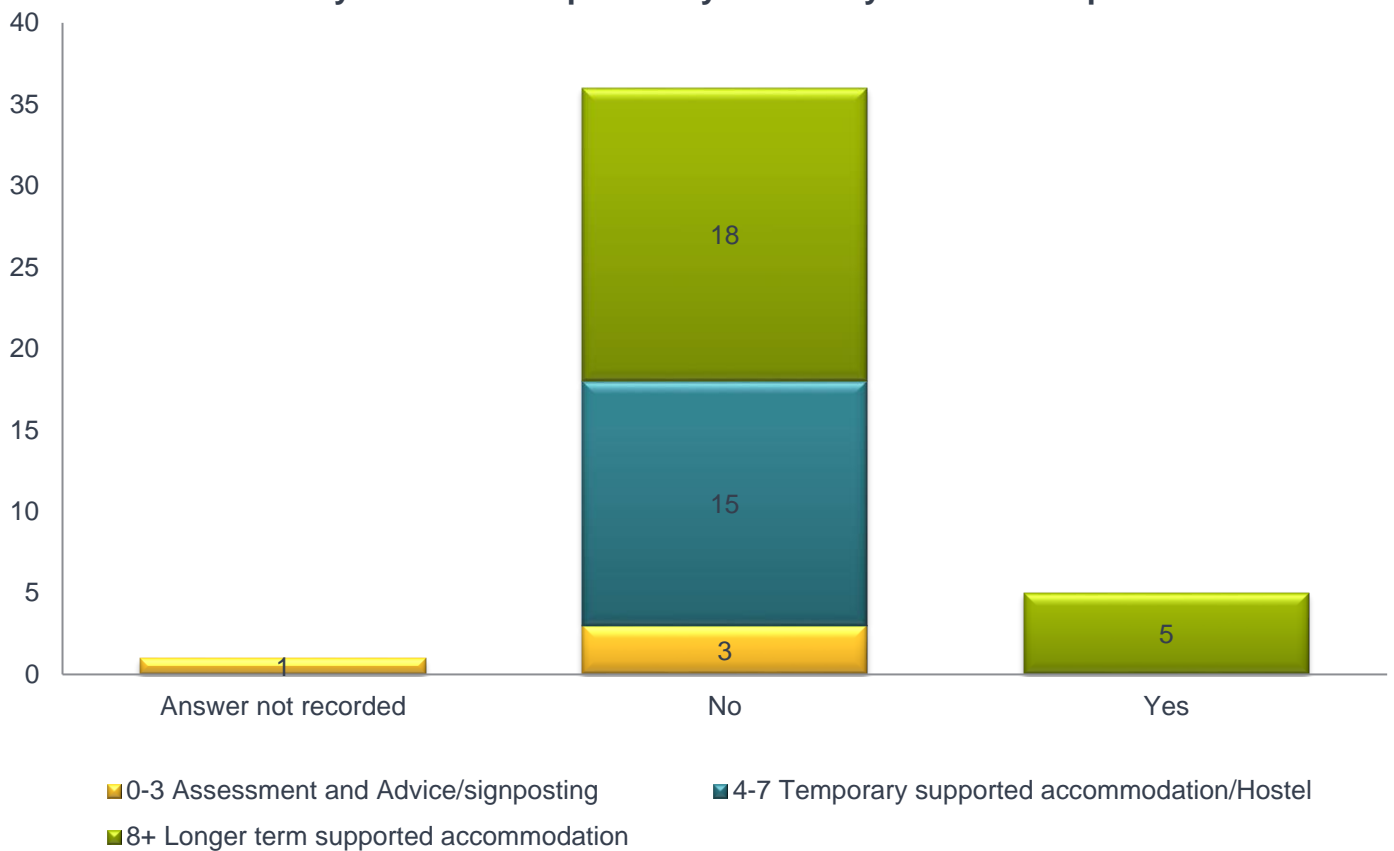


17% of respondents' report having lost accommodation due to a mental health issue, 86% of who fall in to the 8+ group.

Only 7% reported having lost accommodation due to a brain injury. However, the US context in relation to combat related PTSD, and its classification as a brain injury and not a mental health condition, makes interpreting the meaning of the UK respondents difficult. It may well mean that this confusion as to meaning has resulted in an underrepresentation in the data.

14% reported having lost accommodation due to a learning disability, or related condition. However, 83% of those fall into the 8+ group.

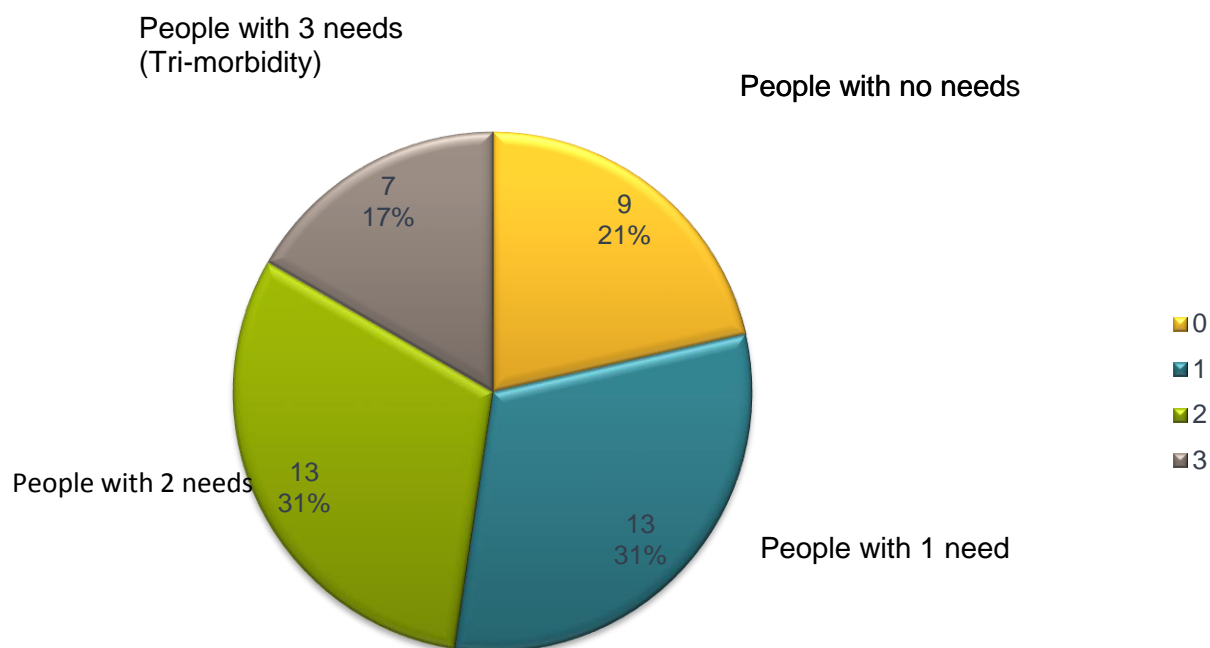
23. Do you have any mental health or brain injury that would make it hard for you to live independently because you'd need help?



12% responded that their mental health or brain injury would make it hard for them to live independently, though 100% of them fall within the 8+ category.

This is fewer people than those who report having lost accommodation due to mental health, which was 17%, and indicates that there is a potential disconnect between people's perceptions of the impact of their mental health on future accommodation options.

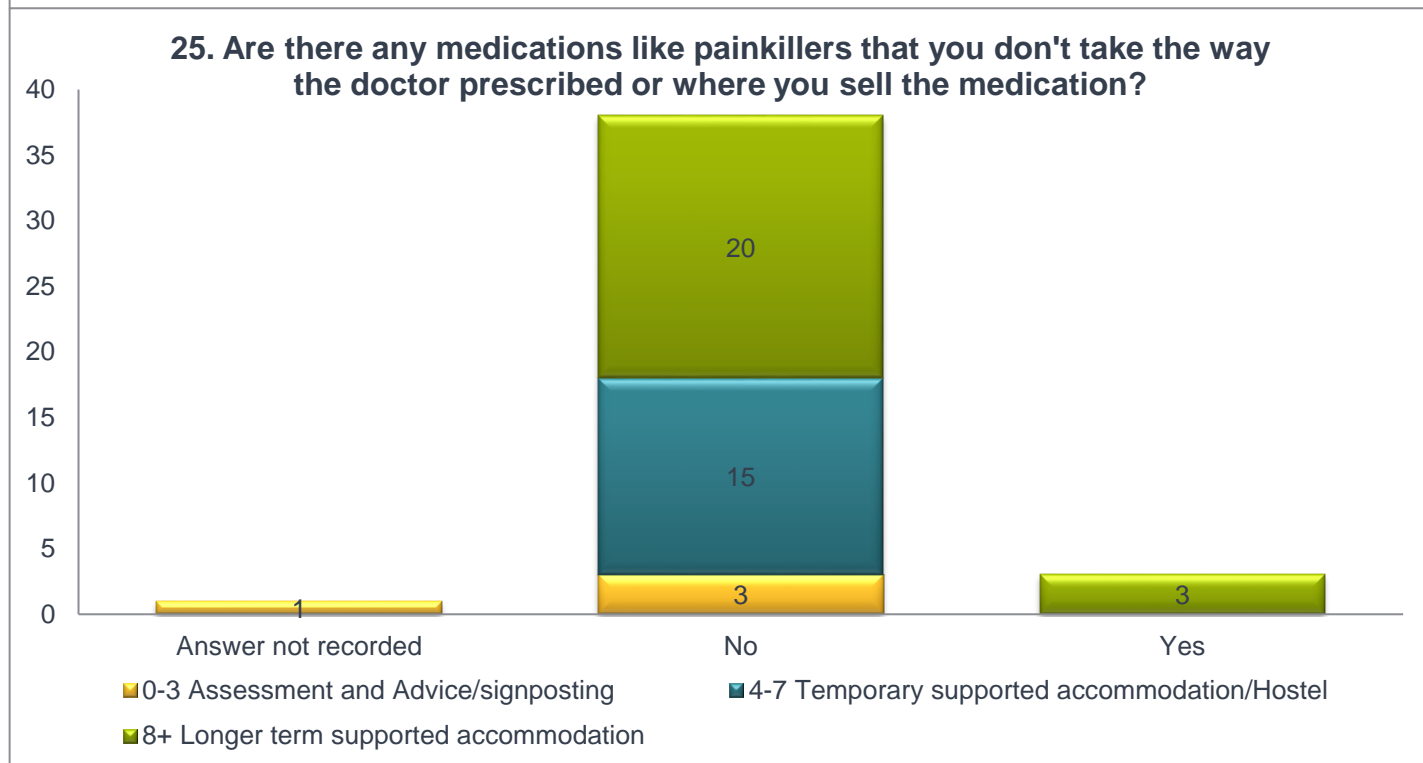
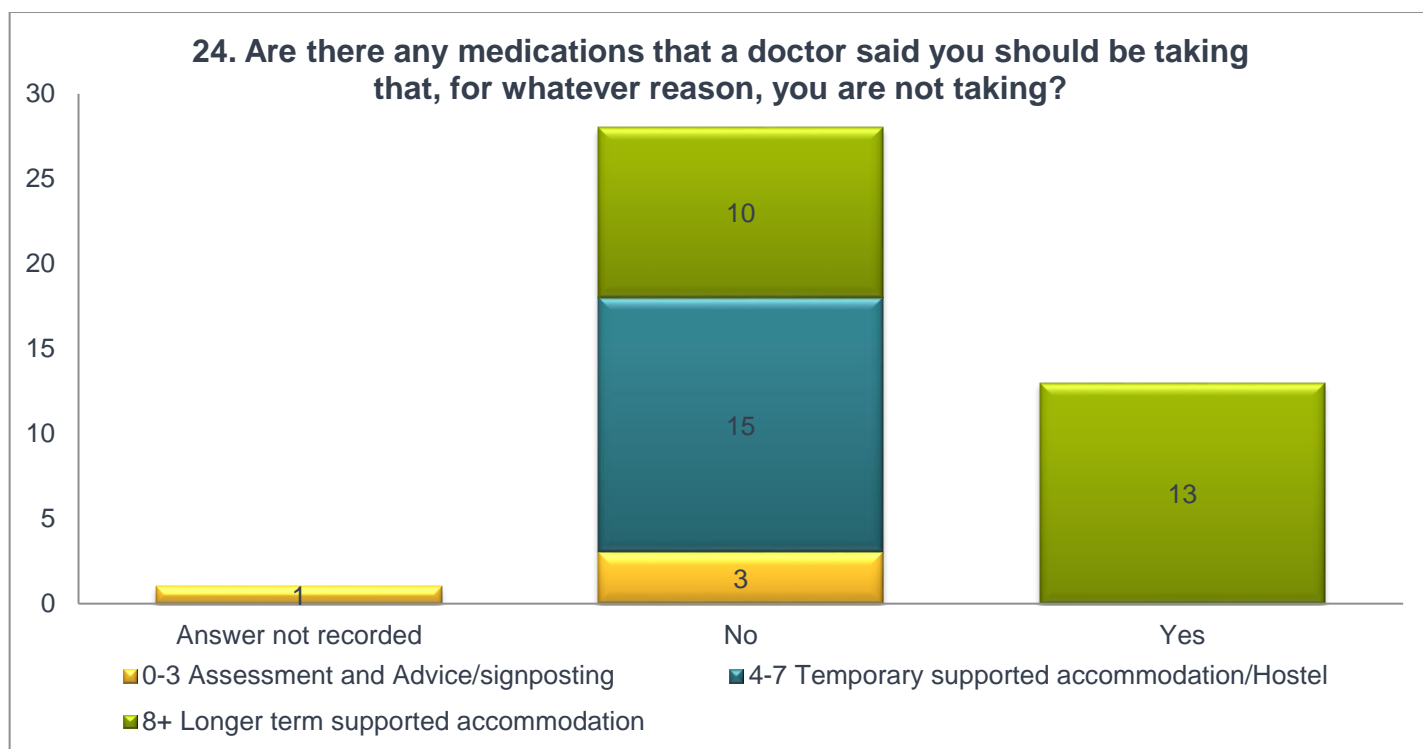
Tri-morbidity (Physical Health, Mental Health, Substance Misuse)



Tri-morbidity relates to those who present with a mental health, physical health, and substance misuse issue concurrently.

This is a key indicator, as the more complex someone's needs, the more complicated their presentation, and the more difficult to find a housing solution that will fit their need.

17% presented with all three needs and are classified as tri-morbid, in comparison with 3% of the street population in Barcelona, and 4% in Valencia.



31% of people surveyed reporting that they are not taking medication that they should, 100% of whom fall in to the 8+ group.

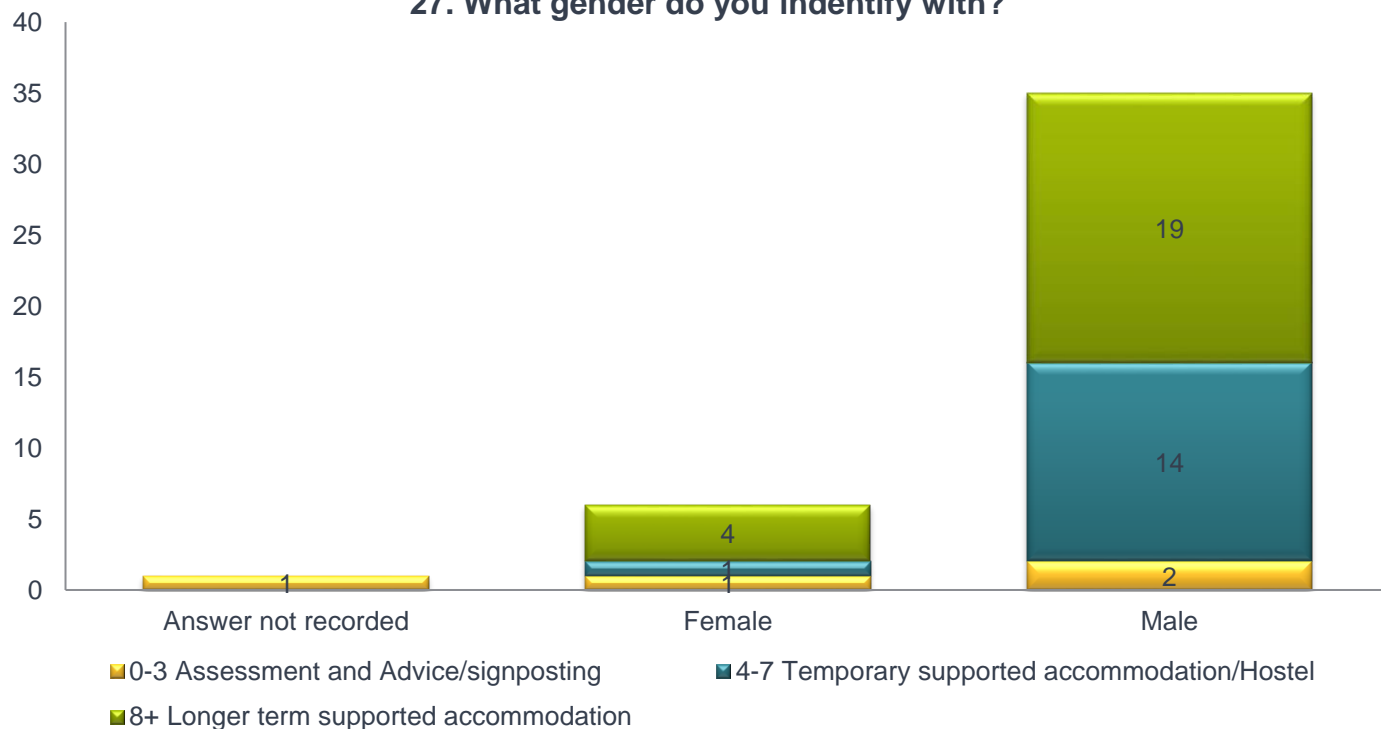
That's compared with only 7% who report the misuse of prescribed medication, though 100% of those also come from the 8+ group.

This fits with the general pattern of disengagement from anything other than emergency medical care.

26. Has your current period of homelessness been caused by a traumatic experience e.g. domestic violence or some other kind of physical or emotional abuse?

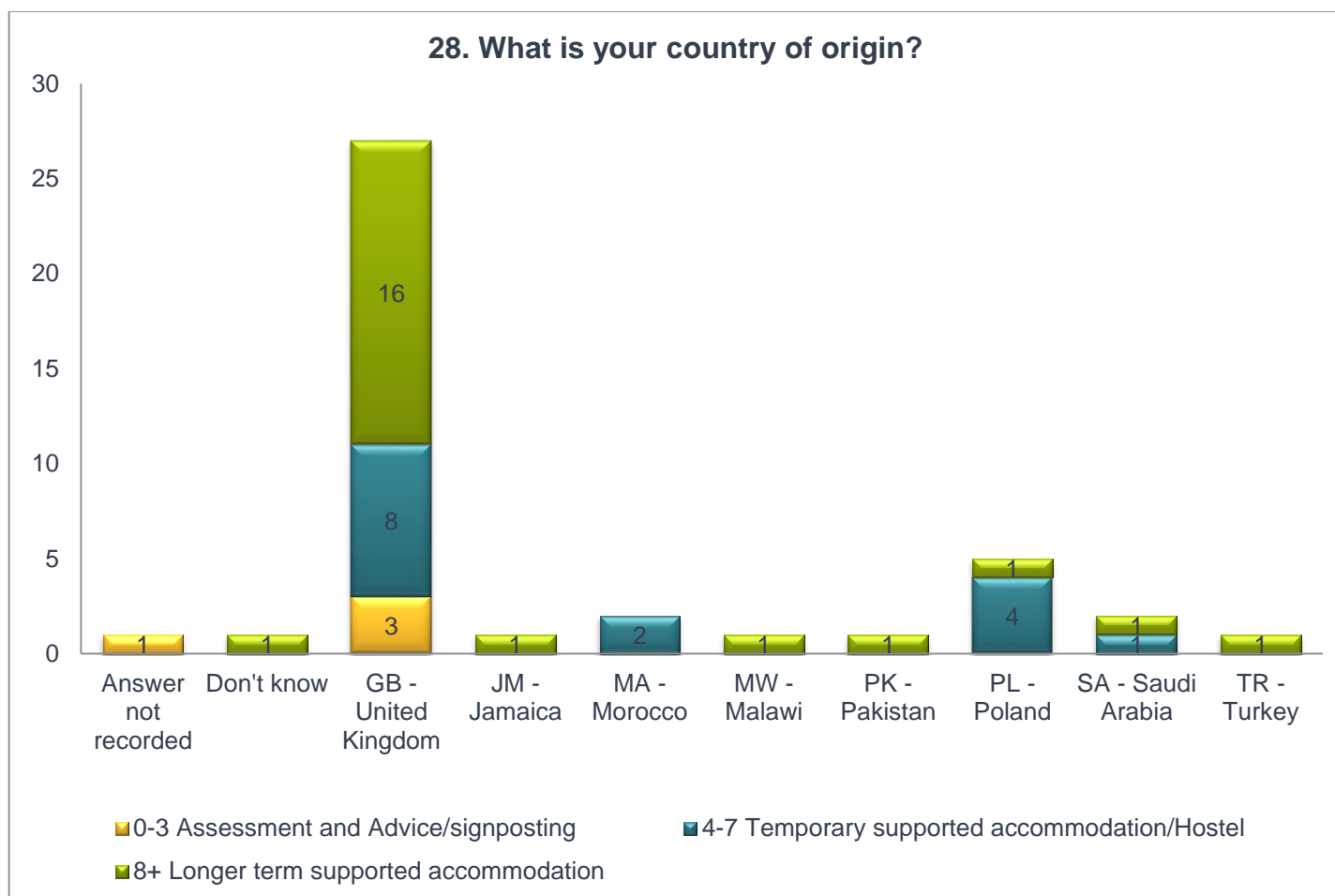


27. What gender do you identify with?



40% people reported that their homelessness was caused by a traumatic experience, with 88% of those falling in to the 8+ group.

14% of people surveyed identified as being female, and 83% male. However, the percentage of females with high vulnerability is disproportionate, with 67% of women falling in the 8+ category, compared to only 54% of males.

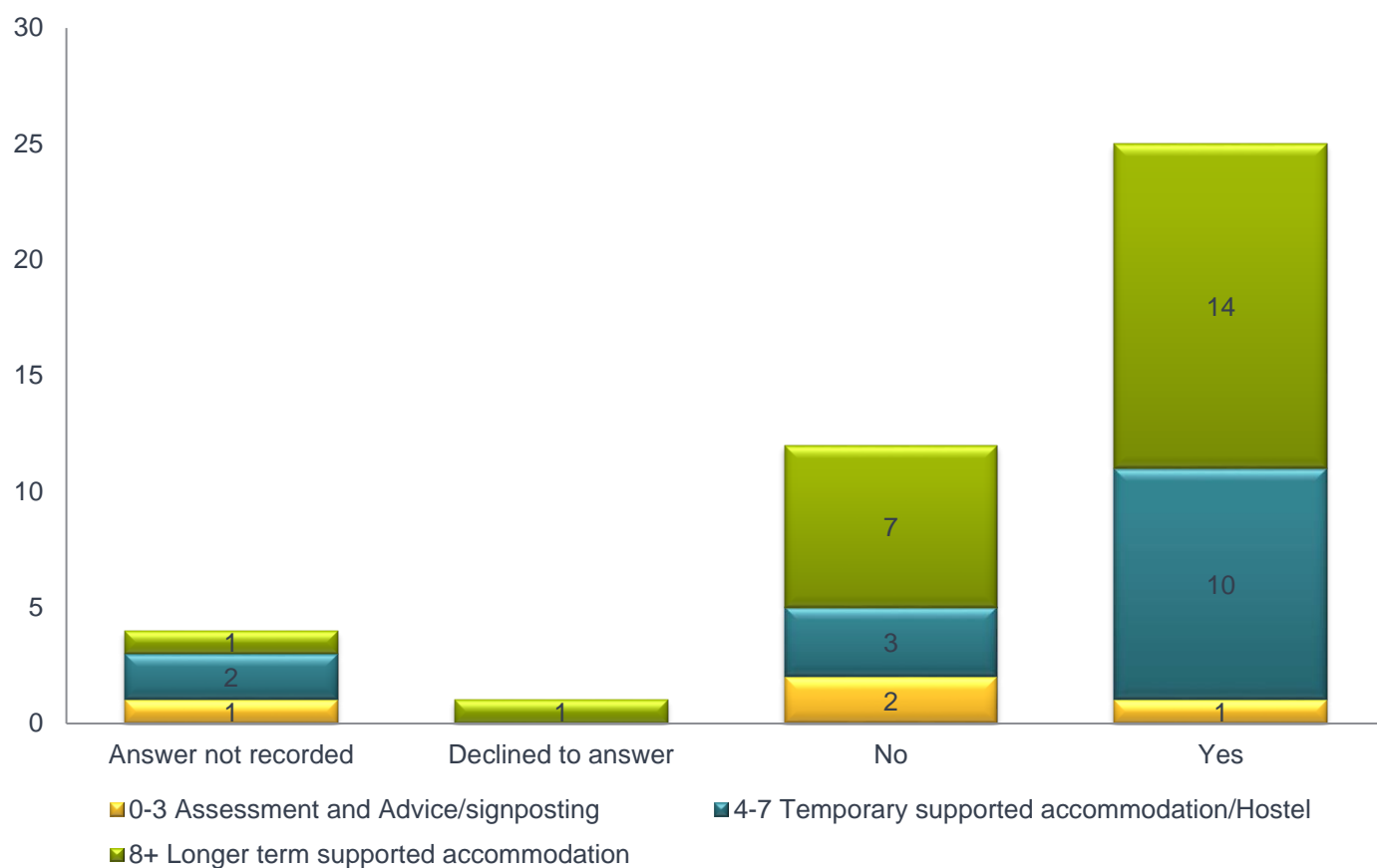


64% people identified the UK as their country of origin, with 59% of these falling in to the 8+ category. This means that 67% of all those in the 8+ category are of UK origins and should have recourse to public funds.

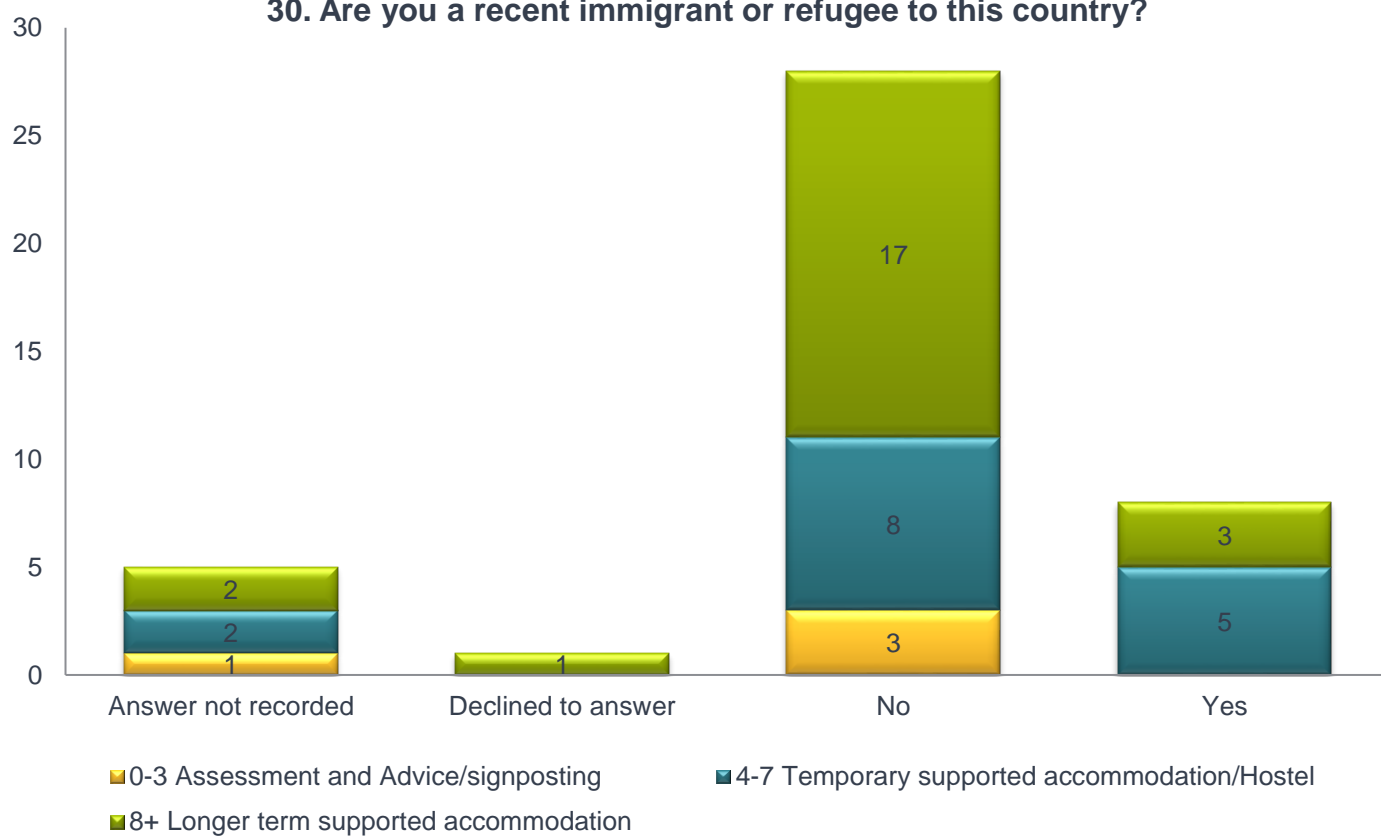
The next largest country of origin is Poland, with 12% people originating from there, of whom only 20% fall in to the 8+ category.

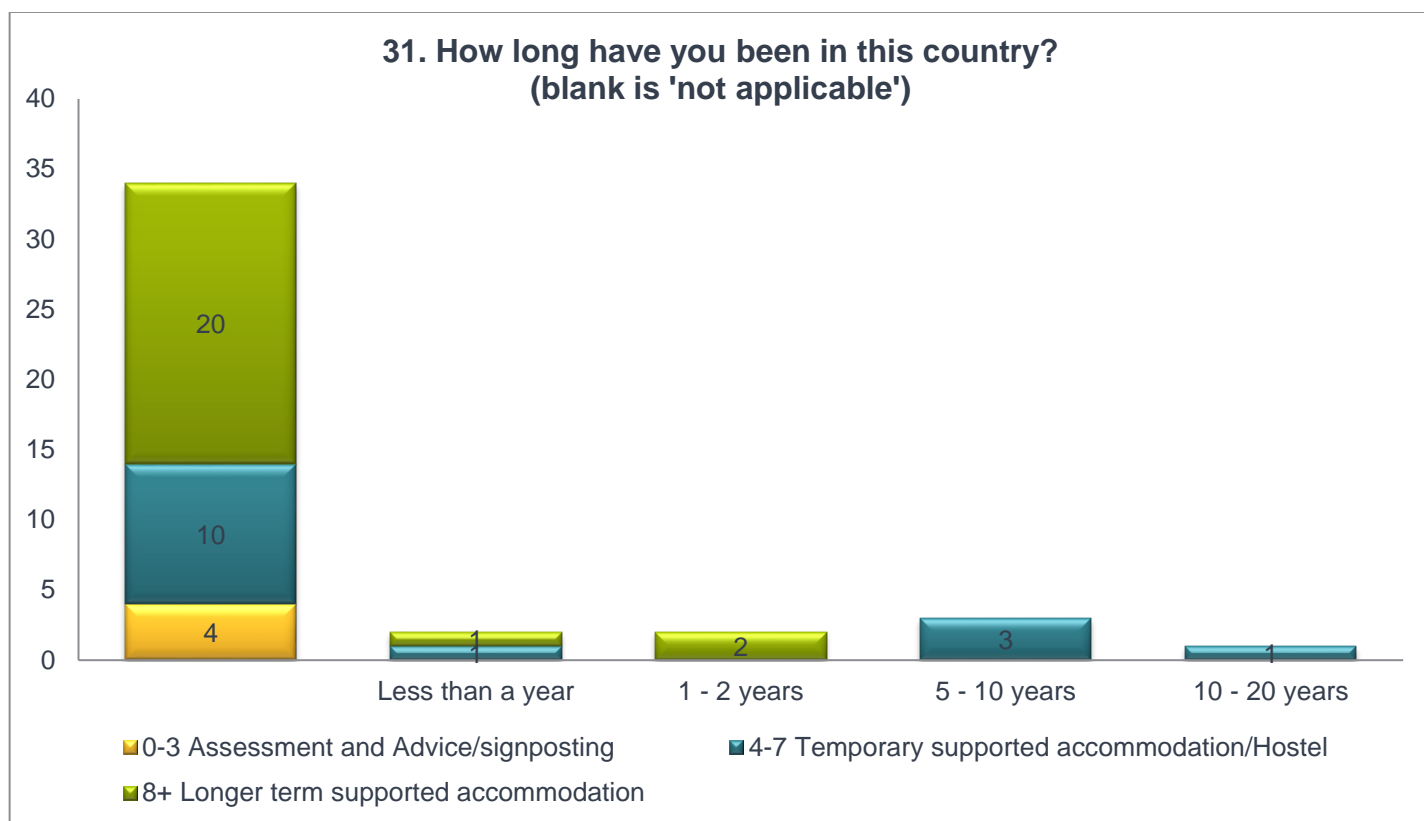
76% of those in the 8+ category are either UK or EU citizens, and 24% who are not.

29. Are you a citizen of an EU country?



30. Are you a recent immigrant or refugee to this country?

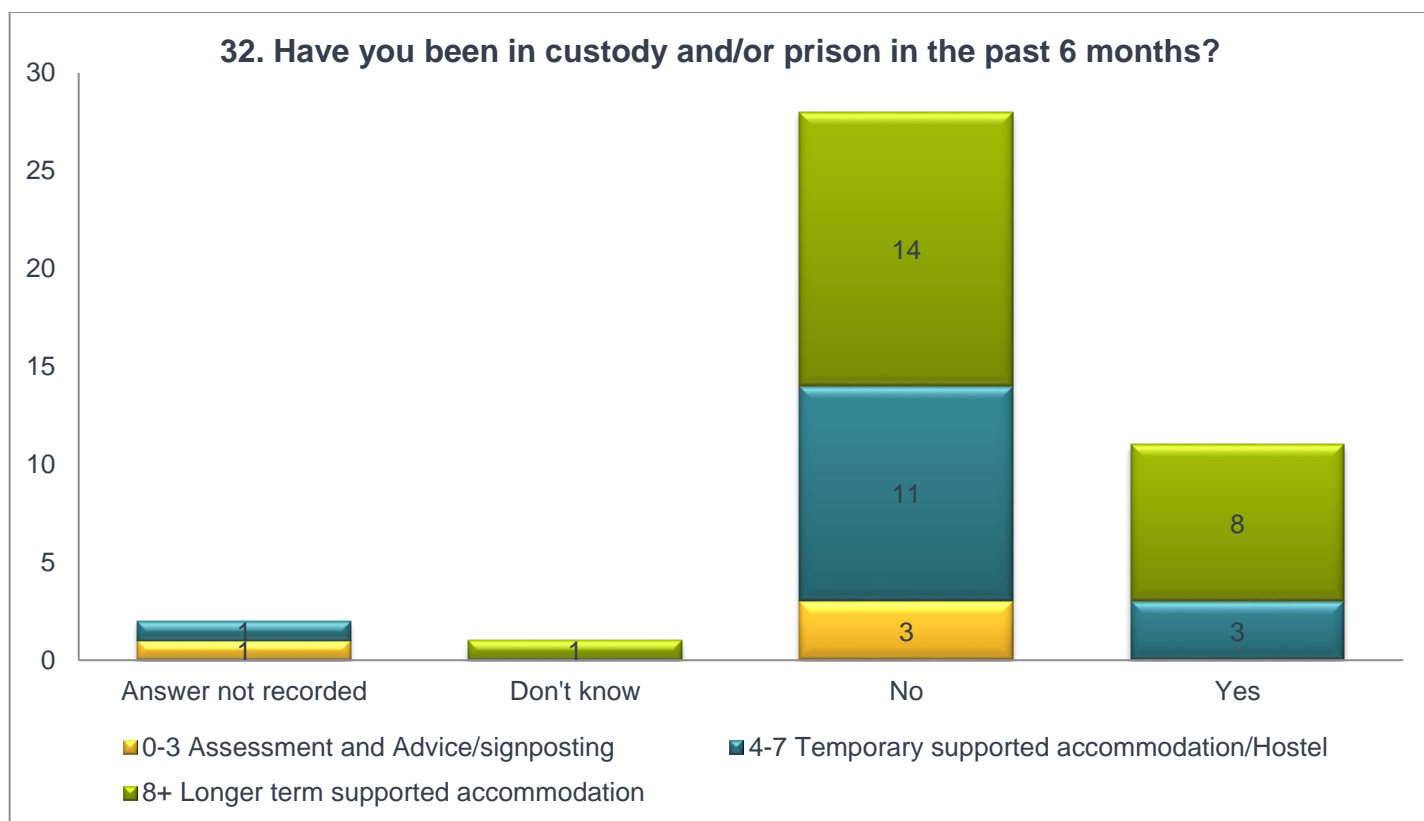




59% people reported being EU citizens.

This is at odds with the information collated in the previous question, which indicates that 76% are EU citizens based on their country of origin. Further interrogation of the data shows that a number of people who describe their country of origin as being the UK also describe themselves as EU citizens.

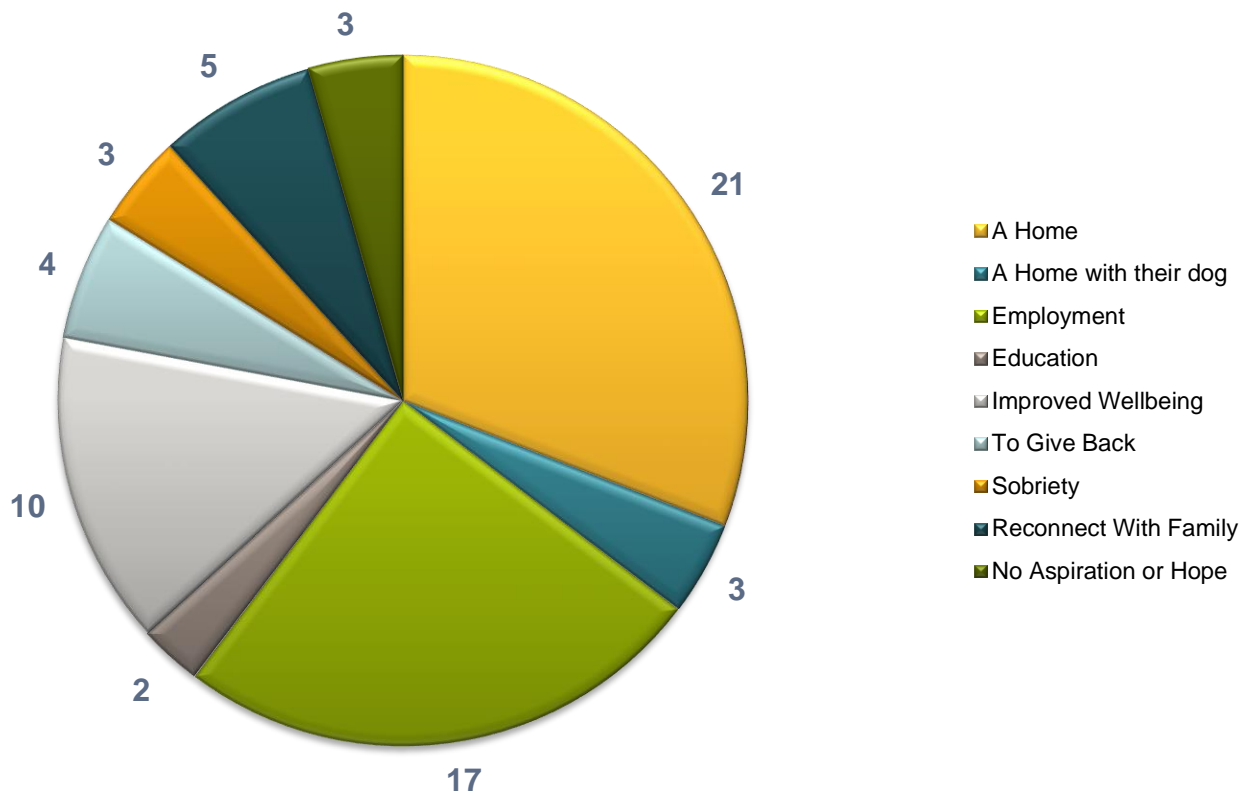
26% people reported being recent immigrants to this country, 38% of who score in the 8+ category. Of these; three were Polish, two Moroccan, two Saudi Arabian and one from Malawi. Of the three who score 8+, only one is an EU citizen.



26% of people reported having been either in custody or prison in the last 6 months, with 73% of those falling in to the 8+ category.

However, in question 4f, 38% of people responded that they had been in custody for at least one night, which is more than those answering 'yes', 'don't know' or 'answer not recorded' to question 33.

People's Aspirations for the Future



Unsurprisingly, the aspiration for the future expressed by the most people related to housing, with 50% of the people surveyed saying this was, or was part of, their hopes for the future. Maybe more surprising is the fact that 3 people, 7% of all those surveyed, specifically stated that they wanted somewhere where they were able to move in with their dog.

40% of people wanted to get back into work, with just under 10% wanting to give back in some way in the future by working with others who are experiencing the same issues that they are currently.

24% of people expressed hopes and aspirations for better wellbeing, ranging from quotes such as “have a good life, to more specific aspirations such as “a shower, a safe place to sleep...”.

12% of people want to be able to reconnect with family, including having a home where they can have contact with their children.

7% of people wanted help to stop using either alcohol or drugs.

But, maybe most shocking of all, 7% of people were not able to identify any hope for the future, including the person who stated “to die.... always really tired”.

Conclusion

Now we know who’s out there, we need to find solutions, irrespective of age, country of origin, immigration status or recourse to public funds.

When asked about their hopes for the future, “to die....” is the one quote from Connections Week that will stay with me for a very long time. If there is any doubt as to the potential impact of chronic rough sleeping, this one quote in itself is

crystal clear as to its impact on this person. This data clearly indicates that the chronic nature of rough sleeping, and the complexity of individual chronic rough sleepers, impacts on both them and the community. Those people who fall into the 8+ category are disproportionately represented in relation to health issues, access to health services, contact with criminal justice, experience of physical abuse, and throughout all of the categories covered by this survey.

Croydon is changing, with large investment's being made. There are massive regeneration projects to improve the local economy and infrastructure, but also the perceptions of the borough too by turning it into one of London's "cultural centres". We do not believe that there should be an acceptance of chronic rough sleeping on the streets of Croydon, not now, and especially not in the Croydon of 2020.

- It's not acceptable that there are at least 21 people who haven't been in stable accommodation for anywhere between 6 months and 5 years.
- It's not acceptable that there are at least four people out there who haven't been in stable accommodation for over five years.
- It's not acceptable that there are five people who have had to use A&E five or more times in the last 6 months.
- It's not acceptable that nine people had made it off the streets at least once in the last 6 months, only to end up back on them again.
- It's not acceptable that 22 people have been attacked while sleeping rough.
- It's not acceptable that there are two pregnant women sleeping on our streets, one of whom was one of the 22 people who were attacked.

We can't leave these people behind.

Rough sleeping affects the entire community. It affects the person sleeping rough more acutely, but it affects the person who feels intimidated on their street, the person who feels upset when they see someone in need and don't know how to respond, the businesses who want the environment they operate in to be one that attracts customers, or the statutory services who are put under increased pressure because of the health and crime impacts of rough sleeping.

Unlike traditional efforts to reduce or manage street homelessness only involving one or two homeless agencies and the council, this campaign will be a community effort to find a community solution. We aim to build a campaign in which all members of the community can play an active role in identifying solutions, and putting them into practice, by participating in the CR Zero 2020 'Solutions Focus Group'.

That's why we are asking the entire community to come together to find the solutions to chronic rough sleeping on the streets of Croydon. We believe that, together, we can find the solutions. We want individual citizens, people who have experienced rough sleeping, businesses, housing developers, Housing Associations, statutory agencies, voluntary agencies, anyone who has ideas, time, resources, expertise, accommodation, good old hard cash, or just a desire to help, to bring it to the table and work together to end chronic rough sleeping in Croydon by 2020.

Using the data gathered to challenge local systems and processes to change could be one way to do this, or through building coordinated housing and support systems that are able to work with complex rough sleepers, simple to navigate, and targeted to the people who need it the most. Or it may be that additional models of service delivery need to be developed to work with the most complex chronic rough sleepers, in addition to the services we already have.

This report, and the data it refers to, will now support this group to find those solutions, and to actively work together to end chronic rough sleeping in Croydon by 2020. But as with any survey, it creates further questions that need to be

answered. What was it specifically about someone's physical or mental health that led them to lose their home? How we answer this, and other, questions will be a firm part of the groups work.

CR Zero 2020 is an ambitious campaign, but we believe that by bringing local people together to find new solutions for chronic rough sleepers in Croydon, we will end chronic rough sleeping on the streets of Croydon by 2020.