

# COUNTING THE UNDERCOUNT: ENUMERATION OF PRIMARY HOMELESS IN ADELAIDE USING CAPTURE-RECAPTURE

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The aim of this research is to determine the number of people in the Adelaide CBD who are categorized as primary homeless, in order to better plan a new outreach health service for homeless people. It explores the limitations of various attempts at enumeration of homeless people undertaken in Australia, in particular with regards to counting rough sleepers. In the study, we adopted the capture-recapture statistical technique to count homeless people, as is being increasingly employed in the literature for enumerating difficult to reach populations. We used three lists from three independently operated agencies in the CBD who work with homeless people, to calculate an estimation of the number of rough sleepers in Adelaide. The outcome demonstrated the marked undercount of homeless population in Adelaide of the 2001 census. This has large ramifications on the planning of services to homeless people that are currently resourced to provide services to a population thought to be 1/5 th of the size.