

# Homelessness, visible and hidden: Improving our policy and clinical responses



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McGill

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**No conflicts to disclose**

Part I

About homelessness



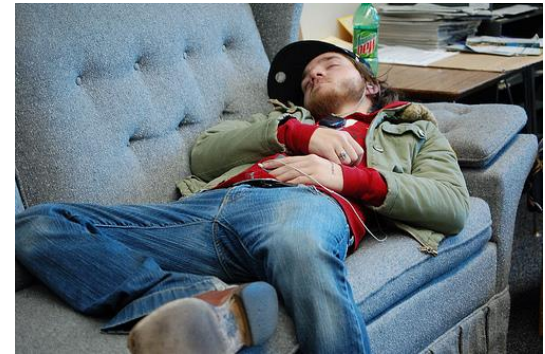
429



1066



?



?



1041



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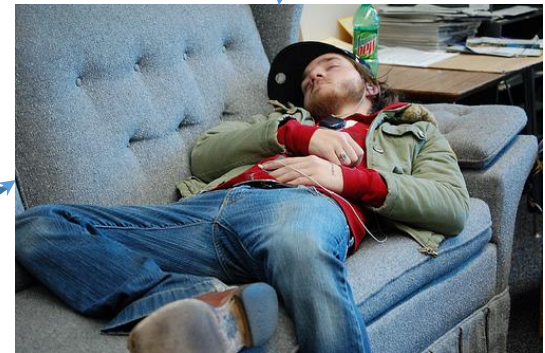


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429

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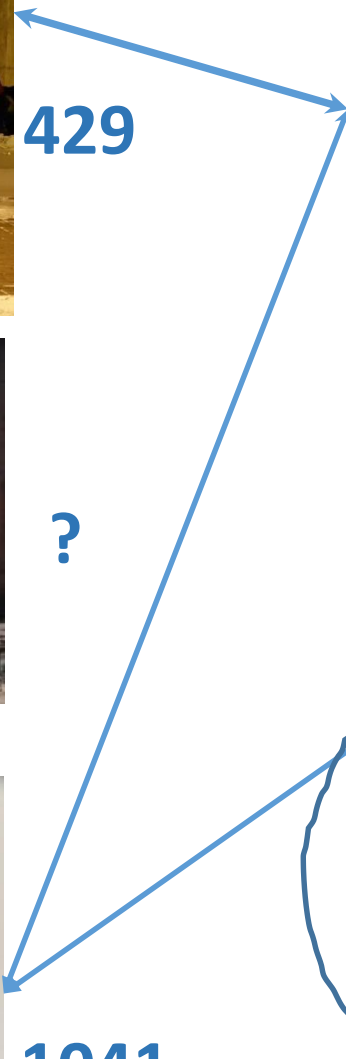
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Situational  
(one-time  
homelessness)

Episodic

Chronic

# POINT-IN-TIME COUNT VS ONE YEAR

**March 24 2015: 3016 PEOPLE IN ONE DAY – FAR FEWER THAN OVER ONE YEAR BECAUSE OF PEOPLE WHO ARE :**

- **EPISODICALLY HOMELESS**
- **EXPERIENCING A ONE-TIME EPISODE OF HOMELESSNESS**

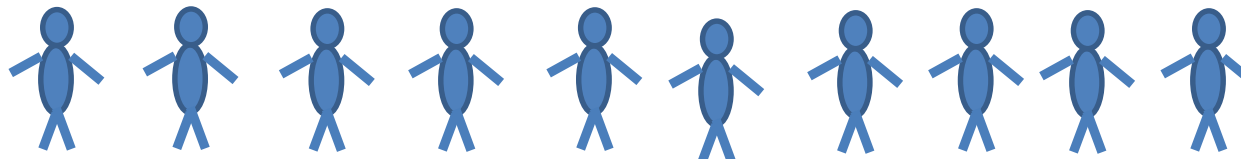
**Over one year (to illustrate):**



**7 one-time**



**4 episodic**



**1 chronic**

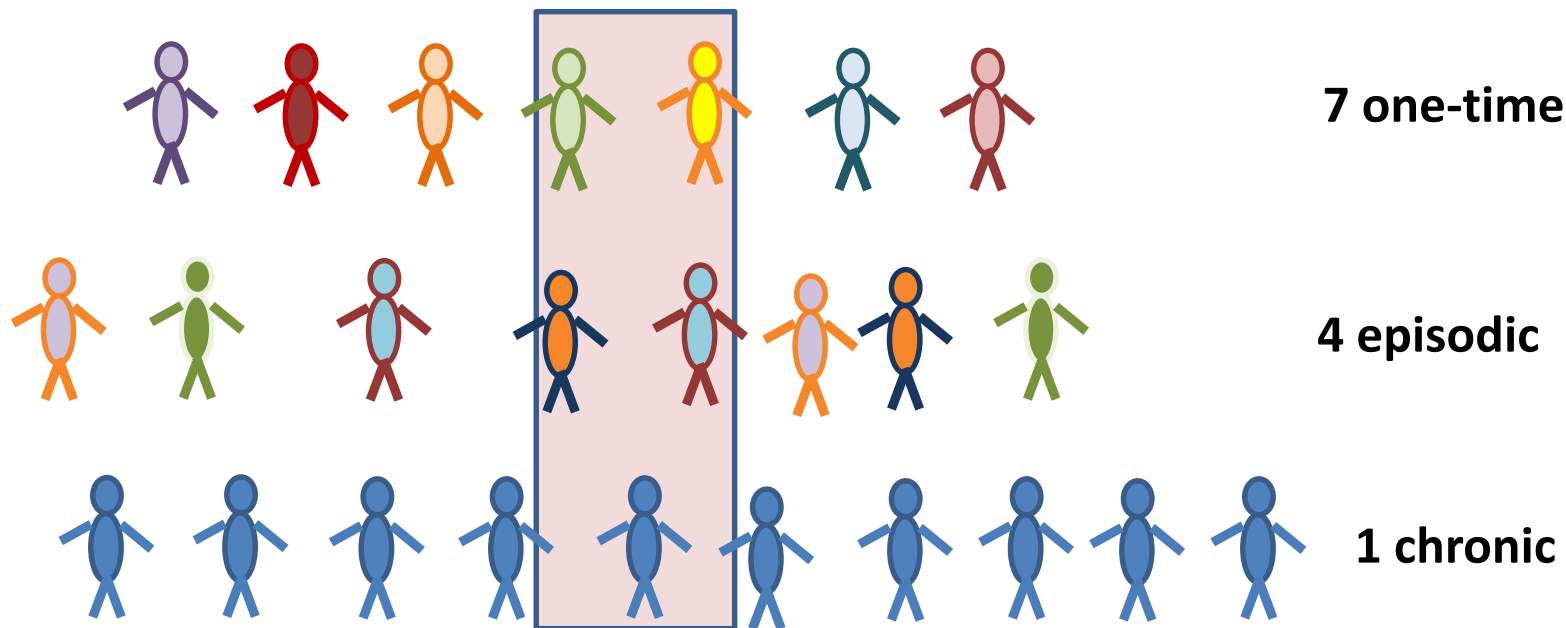
**Total: 11 people**

# POINT-IN-TIME COUNT VS ONE YEAR

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**Over one year (to illustrate):**

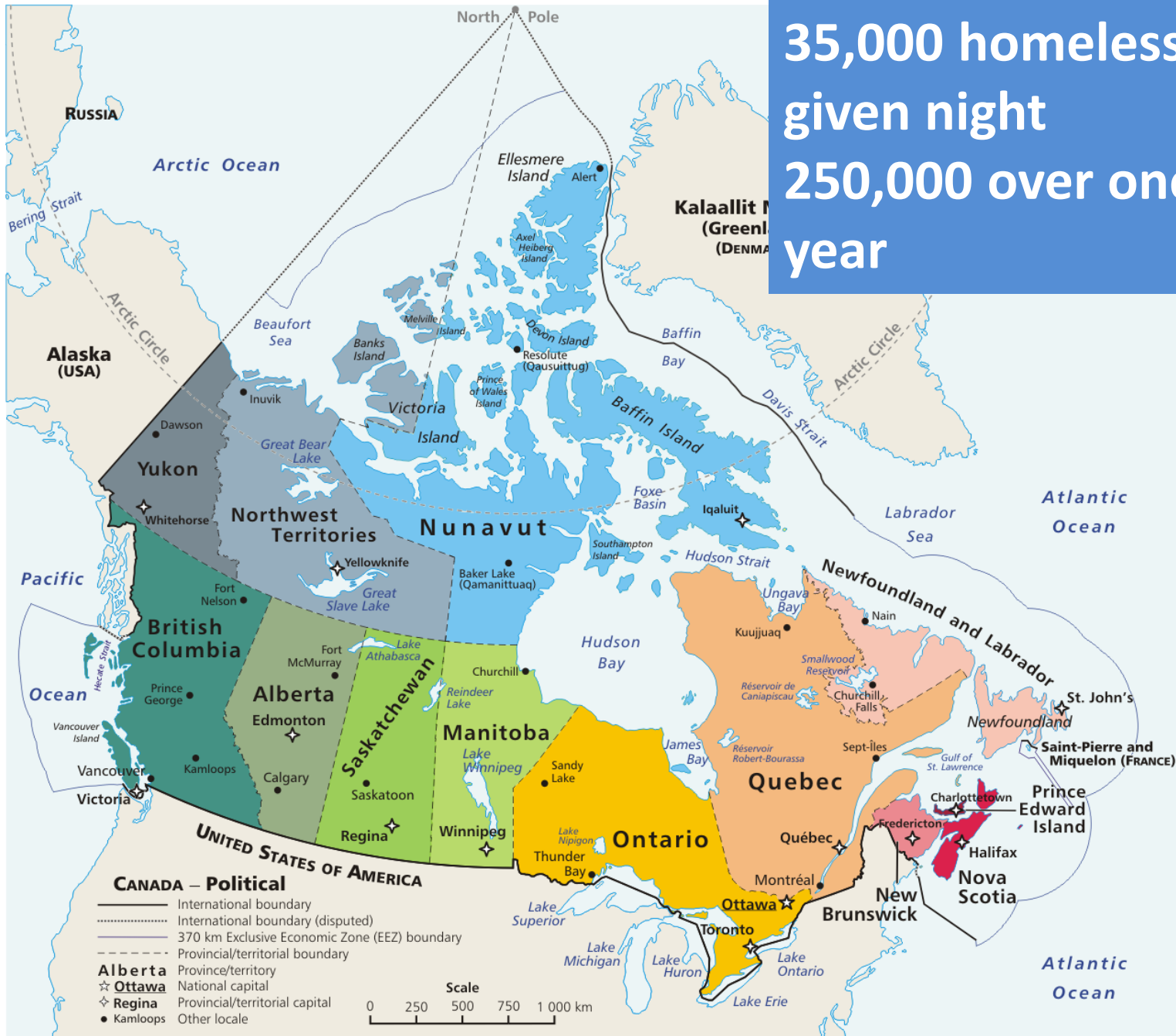


**Over one day: 2 one-time, 2 episodic, 1 chronic  
Total: 5 people**

**Total: 11 people**



35,000 homeless on a given night  
250,000 over one year



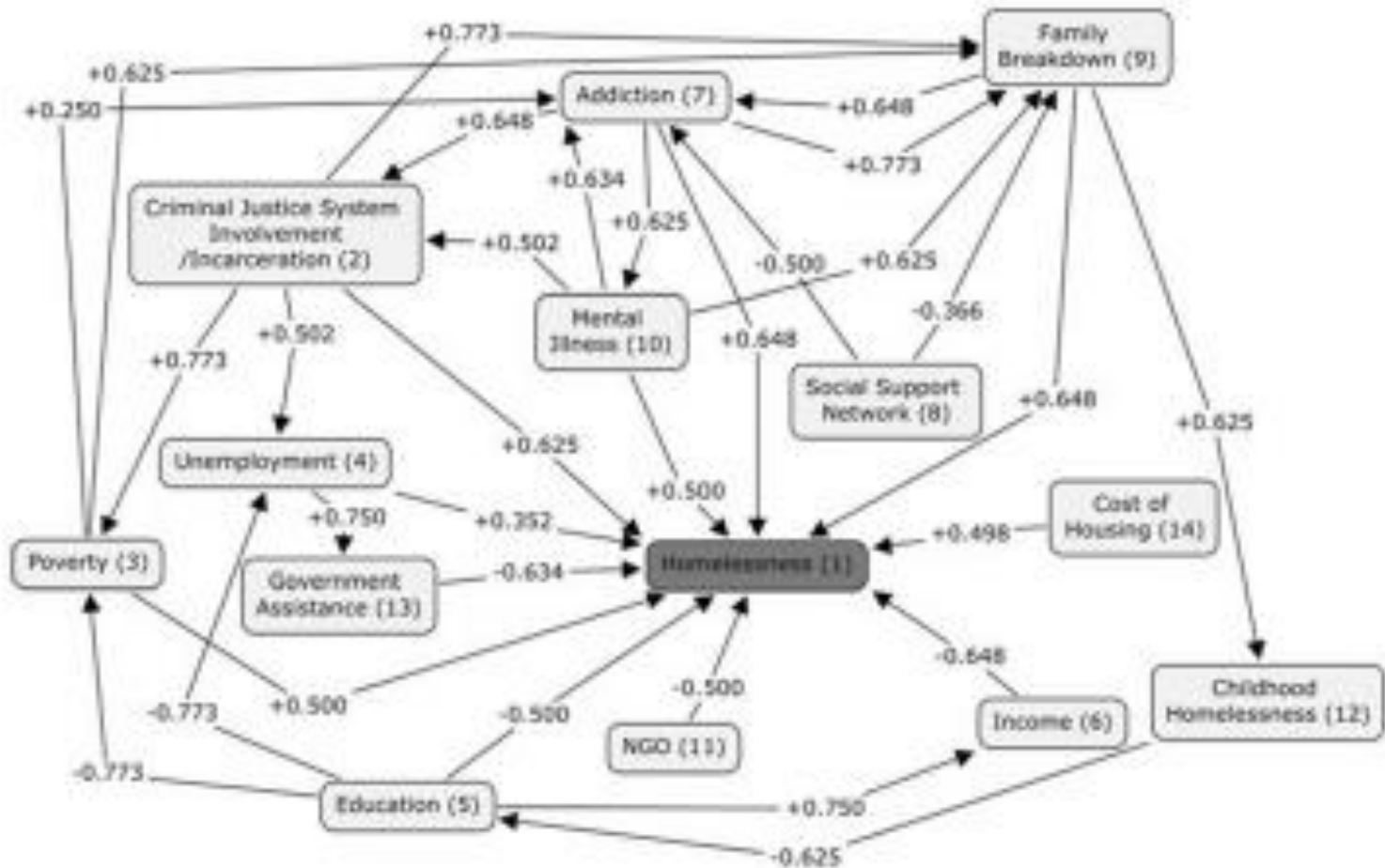
# FACTORS THAT LEAD TO HOMELESSNESS

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Open Access

## Analyzing the impact of social factors on homelessness: a Fuzzy Cognitive Map approach

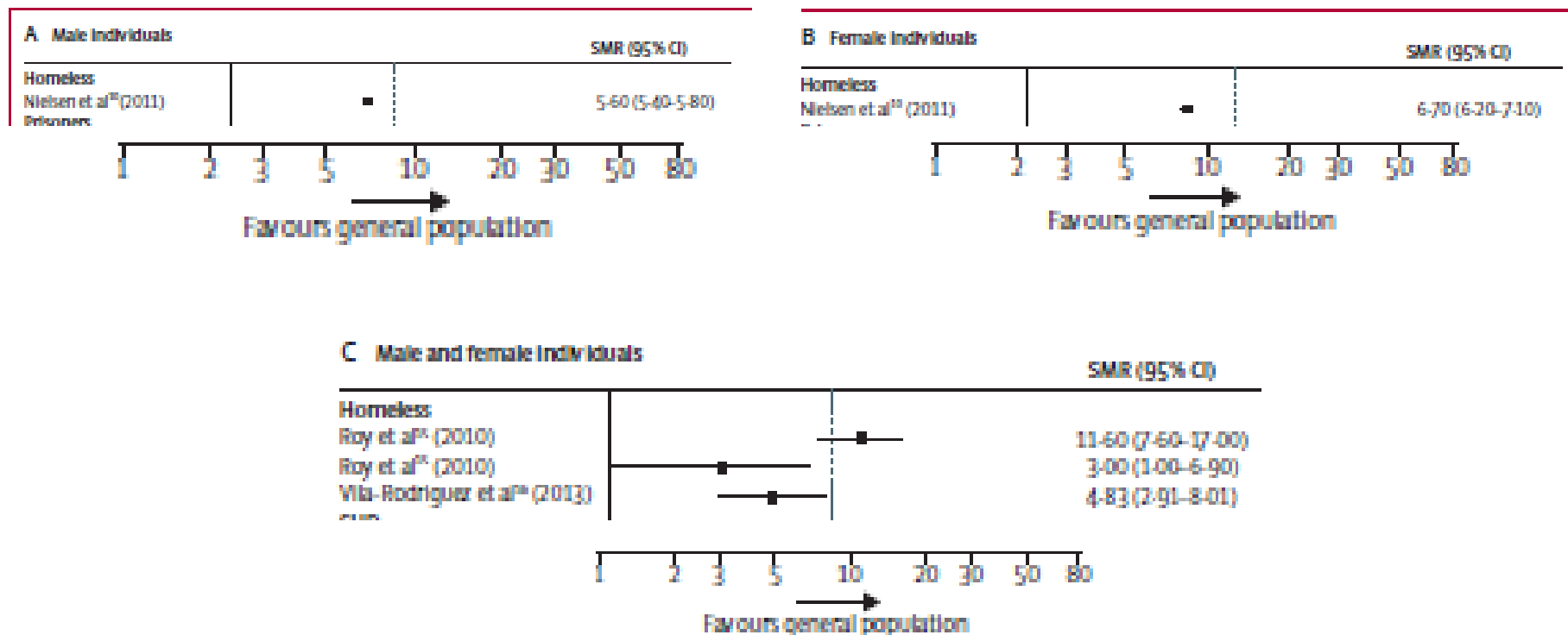
Vijay K Mago<sup>1\*</sup>, Hilary K Morden<sup>2</sup>, Charles Fritz<sup>3</sup>, Tiankuang Wu<sup>4</sup>, Sara Namazi<sup>1,5</sup>, Parastoo Geranmayeh<sup>5</sup>, Rakhi Chattopadhyay<sup>1</sup> and Vahid Dabbaghian<sup>1</sup>



# Morbidity and mortality in homeless individuals, prisoners, sex workers, and individuals with substance use disorders in high-income countries: a systematic review and meta-analysis

www.thelancet.com Vol 391 January 20, 2018

Robert W Aldridge, Alistair Story, Stephen W Hwang, Merete Nordentoft, Serena A Luchenski, Greg Hartwell, Emily JTweed, Dan Lewer, Srinivasa Vittal Katikireddi, Andrew C Hayward



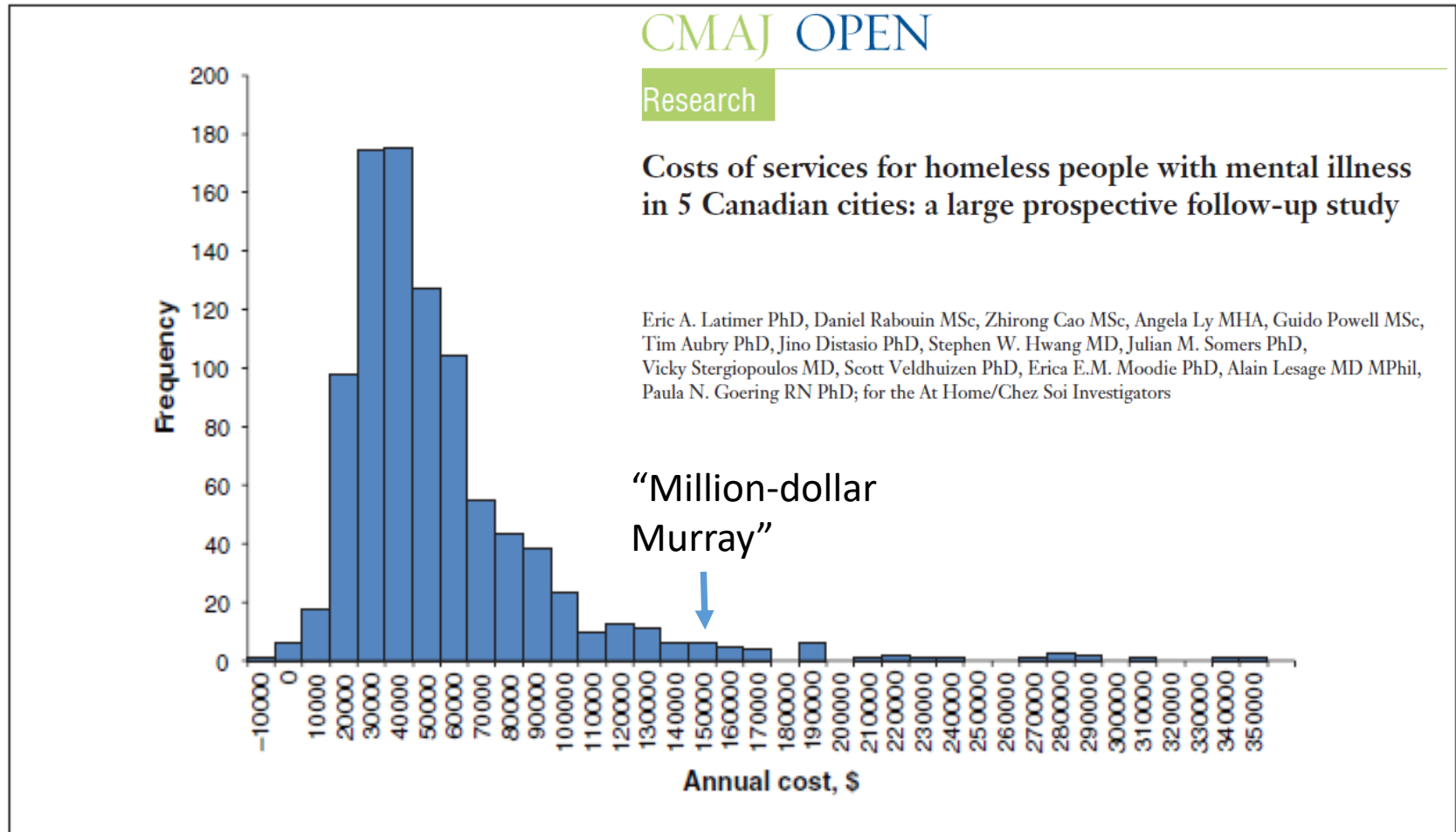
# Mortality Among Unsheltered Homeless Adults in Boston, Massachusetts, 2000-2009

JAMA Intern Med. doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2018.2924  
Published online July 30, 2018.

Jill S. Roncarati, ScD, MPH, PA-C; Travis P. Baggett, MD, MPH; James J. O'Connell, MD;  
Stephen W. Hwang, MD, MPH; E. Francis Cook, ScD; Nancy Krieger, PhD; Glorian Sorensen, PhD, MPH

- 10-year prospective cohort study of 445 unsheltered homeless adults in Boston
- All-cause mortality in unsheltered cohort nearly **3 times greater than in adult homeless cohort**
- **Nearly 10 times greater than in Massachusetts population**

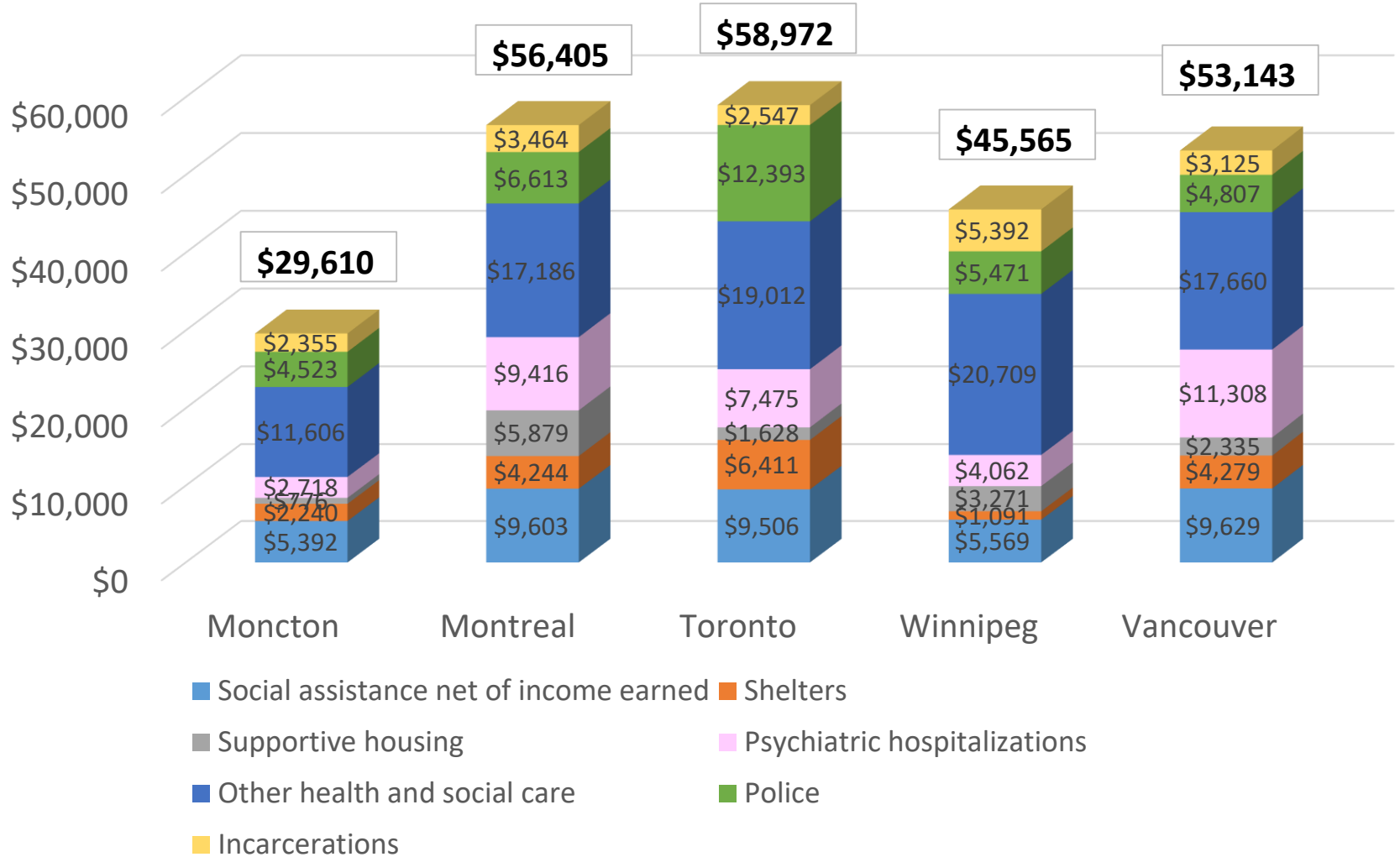
# Homeless people don't all cost the same at all...



**Figure 2:** Distribution of total annualized costs per person across the sample (subtracting earned income from costs associated with use of health, social and justice services, including social assistance and disability benefits).

But on average there are significant opportunities to save, at least in Canada's largest cities...

## Costs of homeless people with mental illness per person per year in 5 Canadian cities ( 2016 CAN\$, meds excluded)



# Conclusions

- Homelessness varies in terms of types of places people sleep and in terms of how people move among types of places
- Homelessness has many causes
- Homelessness increases mortality especially among those who are unsheltered
- Homelessness is expensive



## Part II

# Policy responses

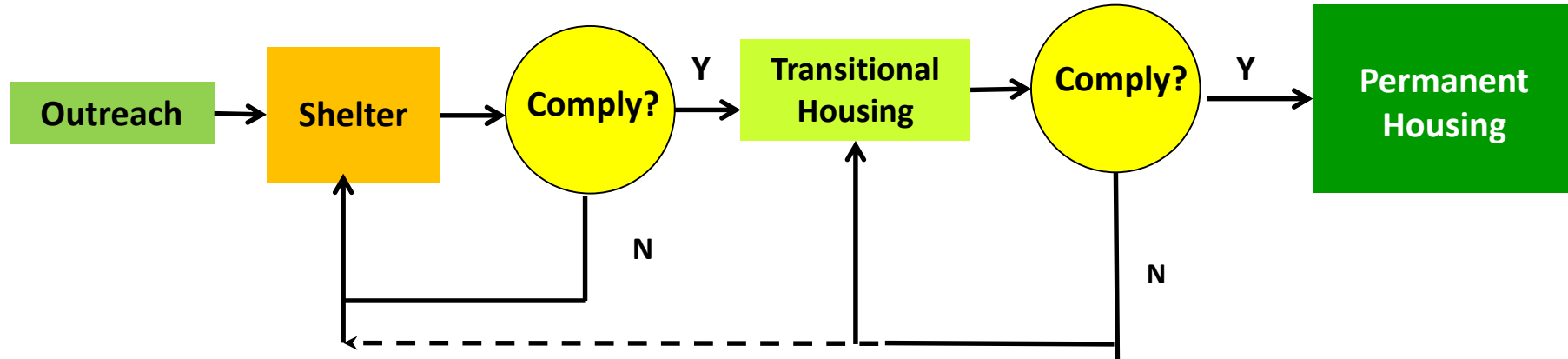


From a policy point of view, homelessness can be thought of in terms of inflows, stock and outflows

# HELPING PEOPLE EXIT HOMELESSNESS

- Recently homeless:
  - Rapid re-housing
  - Critical time intervention (CTI)
- People who have been homeless longer or for whom rapid re-housing or CTI were not enough:
  - Housing First
  - If Housing First is not enough, some form of supervised housing

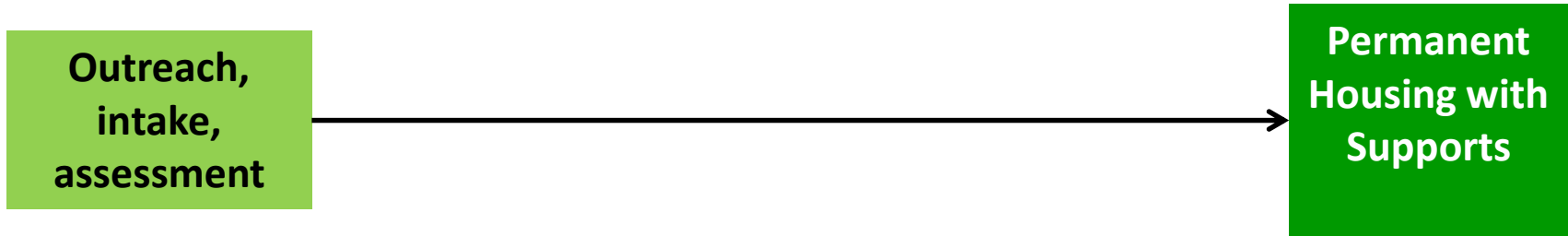
# Predominant continuum of care model



***...+ poorly integrated care***



HOUSING FIRST AT ITS SIMPLEST :  
IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO PERMANENT HOUSING WITHOUT  
PRIOR SOBRIETY OR OTHER CONDITIONS



# Housing First as implemented at Pathways to Housing : Philosophy & Program Model

- ✓ Immediate access to housing – no sobriety or other preconditions
- ✓ Usually subsidized, scattered-site,
  - private market apartments
- ✓ Housing and support functions are managed
  - separately but work together for the client
- ✓ Help clients in pursuit of their own goals – emphasis on client choice, respecting dignity of client
- ✓ Harm reduction, collaborative approach in dealing with substance abuse
- ✓ Pro-active in seeking to engage help-avoiding clients
- ✓ Fidelity scale now available



Sam Tsemberis

## 2 dimensions of programs to help homeless people obtain housing

	Preparatory steps	Immediate access to housing
<b>Scattered – site apartments</b>	<i>e.g. Le Pont</i> in Montreal	Approach taken by At Home/Chez Soi project*
<b>Congregate housing</b>	Traditional approach	Many programs also labeled as « Housing First »

\* Based on model pioneered by Sam Tsemberis at Pathways to Housing in NYC

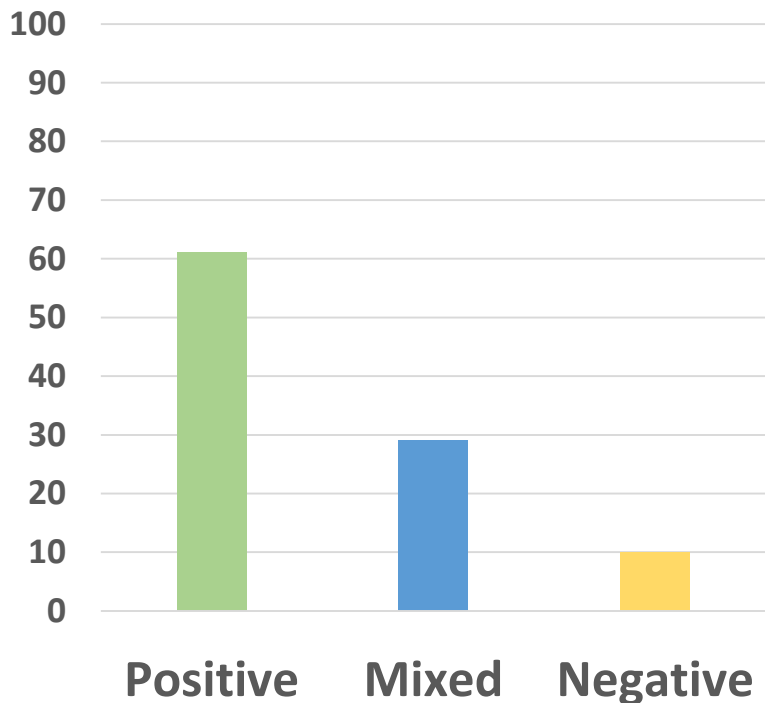
# Why choose the Pathways approach?

- Most people **prefer** independent apartments
- Giving people **choice** is consistent with **recovery approach** in mental health
- Independent, scattered-site apartments facilitate **community integration** (rather than segregation) which is also **consistent with a recovery approach**

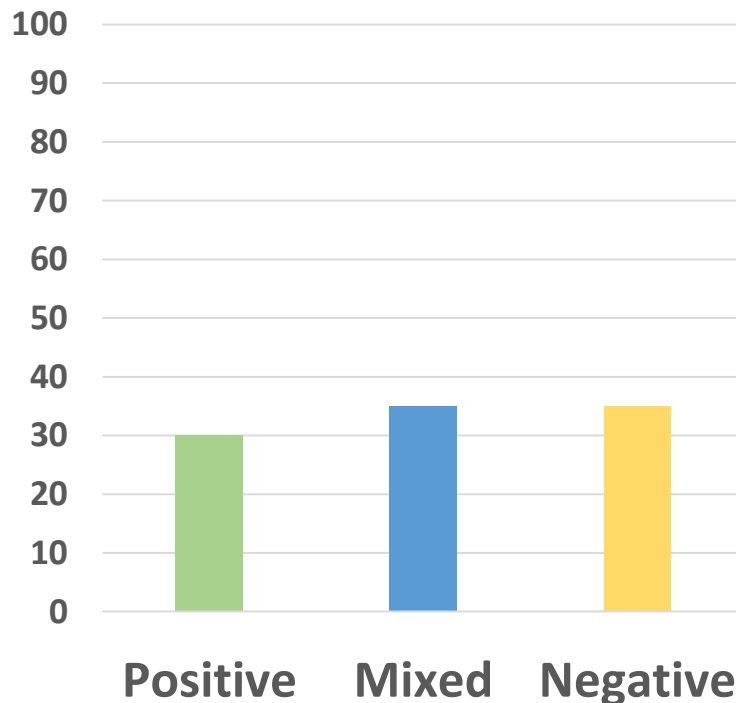


# In-depth narrative interviews on 180 participants: Higher percentage positive trajectories in HF group

## Housing First



## Treatment as usual



Some are unable to function successfully in an independent apartment with the support of a mobile team, but if this is person's choice it should be the default goal

- Significant cost offsets

CANADIAN OBSERVATORY ON HOMELESSNESS  
**POLICY BRIEF**

## LEADING THE WAY

*Reimagining Federal Leadership  
on Preventing Homelessness*



STEPHEN GAETZ • ERIN DEJ • JESSE DONALDSON • NADIA ALI



Canadian  
Observatory on  
Homelessness

[homelesshub.ca](http://homelesshub.ca)

**1. STRUCTURAL PREVENTION**

**2. SYSTEMS PREVENTION**

**3. EARLY INTERVENTION**

**4. EVICTION PREVENTION**

**5. HOUSING STABILITY**

***ENDING***  
**HOMELESSNESS**

***PRIMARY***

***SECONDARY***

***TERTIARY***

# Conclusions

- Shift in thinking from managing to ending homelessness
- Requires systematic approach combining prevention and helping people who are stuck in homelessness
- Housing First is major tool for helping people exit homelessness
- Many points of entry to prevent homelessness