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

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No conflicts to disclose
Part I

About homelessness
Situational (one-time homelessness)  Episodic  Chronic
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
March 24 2015: 3016 PEOPLE IN ONE DAY – FAR FEWER THAN OVER ONE YEAR BECAUSE OF PEOPLE WHO ARE:
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Over one year (to illustrate):
7 one-time
4 episodic
1 chronic
Total: 11 people

Over one day: 2 one-time, 2 episodic, 1 chronic
Total: 5 people
35,000 homeless on a given night
250,000 over one year
FACTORS THAT LEAD TO HOMELESSNESS

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

Vijay K Mago, Hilary K Morden, Charles Fritz, Tiankuang Wu, Sae Namaz, Parastoo Gomrooyeh, Rash Chariopadhyay and Vanja Scebohian
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

Robert W Aldridge, Allistair Story, Stephen W Hwang, Merete Nordsaft, Serena A Luchenski, Greg Hartwell, Emily J Tweed, Dan Lewer, Srinivasan Vittal Kasthuriridi, Andrew C Hayward
• 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...

"Million-dollar Murray"
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)

- **Moncton**: $29,610
  - Social assistance net of income earned: $2,355
  - Police: $11,606
  - Shelters: $2,240
  - Psychiatric hospitalizations: $2,718
  - Supportive housing: $5,392
  - Other health and social care: $9,603
  - Incarcerations: $9,603

- **Montreal**: $56,405
  - Social assistance net of income earned: $3,446
  - Police: $17,186
  - Shelters: $11,606
  - Psychiatric hospitalizations: $9,416
  - Supportive housing: $5,879
  - Other health and social care: $4,244
  - Incarcerations: $9,603

- **Toronto**: $58,972
  - Social assistance net of income earned: $2,547
  - Police: $19,012
  - Shelters: $7,475
  - Psychiatric hospitalizations: $7,411
  - Supportive housing: $1,628
  - Other health and social care: $6,411
  - Incarcerations: $6,411

- **Winnipeg**: $45,565
  - Social assistance net of income earned: $5,392
  - Police: $5,471
  - Shelters: $4,062
  - Psychiatric hospitalizations: $3,271
  - Supportive housing: $1,091
  - Other health and social care: $5,569
  - Incarcerations: $1,091

- **Vancouver**: $53,143
  - Social assistance net of income earned: $3,125
  - Police: $17,660
  - Shelters: $2,335
  - Psychiatric hospitalizations: $2,335
  - Supportive housing: $4,279
  - Other health and social care: $11,308
  - Incarcerations: $9,629

Legend:
- Blue: Social assistance net of income earned
- Orange: Shelters
- Gray: Supportive housing
- Pink: Psychiatric hospitalizations
- Green: Police
- Yellow: Incarcerations
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.
• 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

Outreach → Shelter → Comply? → Transitional Housing → Comply? → Permanent Housing

...+ poorly integrated care
HOUSING FIRST AT ITS SIMPLEST:
IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO PERMANENT HOUSING WITHOUT PRIOR SOBRIETY OR OTHER CONDITIONS

Outreach, intake, assessment → Permanent Housing with Supports
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

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

* 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

- Positive: 60%
- Mixed: 20%
- Negative: 10%

Treatment as usual

- Positive: 30%
- Mixed: 40%
- Negative: 20%
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
LEADING THE WAY

Reimagining Federal Leadership on Preventing Homelessness

STEPHEN GAETZ • ERIN DEJ • JESSE DONALDSON • NADIA ALI
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