

Health of People Experiencing Homelessness

The Hotel Study is a longitudinal research study that seeks to understand the health of individuals who experience homelessness or precarious housing. It is based in the Downtown Eastside neighbourhood of Vancouver, BC.

KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS



GENERAL HEALTH

Participants had an average of 3 co-occurring illnesses, which often includes lung and liver disease.



MENTAL HEALTH

Roughly 60% of participants had psychosis, and over 50% had a mood disorder.

These disorders are linked to substance use and trauma.



NEUROLOGICAL HEALTH

Approximately 50% of participants had a brain illness, and 25% had stroke or traumatic brain injury.

Common causes of hospitalization are traumatic brain injuries and seizures.



HEALTH SERVICES USE

While over 80% of participants saw a physician in the past 6 months, treatment effectiveness is variable (with highest for HIV, lower for psychosis).

TAKEAWAYS:

Important things to keep in mind when caring for individuals experiencing homelessness or precarious housing.

ILLNESS BURDEN is **HIGH**.

Having multiple illnesses is linked to poor daily functioning and lost years of life.



TREATABLE ILLNESSES have **LOW** TREATMENT RATES

Memory impairment or strict work/shelter schedules cause difficulty following a treatment plan.

An expectation of being stigmatized by providers due to past experiences is also a barrier to care.



TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE and HARM-REDUCTION are **KEY**.

Day-of appointment reminders, flexibility in scheduling, and allowing pets/bags at appointments can increase trust and health outcomes.



MORE INFO

Visit hotelstudy.med.ubc.ca/cobra for more details and links to journal articles, or scan the QR code.



Call 2-1-1 or visit bc211.ca for relevant resources

RESEARCH PARTNERS

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