
POSTER ABSTRACT**Exploring the Lived Experience of Aging among Chronically Homeless Older Adults**23rd International Conference on Integrated Care, Antwerp, Flanders, 22-24 May 2023Volletta Peters¹, Winnie Sun¹, David Rudoler¹, Stephen Hwang²

1: Ontario Tech University, Oshawa, Ontario, Canada

2: MAP Centre for Urban Health Solutions, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Introduction/background summary: Twenty-four percent of Canada's homeless shelter users are over the age of 50 years, a number that is predicted to rise [1]. Homeless older adults experience chronic health issues. They encounter barriers to accessing and utilizing healthcare and social services, such as stigma and misalignment between their needs and available services.

Why did you do it? Designing healthcare and social services to address the needs of older adults aging with homelessness first requires evidence of their experiences. This study explores the conceptualization of older chronically homeless adults' lived experiences related to aging.

Who is it for? The research is for healthcare and social service providers and policymakers, populations that are homeless, researchers, and advocates interested in issues of homelessness.

Who did you involve and engage with? Collaboration will occur with staff members and research participants in the study setting. Staff offer insights into participants' recruitment, engagement and retention. Participants provide feedback on the interview questions, their transcribed interview notes, and written descriptions of their stories. Knowledge translation products and actionable items to improve service delivery will be co-created with the study settings.

What did you do? The phenomenological research explores the aging experiences of older adults living with chronic homelessness. Participants will be recruited from four social service organizations and screened using the eligibility screening survey. Twenty eligible participants will be selected from the screening for data collection. The interview questions will be piloted with participants. Qualitative data collection occurs through face-to-face interviews and unstructured observations of participants in the study settings. Quantitative descriptive data will be gathered using the demographic survey and the SF-12 Short Form Health Assessment Survey. The NVivo software will be utilized to analyze the qualitative data. Quantitative data analysis will be completed with the SPSS statistical software.

What results did you get? What impact did you have? Expected results include evidence of participants' early physiological and psychosocial changes related to aging, healthcare and social service unmet needs and service utilization, and strategies utilized to manage developmental tasks related to aging. This study contributes new knowledge on the aging experiences of older

adults living with chronic homelessness. It helps to inform healthcare and social service policy and emerging practices, including person-centred care and integrated healthcare.

What is the learning for the international audience? The results will be transferable or interesting to international audiences that are involved in areas of research, policy, practice and advocacy related to homelessness.

What are the next steps? The next steps involve knowledge translation at conferences, symposiums, presentations and publications. Researchers will collaborate with the study settings to translate the research findings into actionable policy, service design, and delivery mechanisms.

References

1. Gaetz S., DeJ E., Richter T., & Redman M. (2016). The State of Homelessness in Canada 2016. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press.