

Study tracks migration of chronically homeless mentally ill adults to Vancouver's DTES

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A study by Simon Fraser University health sciences professor Dr. Julian Somers reveals that a growing number of those experiencing longstanding homelessness and mental disorders in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES) have migrated from elsewhere. Service use records of more than 400 homeless individuals with psychiatric comorbidities were analyzed to examine patterns of geographic relocation, as well as health, justice, and social welfare service utilization.

Over the past 10 years, the number of those coming from outside Vancouver into the DTES rose from 17 to 52 per cent. Their involvement with health, justice and social assistance services also increased significantly during this time.

The study also suggests that migration into urban regions with a high concentration of services may not necessarily lead to effective pathways to recovery. "Many of those who we tracked during the study are experiencing long-term deterioration in health and [social welfare](#)," says Somers. "Despite increasing involvement with public services, they remain exposed to serious health and social risks associated with poverty."

More information:

Study: bmjopen.bmj.com/content/6/1/e009043.short?rss=1

Provided by Simon Fraser University

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