

Inadequate housing plays a large role in unnecessary hospitalizations

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Homelessness and inadequate housing are major causes of unnecessary hospitalizations, according to a study by University of Hawai'i researchers.

The finding is from an ongoing project to understand and reduce potentially preventable hospitalizations for diabetes and [heart disease](#) in Hawai'i under Principal Investigator Tetine Sentell, an associate professor in the UH Office of Public Health Studies. Said Sentell, "We were interested in patient perspectives on the role of housing as contributing to their potentially preventable hospitalization."

Reported lead author of the study, Michelle Quensell, a UH public health graduate, "We talked to 90 patients, and almost 25% reported a housing-related issue as a major factor in hospitalization. About half of these [patients](#) were homeless, noting the high cost of housing in Hawai'i."

Added Sentell, "Patients said it was hard to care for their diabetes or heart disease when they were living without amenities such as refrigeration, running water, a stove or a safe place to store medications. Patients also mentioned the challenges of following diet plans when canned goods were the only available foods at the shelters and food banks."

Several major health providers in Hawai'i have recently created innovative new programs to address social determinants, including [housing](#), within the health-care setting to improve health-care quality and

reduce health-care costs. This research strongly supports these efforts.

Provided by University of Hawaii at Manoa

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