

The Toronto Housing Outreach Program Collaborative (HOP-C): Stabilizing Housing for Recently Homeless Youth



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CAEH CONFERENCE: NOVEMBER 3RD, 2016

Partners and Funders



Overview



- Context and Rationale – Tyler Frederick
- Transitional Case Management – Shaniah Morales
- Peer Support – Mardi Daley
- Mental Health – Nina Vitopoulos
- Preliminary Findings – Sean Kidd
- Discussion/Questions

Context & Rationale



- **Background:** The idea for HOP-C developed out of a SSRHC funded longitudinal research study of 51 youth exiting homelessness in Halifax and Toronto (Kidd, Karabanow, Hughes, and Frederick). Key themes:
 - Disconnection from support services post-housing and the high risk of cycling back into homelessness
 - Broad mental health needs across the population and barriers to accessing mental health services
 - Social isolation and loss of community
 - The value of having a caring case manager for emotional and practical support

Context & Rationale



- **Guiding structure:**
 - Multicomponent and collaborative design
 - Use of a strong engagement strategy and located outside of emergency services
 - Reflexive and responsive design to adapt to client needs
- **Main components:**
 - Transitional case management (LOFT and Covenant House Toronto)
 - Peer support/Engagement (SKETCH)
 - Mental health and wellness (CAMH)

Test of Feasibility



- Target of 30 participants
- Eligibility: 18-26 years old
- At least 6 months of homelessness (non-consecutive)
- In stable housing for less than 12 months

- Intervention lasts 6 months per person
- Client led: Choice about what components they access and how much
- Only encouragement is to have some contact with case management

Transitional Case Management



The role of case management is to assist individuals with mental illness to achieve independence and the ability to live in the community with the least intervention from formal services and to the greatest extent possible. This includes the ability to make decisions about case management services.

- HOP-C specific role
 - HOP C Specific Goal Setting
 - ✦ Maintaining housing stability - HOP-C program goals/ “Master To Do’ Lists
 - ✦ Finding Meaning in new phase of client’s lives
 - ✦ Life skills (i.e. budgeting, organization, time management, cooking)
 - Structure of HOP C Case Management
 - ✦ Weekly Check- Ins
 - ✦ Managing Client Supports
 - ✦ Developing client community relationships
 - ✦ Unifying the Experience

Transitional Case Management



- **Strengths**

- Flexibility
- Accessibility
- Inter-professional support team

- **Challenges**

- Client engagement
- Length of program
- Research criteria for participation
- Confidentiality

Peer Support



- **Peer Mentorship Role**
- **HOP-C context**
 - Program Development
 - Drop-in activities
 - Social outings
 - Individual Support
 - HOP-C Youth Collective
- **Strengths**
 - Non-hierarchical collaboration/Peer mentors direct contributors to design and research
 - Relatability and comfort for clients
 - Building professional capacity, skills, and community connection
- **Challenges**
 - Peers' personal challenges
 - Steep learning curve
 - Client engagement and retention

Mental Health



- Psychology delivered services:
 - Weekly HOP-C Wellness and Mindfulness Group (in partnership with the Centre for Mindfulness Studies)
 - ✦ DBT, CBT, psycho-education, self-stigma, practical skills and mindfulness
 - ✦ Weekly communication
 - ✦ Youtube videos/blog
 - ✦ Special workshops (i.e. mindful drumming /photography)
 - Individual therapy support with 1/3 of participants
 - ✦ Trauma
 - ✦ Depression
 - ✦ Anxiety
 - ✦ Family relationships
 - ✦ Challenges of daily living

Mental Health



- **Strengths**

- Access
- Relationship building
- Team collaboration

- **Challenges**

- Group engagement
- Managing resources (Individual Therapy)

Preliminary Outcomes



- Benefits of partnership
- 31 participants recruited
- Demographics:
 - Average age = 22
 - 40% born outside of Canada
 - Housing: 39% supported; 32% independent; 13% family; 13% subsidized
 - 29% completed high school; 51% some post-secondary
 - Gender: 45% male; 45% female; 9% outside of binary
 - 29% white; 16% African/African-Caribbean; 38% mixed/other visible minority; 16% no answer

Q&A



- Questions?