Beyond Housing: Creating a Sense of Place after Later Life Homelessness

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SOCIAL WORK

Panel: Homelessness in Later Life:
Insights and Experiences from Across Canada

DIVERSE
INCLUSIVE
ACCEPTING
WELCOMING
SAFE SPACE
FOR EVERYONE

CAEH18
HAMILTON NOV 05-07
NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENDING HOMELESSNESS
CONFÉRENCE NATIONALE POUR METTRE FIN À L'ITINÉRANCE

Presentation Overview and Objectives

Beyond Housing: Creating a sense of place with formerly homeless older adults in Calgary, Alberta

SSHRC IDG 2017-2019

Telus Sprak

1. Provide some background to set the stage for the research
2. Showcase the brief video documentary
3. Share one co-researcher's perspective

Defining older homelessness

Define "older"

Define "homeless"

Who are older homeless adults?

- 235,000 homeless per year in Canada (Gaetz et al., 2013).
- Definitions of homelessness: absolute to relative
- “Older”: Age 50+ (premature aging)
- Constitutes from 2% to 49% of the homeless populations

The population of older homeless individuals are rising, yet 'falling through the cracks'

The number of older adults (50-64) and seniors (65+) experiencing homelessness is growing (Gaetz, Dej, Richter, & Redman, 2016)

Invisible in Aging in Place policies

(WHO, 2013, Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, 2014)

Invisible in homelessness policies

(Burns et al., 2012; Grenier et al., 2016)

Disconnect between supportive housing models and the complex health and psycho-social needs (Burns , 2016)

Beyond Housing

Objectives

1) To understand how formerly homeless older adults' sense of place is created once housed;

2) To understand how diverse identity markers (i.e., gender, sexual orientation, ability/disability, and ethnicity) affects a person's sense of place once housed; and

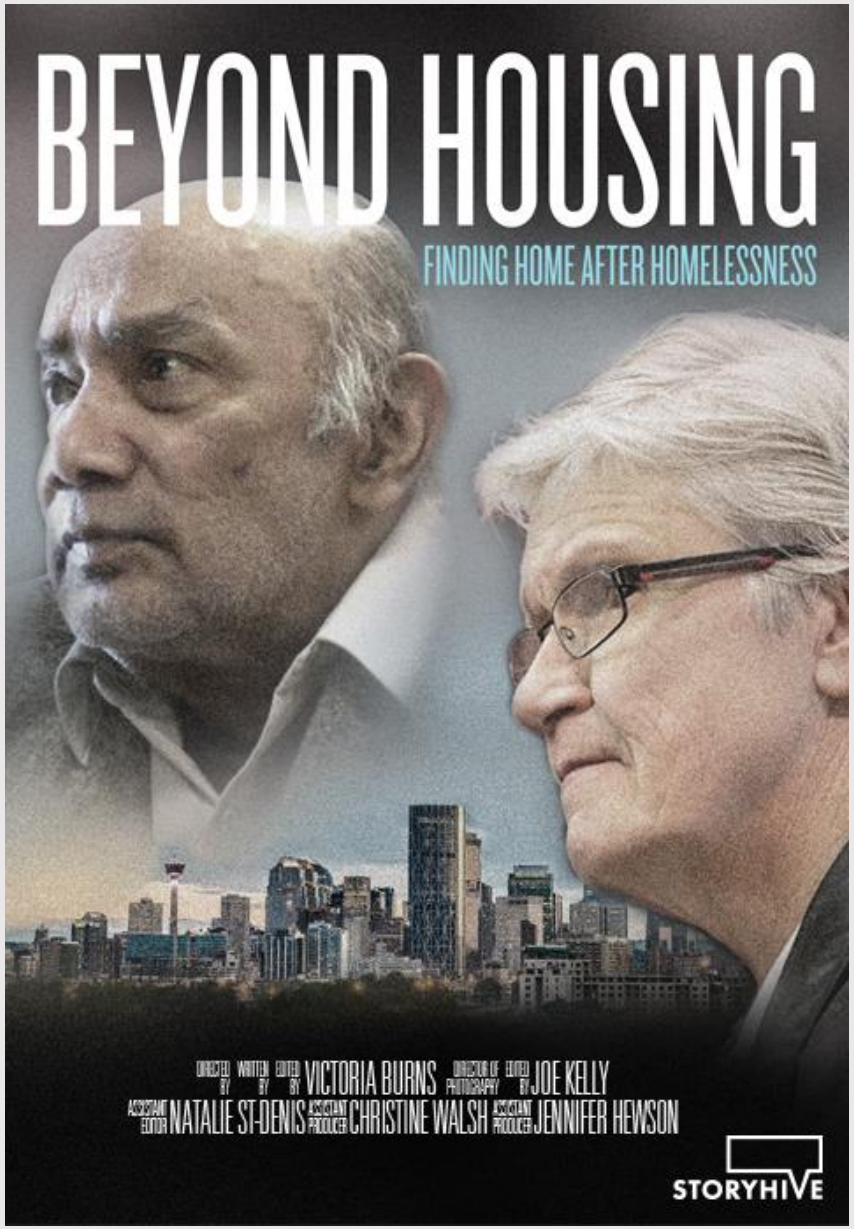
3) To identify the services and approaches that may promote housing stability and well-being to formerly homeless older adults.

Methodology

- Seven individuals aged 50+, across the homeless spectrum (Gaetz et al., 2016)
- Experts on their lived experience of older homelessness
- Willing to share their lives through stories, photography and film

Methods

- Interviews (multiple- individual and group) & Go-along interviews
- Go-along interviews
  - a type of mobile method commonly used in anthropological studies (Kusenbach, 2003)
- Visual methods (photographs and video, documentary film)
- Active engagement in knowledge dissemination activities



Findings

In progress

Beyond Housing: A digital short story to highlight the study and the gap in knowledege about the housing needs of older homeless adults.

https://youtu.be/2V4cMw_z28s

STORYHIVE
creativity connected by TELUS

Hillary

- 1. How does intersectionality contribute to hidden homelessness for this population?
- 2. What does it mean to you to be a co-researcher in this process?

Questions & Thank-you

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