

Comparing the homelessness plan experiences of small Canadian cities: Insights for policy and practice

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Homelessness in Small to Medium Range Cities is Under-Researched

“Urban areas in OECD countries are classified as:

- large metropolitan areas if they have a population of 1.5 million or more;
- metropolitan areas if their population is between 500 000 and 1.5 million;
- medium-size urban areas if their population is between 200 000 and 500 000;
- small urban areas if their population is between 50 000 and 200 000.”¹

1. <https://data.oecd.org/popregion/urban-population-by-city-size.htm>

Siloing Occurs Within Service Sectors

There is very little knowledge transfer within and outside service sectors (i.e., between comparable sized locales where KM could produce innovation)

Challenges of multi-sector, cross-provincial homelessness innovation development; and their current and potential prospects

Study Design

Kelowna, BC

Lethbridge, AB

Sherbrooke, QC

Site Selection

Geospatial – proximity to American border

Size/Population – Kelowna, BC (~144,600),
Lethbridge, AB (~98,410), and Sherbrooke, QC
(~161,300)

Diverse economic bases

Diverse political/cultural bases

Diverse points in time relative to multi-year plans

Study Design

A comparative approach helps systems to move beyond anchoring biases, availability biases, framing effect, and inattentional blindness

Data Collection

Key informants are service providers

Compare and contrast:

Emerging Findings

When done well, systems stand the potential of accomplishing heightened service improvement and genuine innovation

Data Analysis

Levels of knowledge – divergent based on position

Knowledge of plans could be improved

Impact of plan on operations

Feelings about system/government



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The Kelowna Homelessness Research Collaborative

A multidisciplinary team of researchers working to understand and support the provision of services to – and the perspectives of – individuals with lived experience of homelessness, or who are vulnerable and at-risk of experiencing homelessness.



The Kelowna Homelessness Research Collaborative (KHRC) is a UBC Research Excellence Cluster. Members span UBC, Okanagan College, and Interior Health. KHRC receives financial and collaborative support from a variety of funders and multiple community partners across the Okanagan.

Sustainability
Beyond the Life of
the Current
Project