

HOMELESSNESS and EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

The issue needing a home

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“He turangawaewae kore, he wairua whare kore”

Overview

- What is homelessness
- Wellington ED informal staff survey
- Review of literature
- Recommendations



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Homelessness

- Without shelter: rough sleeping
- In temporary accommodation: hostel/ shelter/ boarding houses/ motor camps/ couch surfing
- Sharing accommodation with a household: no fixed tenure
- Uninhabitable housing: garage, dilapidated buildings

Wellington ED staff survey

- Recognised homeless patient
 - Presentation 1-2/ week
 - Felt compassionate/ indifferent
 - Multifactorial and complex, self chosen, non compliance, neglect
 - Mental health, social, alcohol and substance abuse and medical
 - Fair- 31/72, Good-25/72
 - Average- 23/72, Poor-15/72
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Wellington ED staff Survey

- Can you suggest ways to improve the care of homeless in ED?
- Can you suggest ways to improve discharges of homeless from ED?

None

Clear pathway/ liaison person/ easy referral system

Better integration with community/ social agencies/ primary care

Emergency shelter

24 hour Social worker

Resource network/ folder/ links

Favourite Referral



Literature review

- Socioeconomic factors- Multifactorial risk factors and barriers (*Hwang et al., 2013*)
- High morbidity and mortality rate (*Hwang, 2001; Moore et al., 2011*)
- Importance of identifying the homeless (*Moore et al., 2011*)
- Collaborative effort (*Moore, Gerdtz & Manias, 2011*)
- Inadequate ED discharges (*Backer et al., 2007; Best & Young, 2009*)
- ED as default stop/ last resort (*Morris & Gordon, 2006*)
- Housing-first, respite care, supported accommodation (*Tsemberis et al., 2004; Buchanan et al., 2006*)

Why

- Health targets- KPI!
- Treaty of Waitangi- partnership, protection, participation
- Domain 1: professional responsibility (*NCNZ, 2007*)
- High risk group



Recommendations

- Primary care- Nurse clinics, Link nurse, District nurses
- Emergency shelter
- Medication dispensing
- Social worker accessibility
- Ongoing Nursing education and resources
- Domicile code and GP linkage at reception
- Alerts
- Care coordination service

Cooler little capital!

- Te Mahana strategy
- Wellington Night Shelter
- Wellington Outreach programme



“You may choose to look the other way but you can never say again that you did not know” (William Wilberforce, n.d.)

“He waka eke noa”

Acknowledgments

