

Research demonstration projects in mental health and homelessness

Submission date 05/06/2009	Recruitment status No longer recruiting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Protocol
Registration date 18/08/2009	Overall study status Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
Last Edited 17/02/2026	Condition category Mental and Behavioural Disorders	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

The Mental Health Commission of Canada is working with a national and five local research teams in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal and Moncton to conduct this study. The aims are to find out what kind of housing and support work best for people who are homeless and have mental health issues and to influence the government to create more long-term community-based housing and supports.

Who can participate?

Homeless or precariously housed adults aged 18 and older diagnosed with a serious mental disorder.

What does the study involve?

To find out which kind of supported housing works best, we are comparing people receiving Housing First with those in usual care. This means that those who agree to participate will be assigned at random to receive either Housing First (rent supplements and mental health supports from a case manager at one of two levels, assertive community treatment or intensive case management) or usual care (existing community services). All participants will be interviewed every 3 months over a period of two years and be asked to continue in a longer-term 4 year follow-up study. We ask participants to provide us with access to information about their use of health services, income assistance and any contacts with the justice system.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

All participants get a cash honorarium (payment) for each interview. We make the interview as comfortable as possible to reduce the risk of personal questions creating distress. Those in the Housing First groups get supported housing through the study and have access to a minimum level of support and additional treatment if they choose to use it. Rent stipends and case management supports will be provided for the duration of the study when we will try to make sure that their housing is maintained. If they lose the housing for any reason, we will help them find another place to live and either continue to provide services/supports or locate alternative sources in the community. There is an equal chance that participants who agree to be in the study will not receive housing through the study. For those who do not get supported housing through the study, we let them know about housing and support through other sources.

Where is the study run from?
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (Canada).

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
September 2009 to April 2013.

Who is funding the study?
Health Canada.

Who is the main contact?
Dr Paula Goering
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Contact information

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Scientific

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Study information

Scientific Title

Multi-site pragmatic randomised controlled field trial of Housing First versus treatment as usual in mental health and homelessness

Study objectives

What is the effectiveness, cost/benefit, and cost/effectiveness of Housing First in comparison to care as usual for homeless adults?

Ethics approval required

Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Research Ethics Board, 21/09/2009, ref: 252/2009

Study design

Multi-method multi-site unblinded randomised controlled field trial

Primary study design

Interventional

Study type(s)

Treatment

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Homelessness and serious mental illness

Interventions

Treatment: provision of rent supplements and case management or assertive community treatment for the duration of the study

Comparison: care as usual

Duration of intervention: Data collection will be ongoing from Sept 2009 to Feb 2013 with duration of intervention from 24 to 42 months.

Duration of follow-up: 2 years.

Intervention Type

Other

Primary outcome(s)

Housing stability, measured using the Tsemberis Residential Timeline Follow-back Inventory at 6, 12, 18 and 24 months

Key secondary outcome(s)

Quality of life, measured using the EQ-5D at 6, 12, 18 and 24 months

Completion date

01/04/2013

Eligibility**Key inclusion criteria**

1. Legal adult status
2. Absolute homelessness or precariously housed
3. Presence of a serious mental disorder
4. Aged 18 years and older, either sex

Participant type(s)

Other

Healthy volunteers allowed

No

Age group

Mixed

Lower age limit

18 years

Upper age limit

110 years

Sex

All

Total final enrolment

2039

Key exclusion criteria

Does not meet inclusion criteria

Date of first enrolment

01/10/2009

Date of final enrolment

01/07/2011

Locations**Countries of recruitment**

Canada

Study participating centre

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

Toronto
Canada
M5S 2S1

Study participating centre**Centre for Research on Inner City Health**

St. Michael's Hospital

Toronto
Canada

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Sponsor information**Organisation**

Mental Health Commission of Canada (Canada)

ROR

<https://ror.org/00hbkp98>

Funder(s)**Funder type**

Government

Funder Name

Health Canada (Canada)

Alternative Name(s)

Government of Canada, Health Canada, Santé Canada, GovCanHealth

Funding Body Type

Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype

National government

Location

Canada

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

IPD sharing plan summary

Not expected to be made available

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Results article	results	02/10/2012		Yes	No
Results article	childhood learning disability results	22/11/2012		Yes	No
Results article	results	01/06/2013		Yes	No
Results article	results	01/06/2013		Yes	No
Results article	cumulative childhood adversity results	12/04/2014		Yes	No
Results article	results	13/04/2014		Yes	No
Results article	discrimination results	07/09/2014		Yes	No
Results article	results	09/09/2014		Yes	No
Results article	results	14/12/2014		Yes	No
Results article	results	01/01/2015		Yes	No
Results article	results	23/02/2015		Yes	No
Results article	results	03/03/2015		Yes	No
Results article	results	01/05/2015		Yes	No
Results article	results	15/07/2015		Yes	No
Results article	results	29/09/2015		Yes	No
Results article	results	12/09/2016		Yes	No
Results article	results	21/10/2016		Yes	No
Results article	results	20/03/2018		Yes	No
Results article	results	12/07/2019	15/07/2019	Yes	No
Results article	results	02/08/2019	23/08/2019	Yes	No
Results article	results	22/08/2019	27/08/2019	Yes	No
Results article	results	01/11/2019	14/10/2019	Yes	No

Results article	dental results	30/03/2020	02/04/2020	Yes	No
Results article	retrospective analysis results	08/04/2019	15/04/2020	Yes	No
Results article	results	01/05/2019	13/07/2020	Yes	No
Results article	results	20/10/2020	28/09/2020	Yes	No
Results article	violence-related traumatic brain injury results	04/12/2020	07/12/2020	Yes	No
Results article	association of resilience with quality of life results	04/03/2021	08/03/2021	Yes	No
Results article		01/04/2021	19/04/2021	Yes	No
Results article		01/06/2021	29/06/2021	Yes	No
Results article		01/01/2021	12/07/2021	Yes	No
Results article		25/08/2020	29/07/2021	Yes	No
Results article	Women experiencing homelessness and mental illness in a Housing First multi-site trial: Looking beyond housing to social outcomes and well-being	10/02/2023	13/02/2023	Yes	No
Results article	Association of housing and support interventions with mortality among individuals experiencing homelessness and mental illnesses secondary analysis	01/07/2025	07/08/2025	Yes	No
Results article		03/09/2025	04/09/2025	Yes	No
Results article	Ethno-racial differences on healthcare utilization	14/02/2026	17/02/2026	Yes	No
Protocol article		14/11/2011		Yes	No
Protocol article	protocol for secondary data analysis	30/12/2020	04/01/2021	Yes	No
Other publications	initial implementation	01/10/2013		Yes	No