

Correlates of Veteran Status in a Canadian Sample of Homeless People with Severe and Persistent Mental Illness

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Introduction

Goal: to identify correlates of veteran status among housing, mental health, and service use variables in a Canadian sample of homeless people with severe and persistent mental illness

Better knowledge of differences between homeless veterans and other Canadians with mental illness would allow to better calibrate services

Methods

- Data come from the 5 sites of *At Home/Chez soi*
- RCT in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal, and Moncton
- Participants: legal adults, absolutely homeless or precariously housed, mental disorder
- Baseline data from a matched sample (site, gender, and age) of 99 veterans and 297 other Canadians
- Variables: housing status, physical and mental health, alcohol and substance use, social and cognitive functioning, employment status, service use and victimization
- Data analysis: logistic regression

Results

- Homeless Veterans and other Canadians with severe and persistent mental illness are similar on most variables
- Veterans (40,4%) show a higher prevalence of PTSD than other Canadians (29,0%)
- Veterans (48,5%) are more likely than other Canadians (29,6%) to have been victim of robbery in the 6 months before the interview

Conclusions

- As both groups seem reasonably similar, interventions proven successful with a civilian population could also be used with veterans
- However, future research should test this assumption
- Interventions targeting veterans should pay particularly close attention to PTSD and victimization