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Housing First for People with Opioid Use Disorder (OUD)

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SI PHR Abstract
10 December 2018

Housing First for People with Opioid Use Disorder (OUD)

Introduction

Philadelphia's opioid crisis has subsequently resulted in an increase in unsheltered individuals. Significant barriers in healthcare access exist for individuals experiencing homelessness and substance use disorders, often leading to poor health outcomes and significant disease burden.

Objective

This study's purpose is to determine the prevalence of physical and mental illness among individuals with experiences of homelessness and OUD upon entry to a permanent supportive housing program through Pathways to Housing PA (PTHPA).

Methods:

This study is a cross-sectional analysis of physical and mental health conditions of individuals who entered PTHPA's housing program by July 2018. All individuals included had a primary diagnosis of OUD.

Results:

Of the 83 individuals included, 42 (50.6%) had at least one chronic illness, 60 (72.2%) had a positive Hepatitis C antibody, and 22 (27%) had HIV/AIDS. Additionally, 90.3% of individuals had at least one psychiatric diagnosis, the most prevalent of which were mood disorders (75%). Most common psychiatric diagnoses included major depressive disorder (54%) and post-traumatic stress disorder (41%).

Conclusions:

The results show that there is a complex burden of disease among individuals with OUD entering PTHPA's HF program. Understanding these health needs can inform future adjustments and adaptations to provide care for these populations. Importantly, these preliminary results will help inform a larger study on the program, evaluating the association of permanent supportive housing with engagement in treatment for OUD, along with factors like medical and psychiatric diagnoses and their influences on health and treatment outcomes.