

Voices of those with lived experiences of homelessness and adversity in Wales: Informing prevention and response



GIG CYMRU NHS WALES | Iechyd Cyhoeddus Cymru Public Health Wales

Types of homelessness

- ◆ Lack of adequate housing
- ◆ Living in substandard or unsuitable housing
- ◆ Rough sleeping
- ◆ No right to stay
- ◆ Hidden homeless (e.g. sofa surfing, temporary B&B's)

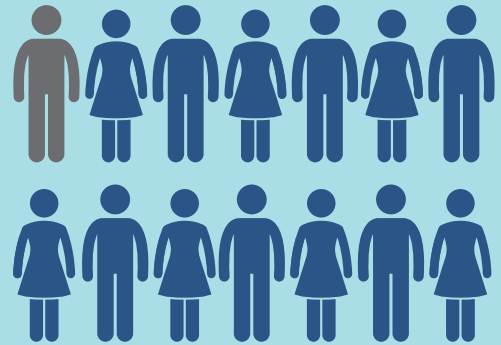
Homelessness can be

- Chronic (longer term)
- Episodic (frequent)
- Transitional (one-off)



Prevalence of homelessness in Wales

1 in 14 (7%) have lived experience of homelessness



Causes of homelessness

Structural factors

Lack of affordable housing

Unemployment

Changes in social support

CAUSES

Individual factors

Disadvantage (e.g. poverty, ill-health, lack of education)

Life history (e.g. childhood adversity)

Life events (e.g. family breakdown)

Those at greatest risk of homelessness



Care leavers



Prison leavers



Childhood poverty



Minimal social support



Childhood adversity/family dysfunction

Ill-health is both a cause and consequence of homelessness

Ill-health



Mental illness



Physical illness



Substance misuse (alcohol and drug)

SOCIAL EXCLUSION



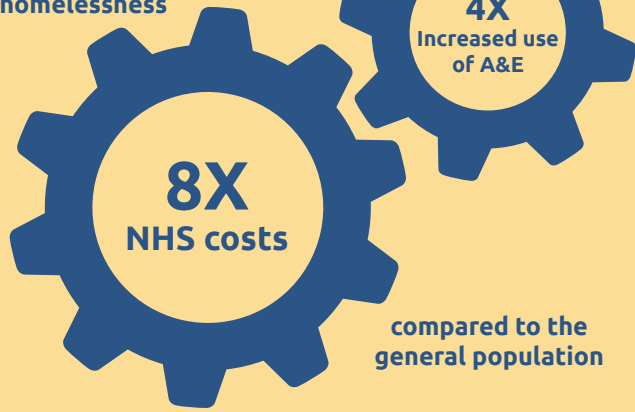
HEALTH INEQUITIES

Homelessness



Multiple health problems

People experiencing homelessness



People who sleep rough are more likely to die prematurely compared to the general population



Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and childhood resilience

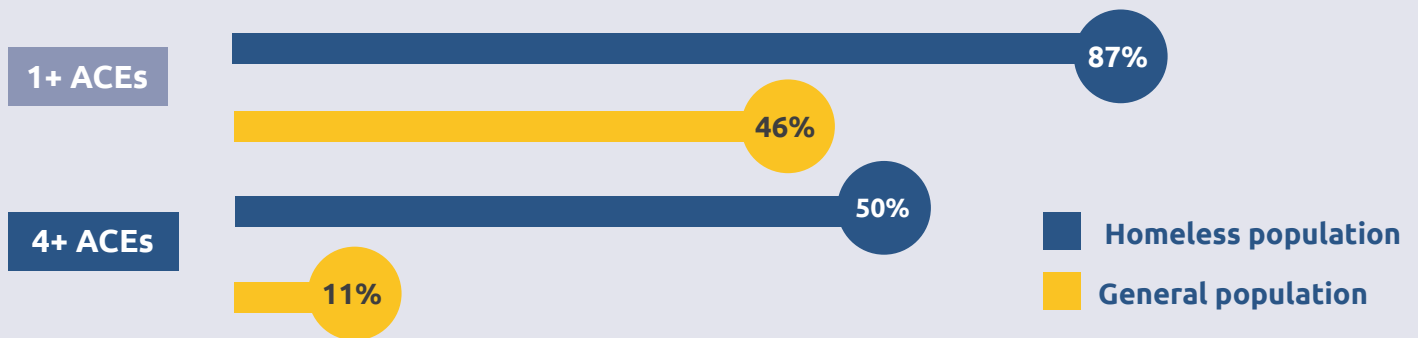
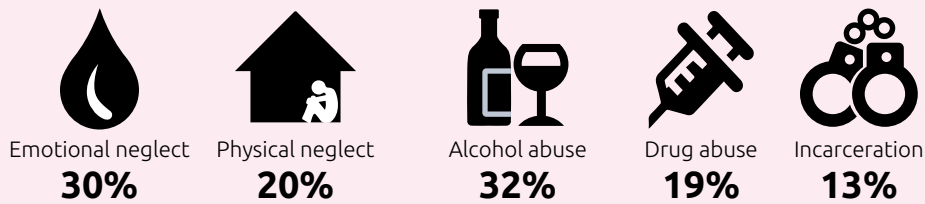
Child maltreatment



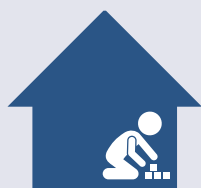
Household ACEs



Prevalence of ACEs in those with lived experience of homelessness



Compared to people with no ACEs those with four or more are



16x
more likely to have lived experience of homelessness



8x

This halves in the presence of protective childhood resilience assets

Preventing homelessness through the lifecycle



Early years/schools and trusted adults are critical in supporting children with ACEs.

Services through the lifecourse need to be ACE-informed and able to cope with adverse behaviour resulting from ACEs.

Childhood resilience - protective factors



Belonging to a community



Trusted relationship with a stable adult



Supportive teachers and youth workers



Supportive family



Solving problems

Barriers to support



Not being listened to



Fear of the consequences



Lack of trust



Not seeing the person behind the presenting behaviour



The child not recognising adversity



Early intervention that prevents ACEs, combined with **empowering and building resilience** in at-risk children, is likely to contribute to **reducing the risk of homelessness** and should have a **multi-agency, collaborative approach** in order to achieve sustainable change.

1 Building capacity into services across sectors in order to take a multi-agency, trauma-informed approach to the vulnerable child or adult

2 Using awareness of the impact of adversity in childhood on later vulnerability in adults so that all services that come into contact with children and young people are better informed to ensure early prevention

3 Better addressing the support needs of both child and adult vulnerable populations that have been impacted by ACEs

4 Supporting early years' settings to work in a trauma-informed way and to recognise vulnerability, centred around supporting the child and their family

5 Recognising the value that teachers, support workers, and community support systems play in early intervention and trauma-informed support

6 Public bodies taking a Children's Rights Approach to supporting at-risk children