

Comparative Case Study of the COVID-19 Response for Urban Unde Patients Experiencing Care Transitions in Three Canadian Citie

Inner City Health and Wellness Program

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Context

Urban underserved groups (e.g., with low income, unstable housing, mental health problems, addictions) experience disproportionate morbidity and premature mortality, yet poor care integration.¹ They may face additional healthcare barriers and disruption to their usual continuum of care during COVID-19.^{2,3}

Research Questions

We are analyzing COVID-19 policies impacting continuity of care for urban underserved groups (e.g., during care transitions).

- 1. How was continuity of care addressed in **COVID-19 response policies?**
- 2. What contextual factors influenced policy development and rollout?
- 3. Which policy actors were involved and how did they interact?
- 4. How can responses be improved to support continuity of care?

Setting and Methods

- Comparative case study of 3 Canadian cities (Toronto, Edmonton, Winnipeg)
- Policy and media analysis (e.g., guidelines, news articles) Jan-Dec 2020
- Walt & Gibson's Policy Triangle Framework⁴
 - **Content:** key policy components
 - **Context:** socio-political, economic, health system setting
 - Actors: individuals, groups involved in response and their interactions
 - **Process:** how policies are formulated, implemented



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Emerging Findings

Documents examined

- to date (N=125)
- **Toronto** n=55
- Edmonton n=38
- Winnipeg n=9
- National n=23

- Primary focus *within* services, not between

"[W]e have cancelled visitation and in-person outpatient services. . . transitioning all group meetings to online platforms." Aurora Recovery Centre (Winnipeg)

providers

- Municipal, provincial, federal governments
- Community members, advocacy groups Corporate, non-health affiliated groups

CONTEXT

- Prior system capacity, resource challenges
- Protecting population health
- Avoiding health system overload
- Future emergency planning

"A coalition of homelessness advocacy groups is suing the City of Toronto over its response to the COVID-19 crisis." **Global News Toronto**

Implications

Our findings suggest that there has been little focus on care continuity for urban underserved Canadians during the pandemic, despite public health measures having disproportionately negative impacts on their care. Policy responses have been largely reactive and temporary, and community members have rarely been involved. However, analyses highlight power in communitybased initiatives in response to policy gaps.

Acknowledgements



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CONTENT

Service restrictions, adaptations to prevent COVID-19 - Service expansions via hotels, conference centers, and integrated multidisciplinary isolation teams Temporary initiatives with some long-term housing plans

ACTORS

Community organizations, service

The hotel will act as shortbridge housing . . . while Ho First teams arrange safe, se permanent housing[.] Homeward Trust (Edmonton)

PROCESS

- Provincial, national top down policy
- Multilateral collaboration locally
- Little collaboration with community members
- Advocacy, community initiatives to policy gaps

Next Steps

Comparative analyses by site are underway. We will triangulate our findings via key informant focus groups (frontline providers, patient advisors, etc.). Overall, our study will provide pragmatic, timely evidence to improve care for urban underserved Canadians.



Funding

rials + Research Centre

References

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- May 1];5(4):e186–7. 2020;369.

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term, ousing ecure	<section-header></section-header>	ARCH 26, 2020 MARCH 26, 2020 MARCH 12, 2020 Manitoba Government announces APRIL 3, 2020 Manitoba Government announces Manitoba Government announces Manitoba Government announces

Federal government announces Canada Emergency Response

> Edmonton's Homeward Trus partners with Coliseum Inn to provide bridge housing during COVID-19

APRIL 6, 2020

Benefit(CERB

APRIL 20, 2020

APRIL 28, 2020 Rogers Communications and City o ronto announce free wifi and

smartphones for low income residential buildings, shelters

JULY 6 2020 Edmonton's Mustard Seed stop insmen Recreation Cente perations; returns to previou: helters; shelter beds reduce by 13

AUGUST 19, 2020

overnment of Canada announ funding for 2 safe supply drug programs in Toror

OCTOBER 6. 2020 City of Edmonton announces plan for new temporary 24-7 homeless shelter in the fo

JUNE 22, 2020

lan to add 140 beds to shelter

system; repurposement of vacant

ain Street Project in Winnipeg

Advocacy coalition in Toronto sues

City over shelter response; City settles

May 15 and expands shelter/housing

opens shelter/drop-in program a

donated warehouse building

Manitoba Housing building

APRIL 18, 2020

APRIL 25, 2020

system further

CHA, Citv of Toronto, announce solation program expansion via second downtown site

CLOSED

ain Street Project in Winnipeg nnounces opening of new socially distanced shelter building

plan for shelter system expansions and offordable housing strategy

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3) Douglas M, Katikireddi SV, Taulbut M, McKee M, McCartney G. Mitigating the wider health effects of covid-19 pandemic response. Bmj.

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