

Supportive Housing: Data Linkages, Cost Offsets, and Public Policy

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What are the key messages?

- The analytical and social power of linked administrative data: An example
- Life changes and identities
- Whose policy problem/interest is housing?

Background

- 2008 Social problem
- Measureable reductions, not crisis
- Affordable housing
- Hardest to house: chronic homeless
- Cost effective

Supportive Housing



Research

- Does supportive housing work?
- Supportive housing:
 - affordable
 - long-term
 - lease
 - integrated multidisciplinary supports
 - voluntary and non-contingent
 - immediate access to housing
- If it works, how much does it cost?

Linked Administrative Data Analysis

- We tested theories about service usage and cost offsets
- Two time windows: 12 months pre supportive housing, and 12 months post supportive housing (N=41)
- In the 12 months pre-supportive housing people were chronically homeless

Administrative Data Sources

- Health:
 - emergency; admitted; mental health, and ambulance
- Police:
 - offences; victims of crime, and watchhouse
- Department of Justice and Attorney-General:
 - courts
- Department of Justice and Attorney-General:
 - prisons; probation, and parole
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare:
 - SHS, including accommodation and brokerage

Linked Administrative Data

- Ethics
- Administrative data: objective and robust
- Existing Australian research
 - self report surveys: unreliable
 - self report surveys: imprecise (aggregate and average rather than specific)

Linked Administrative Data

- Mental Health

	12 months pre tenancy commencement	12 months post tenancy commencement	Difference between pre and post
Episodes	1,029	359	-669 (65%↓)
Minutes	27,152	10,560	-16,592 (61%↓)
Cost	\$372,498	\$129,958	-\$242,540

Linked Administrative Data

- Queensland Police Service

	12 months pre tenancy commencement	12 months post tenancy commencement	Difference between pre and post
Occurrences as Offender	50	24	-26 (52%↓)
Cost per offender = \$2,453	\$122,650	\$58,872	-\$63,778
Offences as Offender	57	28	-29 (51%↓)
Occurrences as Victim	24	11	-13 (54%↓)
Cost per victim = \$243	\$5,832	\$2,673	-\$3,159
Occurrence Police or Corrections transport to Hospital	5	1	-4 (80%↓)
Nights in Police Custody	45	27	-18 (40%↓)
Cost per night in custody = \$830	\$37,350	\$22,410	-\$14,940
Total cost of Police	\$165,832	\$83,955	-\$81,877

Linked Administrative Data

	12 months pre tenancy commencement	12 months post tenancy commencement	Difference between pre and post
Admitted patients	\$1,064,167	\$472,673	-\$591,495
Mental Health	\$372,498	\$129,958.	-\$242,540
Emergency	\$102,510	\$104,860	+\$2,350
Ambulance	\$41,600	\$40,950	-\$650
Subtotal Health Difference	\$1,580,775	\$748,441	-\$832,335
Corrective Services	\$32,296	\$1,452	-\$30,844
Court	\$23,400	\$13,217	-\$10,183
Police	\$165,832	\$83,955	-\$81,877
Subtotal Criminal Justice Difference	\$221,528	\$98,624	-\$122,904
Specialist Homelessness Services	\$174,613	\$5,249	-\$169,364
Total Cost Difference	\$1,976,916	\$852,314	-\$1,124,603

State Government Cost offsets

- Tenants used \$1,976,916 pre, compared to \$852,314 post
- *Pre*: Average annual spend of services \$48,217 per tenant
- *Post*: Average annual spend on services \$20,788 per tenant
- Annual cost of supportive housing per tenant = \$14,329
- $\$20,788 + \$14,329 = \$35,117$ (per tenant annually)

State Government Cost offsets

- *Post*: Including services and supportive housing, average annual spend of \$35,117 per tenant
- *Pre*: Average annual spend of services \$48,217 per tenant
- Cost off set: $\$48,217 - \$35,117 = \$13,100$
- It costs the Queensland Government \$13,100 to keep one individual chronically homeless for one year

Life Changes and Identities

- Many outcomes did not change. What people did of a day and how they lived their lives however, changed demonstrably
- Social action is socially mediated – *reliance* on health, justice and welfare services solved with the provision of housing
- Moved from a homeless consumer, client, patient, inmate, to a tenant

Cost Offsets and Policy Change?

- Department of Housing and Public Works funds = cross government offsets?
- Government silos and budget lines
- Housing as a social determinant of health and social participation
- Treasury and Premiers

Further Details

- We thank the Queensland Government, Department of Housing and Public Works, for funding the Evaluation of the Brisbane Common Ground Initiative
- Parsell, C., Petersen, M. and Culhane, D. (2016). Cost offsets of supportive housing: Evidence for social work. *British Journal of Social Work*. doi: 10.1093/bjsw/bcw115