# Intersections of brain injury

## Homelessness

Research shows that there is a two-way link between brain injury (BI) and homelessness. BI can cause homelessness, and being homeless can increase the risk of BI. These findings have heightened Canadian awareness about homelessness and underscored the need for resources and prevention efforts, particularly in the areas of policy and affordable housing.

* 235k: Approximate number of people that experience homelessness across Canada each year.
* Up to 4x higher: Prevalence of TBI among homeless individuals compared to general population in Canada
* 50%: Approximate proportion of homeless individuals with BI

Challenges and needs

Policy and Awareness: Policy focus in support housing-first initiatives and healthcare access as well as educating the public on this issue can significantly impact the lives of those at the intersection of homelessness and BI.

Awareness Gap: A significant portion of the homeless population with BIs may not be aware of their condition, complicating access to necessary support services.

Identification and Support: There needs to be regular and structured screening for BIs among the homeless population in shelters, as well as tailored support services.

Housing and Care: Stable housing and access to continuous and comprehensive healthcare play a crucial role in preventing homelessness and supporting those with BI.

The reality is that housing programs geared towards supporting individuals with brain injury are underfunded, and specialized housing programs in Canada have extensive waitlists. This poses an ongoing risk to people in precarious housing situations —emotionally, socially and financially. Prevention and stable housing, particularly for youth, are pivotal in tackling the BI crisis among homeless or housing insecure individuals. Early interventions, like the Housing First model, have proven effective in reducing medical emergencies, highlighting the vital role of preventive measures in this context.

For more info, visit braininjurycanada.ca