
Kelowna Homelessness Research Centre Newsletter



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Funders

We are grateful for the generous support we have received from the Eminence Program through the Office of the Vice President of Research and Innovation for the University of British Columbia – Okanagan and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.



a place of mind

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada

WELCOME MESSAGE

As I began to write this message, the Interior BC was emerging for the first time in a week with air quality that was not among the worst in the world. The climate emergency has had a grievous impact on so many places: mudslides and tornadoes in California, heat waves and fires in parts of North America, Europe, and Asia; these things, along with flooding and other calamities across the globe. As always, the most vulnerable in our communities – including and perhaps especially, those experiencing homelessness – are impacted the most severely.



The world is a fraught place. We live in an era of increasing economic inequality, polarization of political and cultural ideas, the climate emergency, and the reduction of people to the status of “outcasts”, as one sociologist describes it. How wonderful that a consortium of scholars, students, and activists – in engineering, management studies, medicine, neuroscience, nursing, social sciences, and social work – should commit themselves to community engaged research to reduce the prevalence and impact of homelessness in our midst.

As the following pages elaborate, we are deeply committed to working with communities to resolve homelessness. The problem has been allowed to persist for many decades, and the solutions are not being taken by those levels of government that could make a telling difference. In this liminal period, in particular, the voices of those who are seldom heard, and the activities of those of us who work alongside the homeless, never mattered more.

Interested in being involved? Feel free to reach out to us and let’s see if together we can make a still greater impact on the unnecessary but very real problem of homelessness in our midst.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Graham'.

John Graham, PhD, RSW
Professor
School of Social Work | University of British Columbia | Okanagan Campus
Principal Investigator
Kelowna Homelessness Research Centre

UPCOMING EVENTS

Save the Date

September

LOVE IN THE TIME OF FENTANYL **Documentary Screening and Panel** **Discussion**

September 15th, 2023

7:00pm

KANDU

2438 Main St, West Kelowna

Click [here](#) to secure your tickets

October

KHRC COMMUNITY SHOWCASE **Research Showcase and** **Community Roundtable**

October 27th, 2023

9:00am - 4:00pm

Central Okanagan United Church

721 Bernard Avenue, Kelowna

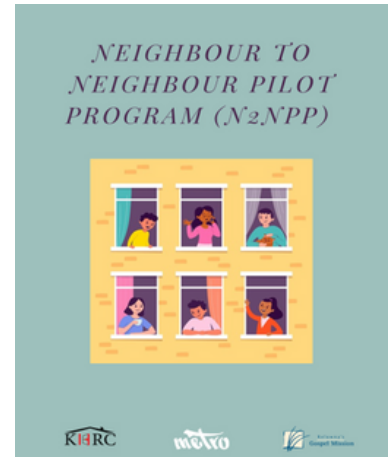
Click [here](#) to register



PROJECT UPDATES

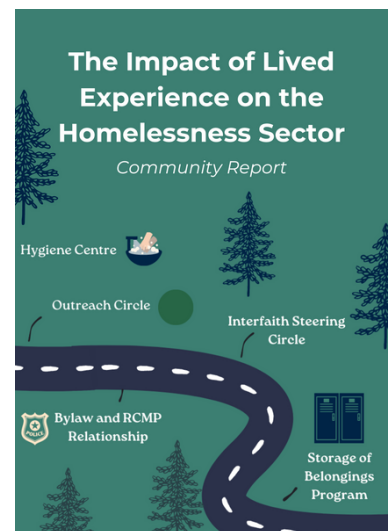
Neighbour to Neighbour Pilot Project (N2NPP)

With the support of the Interfaith Steering Committee, and in partnership with the Kelowna's Gospel Mission and Metro Community Church, the intention of the N2NPP is to help build a more inclusive and accepting community where those who were or are experiencing homelessness experience less stigma and more support. By matching volunteers to newly housed individuals over an eight month period, the N2NPP provides opportunities for newly housed individuals to develop and strengthen relationships with neighbours to create a sense of community connection and social support and to reduce experiences of loneliness and social isolation during what can be a difficult transition. This project is ongoing - research outcomes anticipated in 2024!



The Impact of Lived Experience on the Homelessness Sector

A Community-Based research project designed in collaboration with the Central Okanagan Journey Home Society (COJHS) and the Lived Experience Circle on Homelessness (LECoH) in identifying the successes and challenges of Lived and Living experience engagements with the homelessness serving sector in Kelowna, since the design process of the Journey Home Strategy in 2018. By evaluating the impact of LECoH from members own perspectives and the perspectives of service providers who have worked with LECoH on various projects and initiatives, this report will not only celebrate LECoH's story publicly but we hope it will expand LECoH's local impact, and support future engagements with LECoH. Coming soon!



Additional research outputs from both KHRC and other community researchers are available at khrc.ok.ubc.ca, including these exciting projects:

Creating Allyship in Research

Providing researchers and practitioners with a framework to embed lived and living experience, and allyship, into their work through the [Allyship in Research Toolkit](#) and Creating Allyship in Research [videos](#).

Exploring Opportunities for Lived/Living Experience Circles

A series of [reports](#) and a [toolkit](#) developed to support the work of communities, researchers, and others who are interested in community engaged processes for making social change.



Improving the bereavement experience among people who are experiencing homelessness in BC

On July 26, 2023, members of the KHRC, **BC Centre for Palliative Care (BCCPC)**, and the Lived Experience Circle on Homelessness (LECoH) gathered together at City Park in Kelowna, BC with guests Edna Terbasket of **Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society** and Elder Grouse Barnes of Westbank First Nation in a closing ceremony for the research study. This ceremony was an expression of gratitude for everyone involved in the study, as well as a way to honour those who have died in our community and those who have been impacted by the losses. It is all too common for the bereaved who are experiencing homelessness to be unrecognized grievers in our community, who are then not adequately supported in their bereavement. We hoped this ceremony would provide an opportunity to feel seen and supported. During the ceremony, we were guided through an opening prayer, eulogy to honor all those who have died, a drumming circle, and smudging. We completed the event with food and a memorial art piece together: a white shopping cart adorned with the names of those we have lost, now respectfully located at OS4 in Kelowna.

KHRC and BCCPC now turn our attention to analyzing the data collected from the 40 in-person interviews completed with people with lived experience of bereavement in the context of homelessness, to better understand their experiences and their thoughts on what can be done better in providing support. Research outputs will follow as they become available.

This project has been funded in part by a contribution from Health Canada, Health Care Policy and Strategies Program through the Pan-Canadian Palliative Care Research Collaborative Seed Grants program, and the University of British Columbia Okanagan Eminence program. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of Health Canada or the University of British Columbia. For more information: please contact Joshua Black, project manager (BCCPC) at jblack@bc-cpc.ca or Stephanie Laing, Director of Operations (KHRC) at stephanie.laing@ubc.ca



SPOTLIGHT ON STUDENTS

Housing for Seniors with Substance Use Needs: What are the Options?

Michelle Hawkins, third year medical student, and Dr. Silvina Mema, Deputy Chief Medical Health Officer with Interior Health, **explore** what housing options are available for an aging population with substance use needs.



A Glimpse into the World of Ill-Housed Individuals through a Primary Care Lens: A Transformative Experience

Check out this **research blog** by first year medical student **Peyman Namdarimoghaddam**

"Love in the time of Fentanyl" Screening & Panel

While attending the **West Kootenay Homelessness Response Summit 2023**, graduate student and KHRC Research Assistant **Emilie Isch**, was inspired to screen "Love in the time of Fentanyl" along with a panel discussion in Kelowna.

Registration details for this event can be found on page 3 - join us as Emilie hosts the panel discussion and screening of the documentary, with proceeds going to **KANDU**.



CONFERENCES AND PUBLICATIONS



Gibson, H., Evans, M., Woodmass, K., Laing, S., & Graham, J.R. (2023). Health care in supportive housing facilities. BC Medical Journal, 65(4), 116-121.

Graham, J. R. (April 2023). The Neighbour to Neighbour Project: Theological Insights for Motivating Homelessness Prevention. Canadian Society for Spirituality and Social Work Workshop. St Thomas University, Fredericton, NB.

Graham, J.R., Belanger, Y., Mauer, K, & Donnan M.E. (March 2023). Comparing the homelessness plan experiences of small Canadian cities: Insights for policy and practice. International Journal on Homelessness Conference. DePaul University, Chicago, IL.

Graham, J.R., Mallinson, S., Gladu, C., & Schiff, R. (June 2023). Sustaining innovations by building an inter-jurisdictional, tri-partite and community-engaged University coalition on applied and action-focused homelessness research. C2UExpo. Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, ON.



Saran Mallinson, seated in black, attends the C2UExpo



Laing, S. & Graham, J.R. (2023). Sense of community: Neighbour to neighbour pilot project. Presented at the International Journal on Homelessness Conference. DePaul University, Chicago, IL.

Stephanie Laing and John Graham present at the IJOH conference

STAY CONNECTED!



Follow us on social media for regular updates on our activities as well as other items in and around homelessness prevention and support!



Twitter:

@KelownaResearch



Instagram:

@kelownahomelessnessrc



LinkedIn:

Kelowna Homelessness Research Centre

If you have questions, would like to share ideas, or are interested in partnering with or joining our team, please email us at ask.khrc@ubc.ca - we look forward to connecting with you!

You can also check out our website for more information on our work. If you aren't already on our mailing list, **subscribe** now and you'll receive periodic updates on our activities, research opportunities, and events!



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