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Social injustice kills on a grand scale – health, homelessness and housing supply

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Learning lessons from the response to COVID-19:
safeguarding people experiencing homelessness –
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Social injustice

- In 2008 the World Health Organisation on the Social Determinants of Health (CSDH) published their final report. They “affirmed that social injustice was killing on a grand scale, with a toxic combination of ‘poor social policies and programmes, unfair economic arrangements, and bad politics’ being responsible for producing and reinforcing health inequalities”.
- Early on it was said that COVID 19 was a great leveller. While that may be true on some level, much more significantly it has been the great revealer of social inequalities and injustice.

Health, homelessness and housing supply



Supporting adults who are homeless to be safe(r)

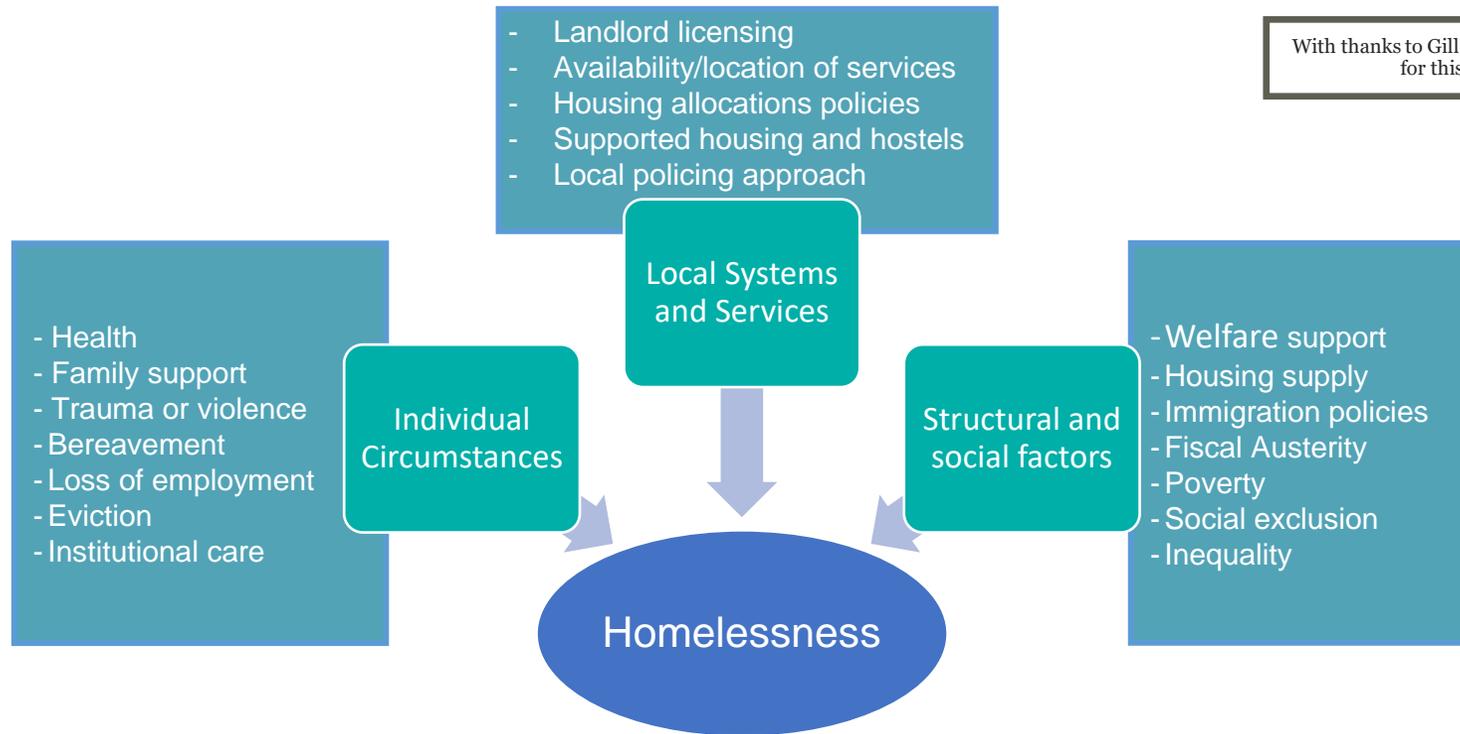
How do we help people who are homeless be safe(r)? A reminder

- Safe and secure housing
- Income (through benefits or employment)
- Health care
- Connections with others – friends and family who are supportive

Where adults are responsible for children, without this environmental and emotional secure base, the wellbeing and life chances of children are at risk.

All this sometimes seems scarcely possible to achieve in our current national policy context

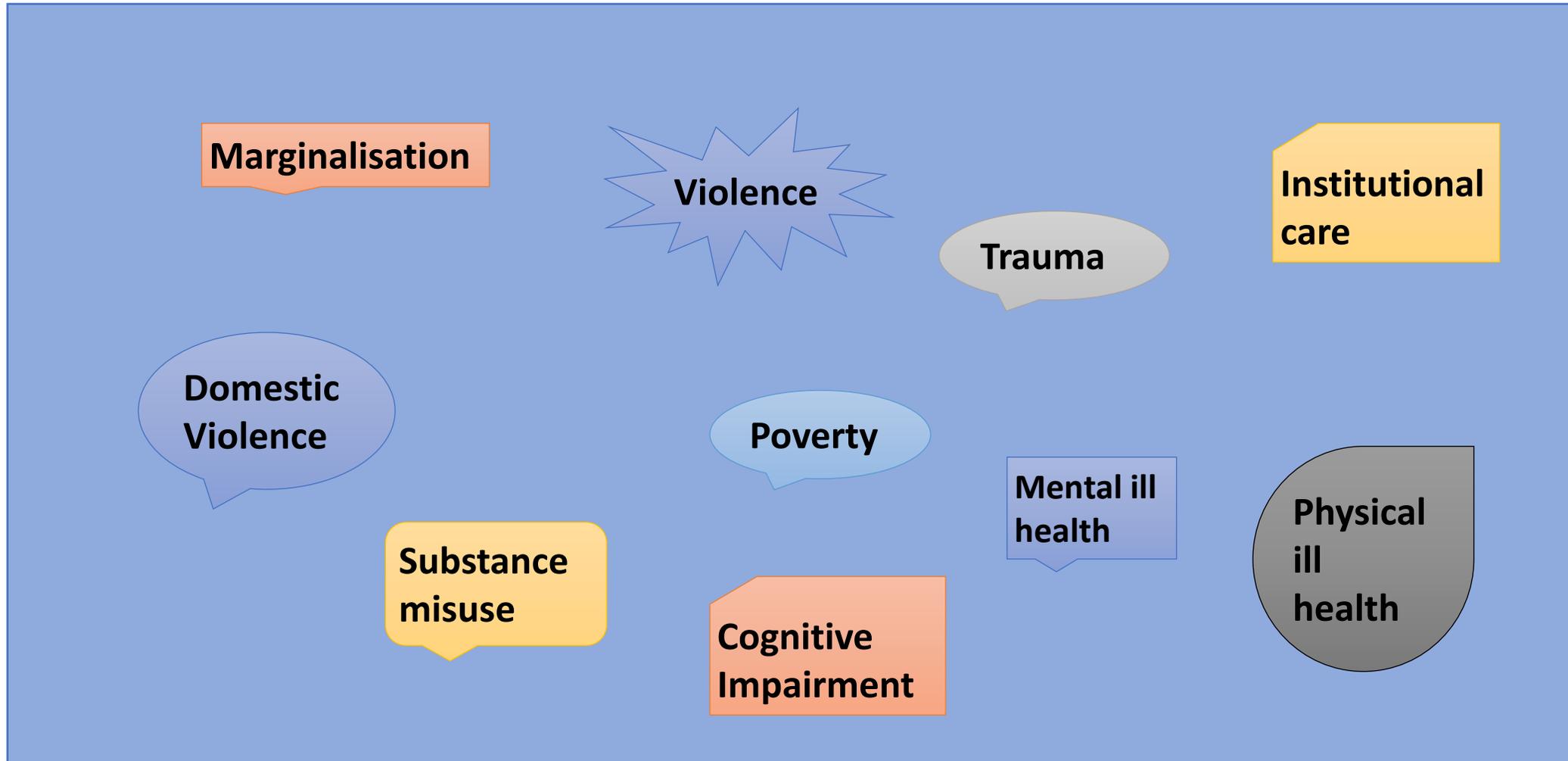
Those most at risk include people whose immigration status limit their access to these key protective factors



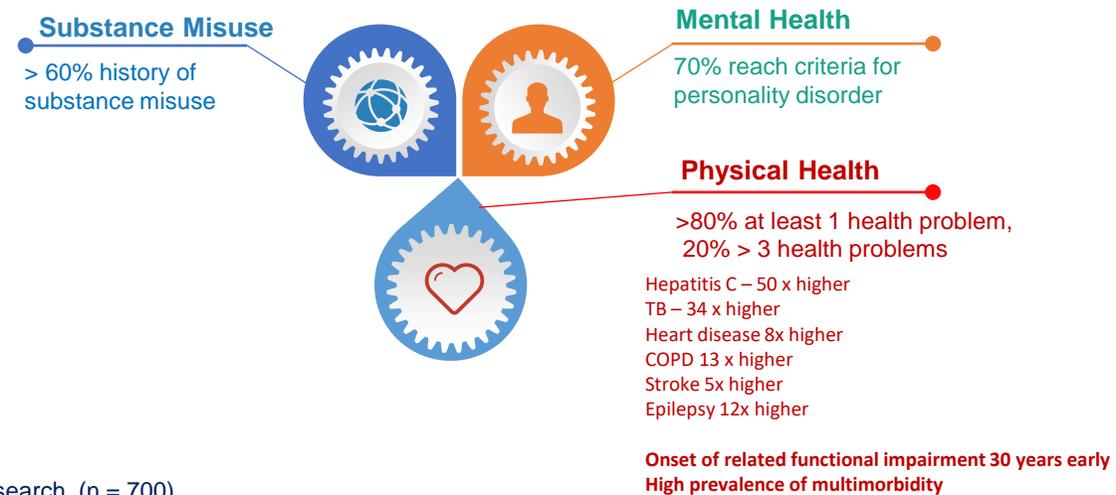
With thanks to Gill Taylor, Haringey, for this slide

Factors that Influence Homelessness

Multiple Exclusion Homelessness



Homelessness and health: vulnerable population, complex needs, tri-morbidity



St Mungos (2010), Homelessness, it makes you sick, Homeless Link Research (n = 700)

Suzanne Fitzpatrick et al (2010) Census survey multiple exclusion homelessness in the UK (n= 1268)

Story, A. (2013) Slopes and cliffs: comparative morbidity of housed and homeless people. The Lancet. Nov 29. Volume 382. Special issue. S1-S105

Rogans-Watson R (2020) Premature ageing and Frailty among people living in a homeless hostel in London (Pathway Conference 2020)

With thanks to Dr Caroline Shulman and the Healthy London Partnership for this slide

London homelessness facts and figures

44 years is the average age of death for those who are homeless

131 different nationalities recorded amongst rough sleepers in London, with half born outside the UK

10,726 people were seen sleeping rough in London in 2019/20

For every person sleeping rough, there are estimated to be x13 more 'hidden homeless' who are sofa surfing, living in cars or in other precarious circumstances

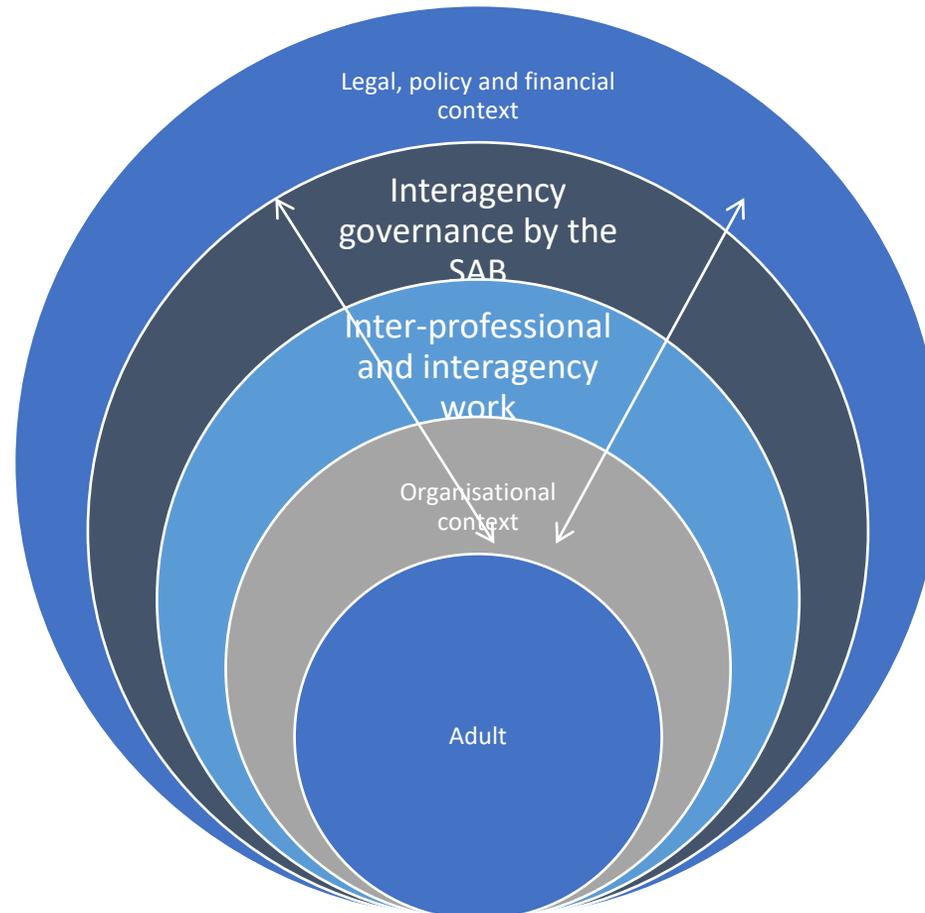
The number of rough sleepers in London has gone up 2.5 times in the last 10 years

People experiencing homelessness use hospital services 4x more than general population

Comprehensive picture of national homelessness available in the Crisis Homelessness Monitor - <https://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/homelessness-knowledge-hub/homelessness-monitor/>

The impact of homelessness on wellbeing and safety – what does research tell us?

Without a safe system with an alignment of checks and balances between the different layers of the system, people suffer as a result of homelessness



With thanks to Michael Preston-Shoot for this diagram

Case Study – Mr A

- Mr A was born in Pakistan, lived in Afghanistan, and moved to the UK in the 1970s. He worked as a bricklayer for a number of years. He is in his early 60s.
- He was evicted from his housing association flat for rent arrears.
- He is sleeping rough in an alley way on a suburban high street.
- He has a diagnosis of schizophrenia and displays both negative and positive symptoms.
- He has been discharged from mental health services due to lack of engagement.
- He drinks alcohol throughout the day.
- He is not registered with a GP.

Case study – Mr A – share ideas on the chat



- What issues, from the case study, indicate that Mr A is at high risk?

Case Study

- Mr A was found dead at his rough sleeping site in the morning after a bitterly cold, snowy night.
- On post-mortem examination Mr A was found to have died from Pulmonary Oedema and Pneumonia and Hypertensive heart and kidney disease. He died a month before his 64th birthday.
- The circumstances of his care and death were the subject of an Adult Safeguarding review (pre Care Act)

Resources

A comprehensive picture of homelessness available in the Crisis Homelessness Monitor which is updated yearly <https://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/homelessness-knowledge-hub/homelessness-monitor/>

HEE's All our Health – Homelessness module - <https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/all-our-health/> - open access e-learning module on the health issues experienced by people who are homeless

HEE's e-learning module on the Duty to Refer for frontline NHS staff <https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/tackling-homelessness/>

User experience briefings about being homeless during the pandemic are published regularly on <https://groundswell.org.uk/monitoring-covid-19/>

Lewer D, Braithwaite I, Bullock M, Eyre MT, White PJ, Story A, Hayward A. 2020. COVID-19 among people experiencing homelessness in England: a modelling study. Lancet Respiratory Medicine. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2213-2600\(20\)30396-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2213-2600(20)30396-9) [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanres/article/PIIS2213-2600\(20\)30396-9/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanres/article/PIIS2213-2600(20)30396-9/fulltext)

Adult Safeguarding and Homelessness: a briefing on positive practice – very comprehensive up-to-date document based on 4 national workshops

<https://www.local.gov.uk/adult-safeguarding-and-homelessness-briefing-positive-practice>

Voices of Stoke Toolkits for assessing adults who experience multiple exclusion homelessness

<https://www.voicesofstoke.org.uk/care-act-toolkit/>

<https://www.voicesofstoke.org.uk/2020/06/01/multiple-exclusion-homelessness-a-safeguarding-toolkit-for-practitioners/>

London Association of Directors of Social Services Appendix to the Multi Agency Procedures - <http://londonadass.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Appendix-Seven-Adult-Safeguarding-and-Homelessness.pdf>

King's College Safeguarding and Homelessness research programmes - <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/scwru/res/atoz>