

AGEING  
WELL

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talkaumatanga

# Hidden homelessness among older renters

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International research on 'first time' homelessness among older people

We looked at 108 interviews with older tenants, to find out whether homelessness is part of their renting experience

## Older people forced to sleep in car as housing crisis bites

Sara Meij · 17:00, Aug 09 2018



STUFF

# NZ definition of homelessness

- Statistics NZ measures ‘severe housing deprivation’
- Four categories representing homelessness:
  - without shelter
  - temporary accommodation
  - sharing accommodation
  - uninhabitable housing

# Official homelessness data (2013)

- Total (all ages) severely housing deprived = 40,658 (1% of total NZ population)
- Total severely housing deprived aged 55+ = 5,971 - almost 15% of severely housing deprived population
- People identifying as Pacific, Māori or Asian are over-represented in the homeless population

# Experiencing homelessness


- 19 of 108 reported one or more episodes of homelessness within the five years before their interview (17.5%)
- Age homelessness occurred:
  - 55-59 (3)
  - 60-64 years (8)
  - 65-69 (5)
  - 70+ (3)
- 11 women and 8 men
- Two had more than one stint of homelessness within the previous five years
- Six were homeless at the time of interview – they were also paying rent



# Types of homelessness

Type of homelessness	Men	Women	Total
<b>Without shelter</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicle</li> <li>• Shed</li> <li>• Garage</li> <li>• Sleepout</li> <li>• Rough sleeping</li> </ul>	4	4	8
<b>Temporary accommodation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camping ground</li> <li>• Emergency accom</li> </ul>	4	1	6
<b>Sharing accommodation</b>	2	2	4
<b>Uninhabitable housing</b>	0	2	2
<b>Non-residential building e.g. farm, commercial, industrial</b>	0	4	4

# Key Drivers of homelessness

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- Unaffordable rents
  - Tenancy termination

*It was very difficult to find something. I hesitated taking it because of the bath. But if I didn't take it, there was nothing. I was staying in a motel and needed to move out (woman, 76 years).*

*[Landlord] sold the house, he was in his 70s, and then the new people wanted to increase the rent by 66%. Trying to get a flatmate was one option, couldn't find anybody and couldn't afford to pay that myself (woman, 62 years).*

# Conclusions

- Most have had conventional housing histories and experience ‘first time’ homelessness in later life, usually due to a crisis or ‘shock’
- Layers of housing insecurity – unaffordable rents, sudden termination, poor condition and unsafe housing
- How can services help prevent hidden homelessness among older people?