Health Advocacy Committee BC Association of Social Workers

Discharge into Homelessness Survey Results 2019

acute care social workers responded to our province wide survey exploring outcomes for vulnerable, homeless people being discharged from hospital

of respondents had been involved in the discharge of homeless patients during the past 3 months



"Many come to the ER as their health needs are not being managed at the shelters or outdoors. They need to have secure housing to access some of the supports such as wound care"



involved with had either mental health conditions. addictions or concurrent disorders

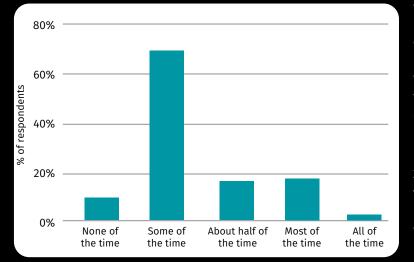
said that **most** of the homeless patients they were

said that **all** of the homeless patients they were involved with had concurrent disorders

"Without proper follow-up in a supportive setting, there (is a) high probability of a person coming back to the ER"



Portion of time that social worker's advocacy efforts resulted in a homeless patient being able to stay longer in hospital.



81% of respondents knew of homeless patients discharged and returned to hospital within 48 hours

80% of respondents were involved with patients who were discharged to locations where necessary health care services could not be provided

35% of respondents reported that the majority of the homeless patients they were involved with had mobility impairments



Respondents reported that **Discharge of** Homeless Patients is challenging due to:

- · The complexity of clients' conditions including concurrent disorders
- Systemic obstacles including:
 - · lack of shelters or affordable housing
 - a focus on medical rather than social conditions
 - a lack of coordination of care, and
 - pressure to discharge patients
- Social workers experiencing moral distress, stress and frustration, hopelessness, and a lack of support and resources

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Thank you to the Health Sciences Association for their assistance in distributing the survey link to hospital social workers and to the acute care social workers who responded. For more information about this project, please contact Fiona Lewis, Health Advocacy Committee Chair at bcasw@bcasw.org.