

Research Summary:

Cluster analysis of typology of people from CaLD backgrounds experiencing homelessness in WA



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The Journey to Home Project conducted a cluster analysis using homelessness data collected in Perth, Western Australia (WA) to identify heterogeneity among people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds experiencing homelessness in WA. The analysis was conducted utilising data sourced from Vulnerability Index Service Prioritisation Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) surveys conducted with 2,376 people between 2012-2020 to assess the health and social needs of people experiencing homelessness.

Data analysis was conducted on data from the participants from CaLD backgrounds (n=143)

The analysis identified a three cluster solution for the CaLD group in which cluster 1 included participants identified as most vulnerable to homelessness (n=50, 35.0%), cluster 2 including participants identified as moderately vulnerable (n=39, 27.3%) and cluster 3 consisting of less vulnerable participants (n=47, 32.9%).

Cluster 1 High Risk

- Highest mean total VI-SPDAT
- Medium- to long-term homelessness
- Receiving government support
- Problematic drug or alcohol use
- High mental illness rates
- Hospitalised against their will

Cluster 2 Medium Risk

- Moderate mean total VI-SPDAT
- Short- to medium-term homelessness
- Receiving government support
- Problematic drug or alcohol use
- Moderate mental illness rates

Cluster 3 Low Risk

- Lower mean total VI-SPDAT
- Short-term homelessness (significant proportion of sample experience long-term homelessness)
- Receiving government support
- Moderate problematic drug or alcohol use
- Moderate mental illness rates

So what?

The cluster analysis saw **an increase in risk of homelessness among people from CaLD backgrounds with increases in VI-SPDAT score, increase in problematic drug use and increases in signs of mental illness.** This analysis aimed to identify the heterogeneity amongst people with CaLD backgrounds experiencing homelessness and determine patterns and subgroups within CaLD populations to inform recommendations to increase housing stability and reduce social isolation.