

AT HOME PROJECT: Information for Referral Agencies

Thank you very much for your interest in the AT HOME PROJECT. This is a short overview of the project and the first steps for you and for your clients who might be interested in the study.

How to contact us:

If you have any questions, if you need more information or if you would like to make a referral please contact:

- Verena Strehlau, Field Office Coordinator
- **604-675-2380**
- **vstrehlau@brain.ubc.ca**
- Field office: 283 East 11th Ave., 2nd Fl. (between Main Street and Kingsway).

AT HOME PROJECT

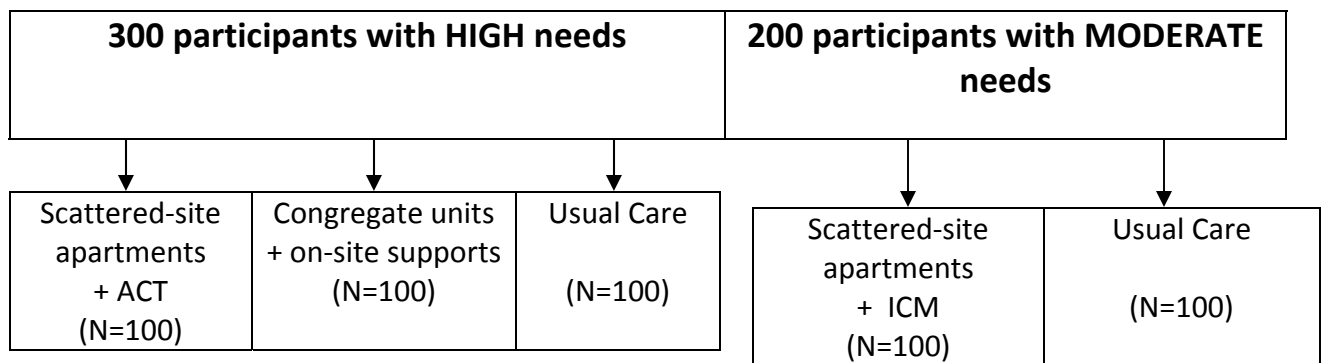
Purpose:

- To examine the benefits and costs of supported housing programs designed to help homeless people who have mental illness including addiction.
- To gain a better understanding of what this population needs in order to keep their housing and support themselves in the community
- To influence policy-makers across Canada to create more long-term, community-based housing and supports for people who are homeless and have mental illness.

Method:

We are comparing different models of supported housing for people with severe and moderate symptoms of mental illness against a group of people who do not get housing through our study.

In total, **500 participants** will be enrolled in the study between **October 2009** and **March 2011**.



Participants will be assigned to one of FOUR groups:

1. Independent apartments, throughout the community, with **Assertive Community Treatment (ACT)**
2. Independent scattered-site apartments with **Intensive Case Management (ICM)**
3. **Congregate** self-contained units with dedicated, on-site support at Howe & Helmcken [Note: The BOSMAN Residence will not be ready until May 2010. Until then, a transitional housing option is offered at Dunsmuir House, however, minimal supports will be available.]
4. **Usual Care:** Participants in the this group do not receive housing through our study but can, of course, get housing or support through any other available service.

All participants – whether they get housing or not through our study – will meet with our interviewers to participate in an interview every 3 months for two years to ask them questions about their living situation, health, service utilization and quality of life. They will receive a cash honorarium for their participation in all interviews.

FIRST STEPS...for referral agencies:

Check the eligibility criteria of your client who is interested in becoming a participant:

- Legal **adult** status (age 19 and older)
- **Absolutely homeless:** No fixed accommodation for more than 7 nights **OR**
- **Precariously housed:** Participant lives in an SRO or transitional housing and has been absolutely homeless for at least two 1-week episodes or one consecutive episode of at least 4 weeks in the past year
- **Severe Mental Illness** (chronic, persistent symptoms, history of hospitalization, etc.)
 - Formal diagnosis is not required
 - Substance dependence alone is not sufficient for inclusion, but is allowed if concurrent with other mental disorders

Contact the AT HOME Field Office at 604-675-2380 or vstrehlau@brain.ubc.ca

Call or email Verena, field office coordinator. She will help you determine whether your client is a good fit for the study and will set up a referral process that works for you.

The referral process is paper-free and we try to be flexible to make the referral process easy for you and for your clients who may be interested in participating. In our experience, it makes sense to have one or two staff members in your agency to be our contact person.

FIRST STEPS...for participants:

Get a referral to the Project through a referring agency

If a participant self-refers we will try to confirm that they are “absolutely homelessness” or “precariously housed”

The first step is a “Screener” to see if the participant is eligible for the study. It takes about 30 minutes and pays \$5. If the participant is eligible, we can continue or re-schedule an appointment for the first interview (called the “baseline”-interview), which takes about 90 minutes and pays \$30.

Good to know!

- **Not all** the participants will receive subsidized housing through the AT HOME study.
- Participation is voluntary (participants can leave the study at any time) and all the data collected are confidential.
- If participants receive housing, they must meet with a case worker once a week but there are no requirements for sobriety or engaging in treatment.

