

# **Parent and Staff experiences of a Nurse Practitioner led Community Intervention for Families Living in Housing Instability**

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## **Background**

The Australian Department of Health's Action Plan for Children and Young People states that 22% of all children in Australia, aged 0-14 years, live in housing instability. Exposure to housing instability in childhood is significantly linked to long term ill-health, lower academic achievement, increased poor physical and mental health, and increased risk of adult homelessness. Housing instability has created detrimental underservicing for children at a time when they are developmentally vulnerable.

## **Aim of the study**

One of the aims of this research was to capture the homeless service staff and parents experiences of a Nurse Practitioner (NP) led clinic embed in a homelessness service. The NP offered the parents attending the service a comprehensive health assessment for their child and an extended referral follow-up.

## **Methods**

Part of this mixed methods research involved in-depth interviews with parents and staff of the homeless service regarding their experiences of the NP led clinic and the extended referral follow-up services.

## **Results**

Interviews indicated there were multiple barriers to health services for children, these included 'time', 'not just homeless', 'unpredictable circumstances', and 'transport'. The themes and subthemes highlight the all-encompassing impact that housing instability/homelessness has on families and how these are addressed by the NP led intervention.

## **Conclusions and implications**

The embedding of a child focused nurse practitioner led health interventions in the community is imperative if we are to address the lifelong health impacts on children from disadvantaged populations living in housing instability.