



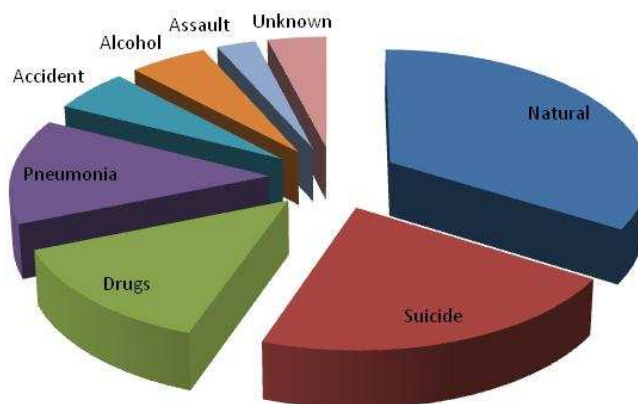
Why do homeless people die younger than their non-homeless peers?

David S Morrison

Director, West of Scotland Cancer Surveillance Unit
Glasgow's 15th Annual Homelessness Conference 2010
5th October 2010

Crisis, Still Dying for a Home, 1996

Average at death: 42 years



A new study on homeless people in Glasgow*

- All homeless applicants to Glasgow City Council in 2000.
- Age and sex matched random sample from the general population of NHS Greater Glasgow area.
- 5 year follow-up of all deaths and hospital admissions.

*Morrison DS. Homelessness as an independent risk factor for mortality: results from a retrospective cohort study. *International Journal of Epidemiology* 2009; 38(3):877-83.

About the participants

- 6323 homeless and 12625 non-homeless
- Two thirds men
- Average age 32 years

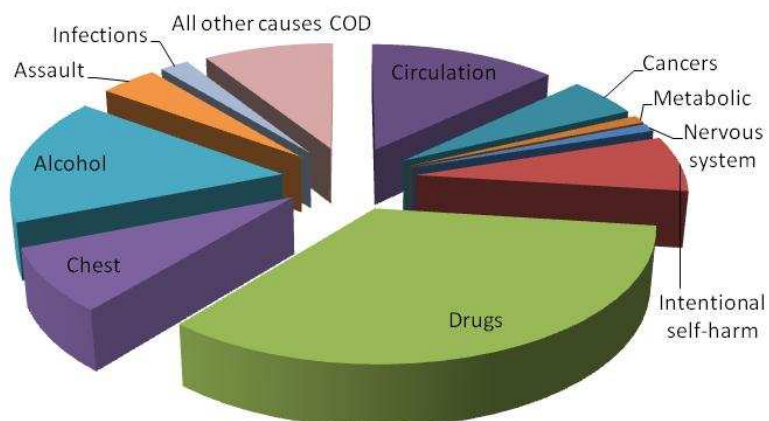
Deaths within 5 years

- 7% (1 in 14) homeless people died
- 2% (1 in 50) general population died

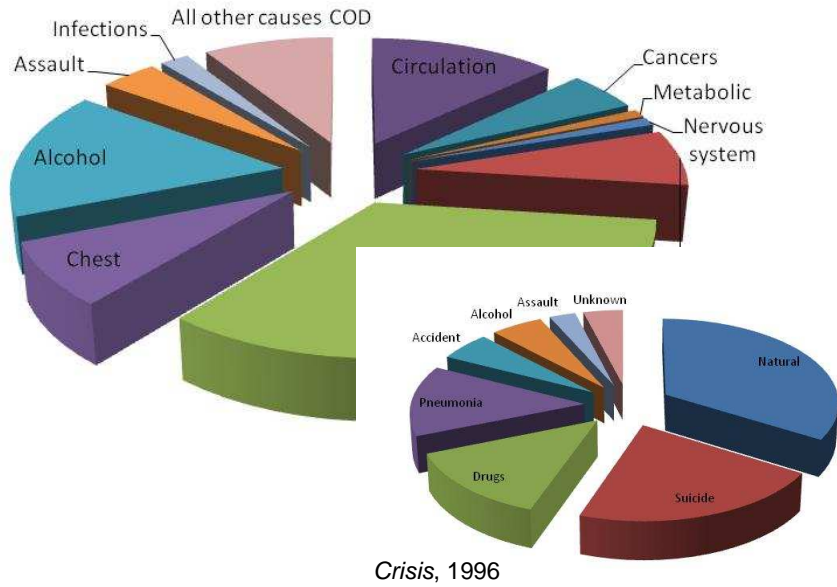
- Age at death: 41 in homeless, 53 in general population

Homeless people were four and a half times more likely to die

Causes of death in Glasgow homeless



Causes of death in Glasgow homeless



Cause of death	X greater risk in homeless
Drugs	20
Alcohol	5
Circulation	3
Chest	6
Intentional self-harm	8
Cancers	1
Assault	7
Infections	6
Metabolic	4
Nervous system	2
All other causes	5
ALL	5

**Do sick people become homeless or
does homelessness make people
sick?**

The extra risk of being homeless

Cause of death	Been in hospital for the problem	Extra risk of being homeless
Drugs	4	7
Alcohol	42	1
Circulation	6	2
Intentional self-harm	7	3
Chest	6	3
Assault	4	3
Infections	73	1
Nervous system	29	1

Conclusions

- Homeless in Glasgow die aged 41, their peers at 53
- Homeless 4½ times more likely to die
- Drugs, alcohol and circulation problems are ⅔ of all deaths
- Being homeless increases the risk of death from drugs by 7 times, trebles risk from chest conditions and doubles risk from circulatory conditions.
- Homelessness doesn't add further risk to death from alcohol.

What is your service doing to reduce deaths in homeless people?