Housing and health inequalities

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Housing and health

- Physical qualities
  - e.g.: temperature, damp, leaks, overcrowding, disrepair

- Psychosocial qualities
  - e.g.: affordability, security, autonomy, control
For example, the effect of UK housing benefit changes in the private rented sector on depressive symptoms.
Housing and health

Housing

Physical qualities
- e.g.: temperature, damp, leaks, overcrowding, disrepair

Psychosocial qualities
- e.g.: affordability, security, autonomy, control
For example

- How do housing characteristics relate to objective health?
- C-reactive protein
  - A marker of inflammation associated with infection or stress
  - Higher levels indicate worse health
C-reactive protein levels
But some relationships when controls are included:

- Tenure (private renting ↑)
- Building type (detached houses ↓)
- Housing cost burden (only for low income renters ↓)
Why is private renting worse?
It has the poorest quality
It is the least affordable
It is the least secure
Housing precariousness

- Quality
- Affordability
- Security
- Access to Services
Renters have higher precariousness in the UK.
But this is not true everywhere.
Individual housing circumstances are associated with health

- But research to date hasn’t explored the interrelationships between housing issues

- Must not ignore within tenure differences

- We need more data on housing
Thank you

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# The Housing Precariousness Measure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Cross-National Indicators from EU-SILC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affordability</td>
<td>• Burden of housing costs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>• Forced change in previous dwelling, or risk of forced change in current dwelling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality and facilities</td>
<td>• Presence of leaks and/ or damp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Presence of essential utilities - bath/shower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Presence of essential utilities - toilet</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ability to keep home warm in winter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ability to keep home cool in summer</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Overcrowding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access to essential services</td>
<td>• Access to Grocery services</td>
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<td>• Access to Banking services</td>
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<td>• Access to Postal services</td>
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<td>• Access to Public transport</td>
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<td>• Access to Health care</td>
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Housing and health

Affordability
- Stress
- Financial Strain
- Reduced disposable income
- Threat to ontological security

Higher costs associated with frequent moving

Unaffordable housing reduces resources for maintenance/repair

Unaffordable housing may be more expensive to maintain/heat

Poor quality housing is likely to be unsustainable

Insecure housing with high turnover may be less well maintained

Insecure housing with high turnover

Exposure to hazards
- Overcrowding
- Stigma/status
- Accident risk

Quality

Security
- Stress
- Threat to ontological security

Lower security where affordability is poor

Inaccessible housing is likely to be unsustainable

Insecure housing can affect contact with services, such as health care

Access to Services
- Access to health services
- Access to employment
- Access to food
- Access to education
- Access to other essential services

Relationship with Housing Provider
- Stress
- Dignity/status

Autonomy and control affected by the relationship with the housing provider

Autonomy to maintain home may affect quality

Autonomy to maintain home

Undermining sense of coherence

Ability to maintain a suitable home

Autonomy & Control

Scene relationships may allow for flexibility in payment at times of hardship, for example

Poor affordability may impact ability to maintain the home as desired

Access to Services

Institute for Social & Economic Research