



**Palliative Care and the  
Vulnerably Housed**

Who are we working with at

The Lighthouse

Searching

Addicted

People

Desp

Alone

# **What does The Lighthouse offer?**

**We have a clinic on site. There is limited palliative care. We have GP's and other health care professionals working out of The Lighthouse.**

**There is no full time medical person on staff.**

**We have two facilities. One is an emergency shelter. The second is short term housing for people wanting help to get settled into permanent housing.**

# Inside Intel

**Our community of people are not used to advocating for themselves. They are used to life happening to them.**

**They also expect bias toward them and specifically from the medical community... not you of course!**

**Most people will have no Power of Attorney so this should be addressed early in the process.**

# Inside Intel

**There is a strong likelihood that there is a medication issue, whether under or over-taking it.**

**Many people have lived their lives in chaos and have not had conversations about end-of-life care, or, about options available to them.**

**At the same time, many people are only facing recent trouble and are more able to advocate or have thought these things through.**

# Inside Intel

**Common medications you might see:**

- **anti-anxiety medications**
- **serotonin/reuptake inhibitors**
- **antipsychotic medications**
- **antidepressants**
- **opioid and non-opioid pain medications**
- **diabetic medication**
- **heart medication**

# **A Scientific Look**

**45% of those with Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) die from liver or heart disease, or cancer.**

**Palliative care is less likely to be available in either a clinic or a home setting for those with OUD.**

**On average, palliative care begins 35.8 days later for those who live with OUD.**

Jenny Lau, Mary M. Scott, Karl Everett, Tara Gomes, Peter Tanuseputro, Sheila Jennings, Rebecca Bagnarol, Camilla Zimmermann and Sarina R. Isenberg  
CMAJ April 29, 2024 196 (16) E547-E557; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1503/cmaj.231419>

# Medical Reality

**Hepatitis C = 28x's more likely**

**Heart Disease = 5x's more likely**

**Cancer = 4x's more likely**

**Life expectancy is about half...  
34-47 years**



# Specific Needs of Clients

**An invested advocate**

**Kindness**

**Over-explain information and next-steps. Workers may not all have the same information.**


**Be careful of acronyms and jargon.**

**Embrace uncomfortability**

## 3 Cautions

- 1. Assume everyone wants to live as badly as you do.**
- 2. There is a difference between bad choices and bad people.**
- 3. Make sure your belief in the dignity of life extends to all people.**

# **3 Immediate Needs from Care Providers That May not Cost a Dime**

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- 1. Be accessible**
  - 2. Be flexible**
  - 3. Be humanistic**



## **A word from Bruce**

**The one who lets his demons win**

**The one we think we're better than**

**A challenge great as I recall**

**Our orders said to love them all**



THE LIGHTHOUSE