

DÉTÉRIORATION ÉCONOMIQUE, RENOUVELLEMENT SOCIAL: CAUSES DE DÉTRESSE

Conseils de villes priés de protéger la santé mentale des résidents

MONTRÉAL (24 juillet 2014) – Une nouvelle étude canadienne sur les effets environnementaux des quartiers urbains sur la santé mentale démontre deux tendances qui sont causes de détresse psychologique : à la fois, la détérioration économique et le renouvellement social, provoquent une hausse de détresse psychologique parmi les résidents à long terme.

Pendant deux ans, une équipe de chercheurs menée par Dr. Norbert Schmitz de l'Université McGill a étudié des données de l'Enquête nationale de santé de la population canadienne ainsi que des données du recensement canadien pour estimer les effets psychologique des changements urbains. L'équipe de Dr. Schmitz a observé que certaines transformations socioéconomiques—surtout les processus de détérioration économique et le renouvellement social rapide auprès des quartiers—causent des troubles en santé mentale parmi les résidents urbains.

La recherche actuelle suggère que la détérioration de conditions socioéconomiques peut augmenter le niveau de stress chez les résidents, et que l'arrivée de nouveaux résidents affaiblis le tissu social des quartiers. Ce sont les liens sociaux qui souvent protègent la santé mentale des résidents.

Il est recommandé que les conseils de ville à travers le Canada évaluent les besoins psychologiques de leurs résidents, et promeuvent le développement de ressources sociales pour protéger la santé mentale de leurs citoyens.

POUR DIFFUSION IMMÉDIATE

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URBAN DETERIORATION, SOCIAL RENEWAL CAUSING DISTRESS

Borough councils in Canadian cities urged to protect residents

MONTREAL (July 24, 2014) – A first-ever study of neighbourhood change across Canadian cities shows two alarming patterns that are causing distress among urban residents: both economic deterioration and social renewal are leading to higher distress levels among long-term residents.

Over the past two years, a McGill University research team headed by Dr. Norbert Schmitz at the Douglas Hospital Research Center in Montreal worked with Canadian neighbourhood data and health data to assess whether changes in neighbourhood environments affect the mental health of Canadians. This novel question had never been examined using Canadian data. It is particularly relevant given that over the past 20 years, income segregation has been growing in Canadian urban centers. Dr. Schmitz's team observes that neighbourhood social and economic changes are causing mental health issues among urban residents.

Long-term residents living in neighborhoods that are facing economic deterioration and social renewal are reporting elevated symptoms of anxiety and depression. It is hypothesized that economic deterioration restricts the formation of protective support networks, and decreases residents' access to services and resources. Similarly, the influx of less socially marginalized residents is making existing community social networks unstable. Residents rely on these networks for psychological support.

Borough councils of low-income neighbourhoods in Canada are encouraged to assess the mental health needs of their long-term residents and promote social resources and health initiatives to prevent distress.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Winter 2014 Internship

In 2014 the IHSP welcomed ten McGill students from across the University for a 14-week Internship. Training sessions focused on communicating research findings to the media or general public, and gaining insight into different disciplinary approaches. In addition to in-depth research projects carried out in collaboration with faculty and staff, interns devoted ten to fifteen hours to short policy projects on a topic of their choice. Students were asked to frame an issue, find at least two points of supporting evidence and develop rudimentary policy recommendations. The above document reflects the short timeframe given to students to complete this task, and may not be a polished product.

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