

2015 Toasty Toes Backgrounder & Fact Sheet

Homelessness & Foot Health

- There are 10,627 homeless individuals receiving housing and supports from the Government of Alberta.¹
- Socks are the most requested, yet least donated item to Alberta shelters.
- For daily use, the Alberta government provides 3,500 emergency shelter spaces in 30 facilities across Alberta.²
- Homeless individuals without access to (clean, dry) socks and shoes risk foot injuries and disorders, such as sores/blisters, frostbite and skin infections,³ as well as onychomycosis (fungal nail infection), tinea pedis (Athlete's foot), corns and callouses, and immersion foot (trench foot). Recovery is often impeded by an inability to get adequate rest and medicine; many do not have insurance benefits and cannot afford to fill prescriptions.⁴

Chiropractic care

- Chiropractic is a treatment for back and neck pain, headaches, motor vehicle accident injuries, sports and workplace injuries, strains and sprains and restricted range of motion.
- More than half of Albertans have been treated by a chiropractor.⁵
- Almost one million Albertans visit a chiropractor each year.
- Chiropractors receive excellent patient satisfaction ratings for treatment of back and neck pain.⁶
- Alberta has the highest chiropractic utilization rate in North America.

Doctors of Chiropractic (Chiropractors)

- There are currently 1,036 chiropractors in Alberta.
- Chiropractors diagnose, treat and help prevent musculoskeletal (bones, muscles, cartilage, tendons, joints and connective tissues) disorders and the effect they have on the nervous system.
- Chiropractors are trained to recommend rehabilitative exercises, and offer nutritional and general health and wellness counseling.
- Chiropractors support a multidisciplinary approach to patient care and refer patients to other health care providers when appropriate.

Alberta College and Association of Chiropractors (ACAC)

The ACAC regulates the chiropractic profession in Alberta under the Health Professions Act and is committed to its mandate of protecting the public, ensuring accountability and improving Albertans' health and well-being.

¹ Alberta Human Services. (2014, December 31). *Alberta Statistics on Homelessness*. Retrieved from Government of Alberta: <http://humanservices.alberta.ca/homelessness/16052.html>

² Alberta Human Services. (2015, August 27). *Find a Shelter*. Retrieved from Government of Alberta: <http://humanservices.alberta.ca/homelessness/14633.html>

³ Carpenter, D. (2007, June). *On the Front Lines: A Case of Trench Foot in a Homeless Woman*. Retrieved from National Health Care for the Homeless Council: <http://www.nhchc.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/CaseReportTrenchFoot062707.pdf>

⁴ Hwang, S. W. (2001, January 23). *Homelessness and health*. Retrieved from National Center for Biotechnology Information: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC80688/>

⁵ Ipsos Reid. (2014). *ACAC 2014 Market Assessment*. Alberta.

⁶ Health Quality Council of Alberta. (2006). *Satisfaction With Health Care Services: A Survey of Albertans*. Alberta: Health Quality Council of Alberta.