

# The Unhoused with Serious Mental Illness: Life vs. Liberty

Charles Scott, MD

## Level

Intermediate

## Room

## Track

Clinical

## CE

CPA/BBS/CJER

## Bio

**Charles Scott, MD** is Chief, Division of Psychiatry and the Law, Forensic Psychiatry Fellowship Training Director and Professor of Clinical Psychiatry at the University of California, Davis Medical Center in Sacramento, California. He is Board Certified in General Psychiatry, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and has added qualifications in Forensic Psychiatry and Addiction Psychiatry. Charles is a Past-President of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law (AAPL) and is also Past-President of the Association of Directors of Forensic Psychiatry Fellowships. He has served as a member of the AAPL national task force to develop guidelines for the evaluation of criminal responsibility and competency to stand trial. Charles is one of four national AAPL Forensic Psychiatry Review Course Faculty instructors and in 2008 received the AAPL award as the most outstanding forensic psychiatry fellowship program instructor in the United States.

Charles has served as a forensic psychiatric consultant to jails, prisons, maximum security forensic inpatient units, California Department of State Hospitals and as a consultant to the National Football League (NFL) providing training on violence risk assessment for NFL counselors. He has performed suitability evaluations for NASA's Astronaut Selection Board. His academic subspecialty is child and adolescent forensic psychiatry. Charles has authored book chapters on juvenile violence, mental health law and co-authored chapters on child psychiatry and the assessment of dangerousness. He has served as editor or co-editor for numerous books and is co-editor of the Third Edition of Principles and Practice of Forensic Psychiatry.

His research interests include the relationship of substance use to aggression among criminal defendants, on the quality of forensic evaluations of criminal responsibility, child witness testimony, malingering and assessment of posttraumatic stress disorder. He lectures nationally on the topics of malingering, violence risk assessment, juvenile violence, substance use and violence, the assessment of sex offenders, correctional psychiatry, DSM-5 and the law and malpractice issues in mental health.

## Narrative

This presentation provides an overview of individuals with schizophrenia who become unhoused and explores current approaches to managing this severe illness in those who often do not want care or believe they need it. The combination of having a psychotic illness while being unaware of the illness makes interventions for unhoused individuals with schizophrenia particularly challenging. This review will examine the available research evidence on the effectiveness of the Housing First model and Harm Reduction Approach in reducing psychotic symptoms among individuals with schizophrenia. As one walks down the street of a major urban city, seeing a disheveled and often half naked human screaming in agony at voices that don't exist and running in fear from unfounded foes, society is faced with an obvious moral question: Is this

the best we can do for those most in need? The presentation notes that we can and must do better with suggestions for saving life while respecting liberty of those who deserve our help.

### **Learning Objectives**

1. Identify two different definitions of homelessness
2. Assess the relationship of schizophrenia to homelessness
3. Differentiate the Continuum of Care model from the Housing First model
4. Assess the research on Harm Reduction outcomes for unhoused individuals with schizophrenia
5. Describe three evidence-based approaches to help improve outcomes for unhoused individuals with schizophrenia