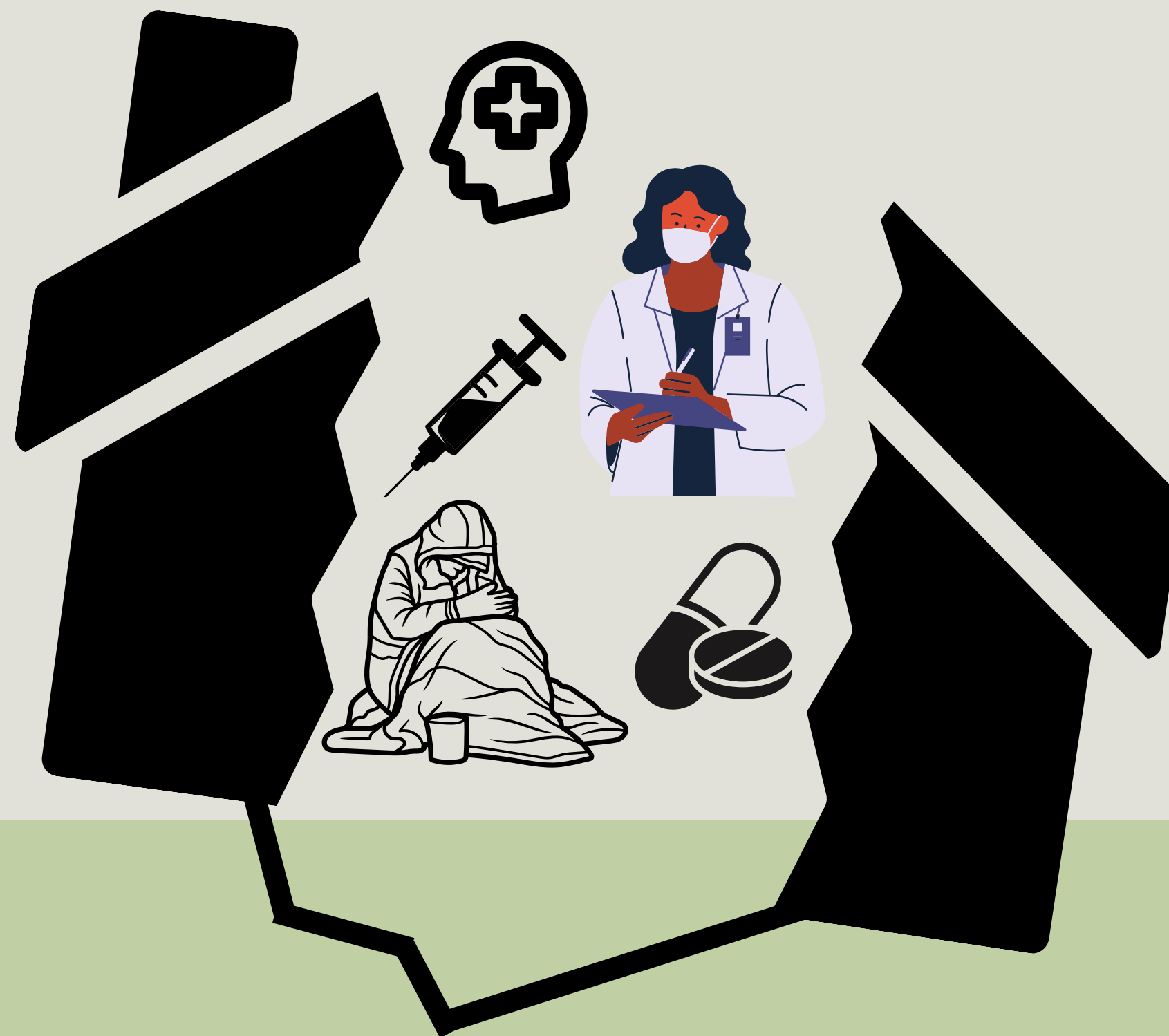


ADDICTION IN PERSONS WITHOUT HOUSING

A systematic analysis of the disproportionate substance abuse rates experienced by People without housing in Vancouver, British Columbia



In 2021, there were **235,000 persons without housing** in Canada. This population is growing at the same rate as the general population

60% of Persons without housing in Vancouver **experience addiction**

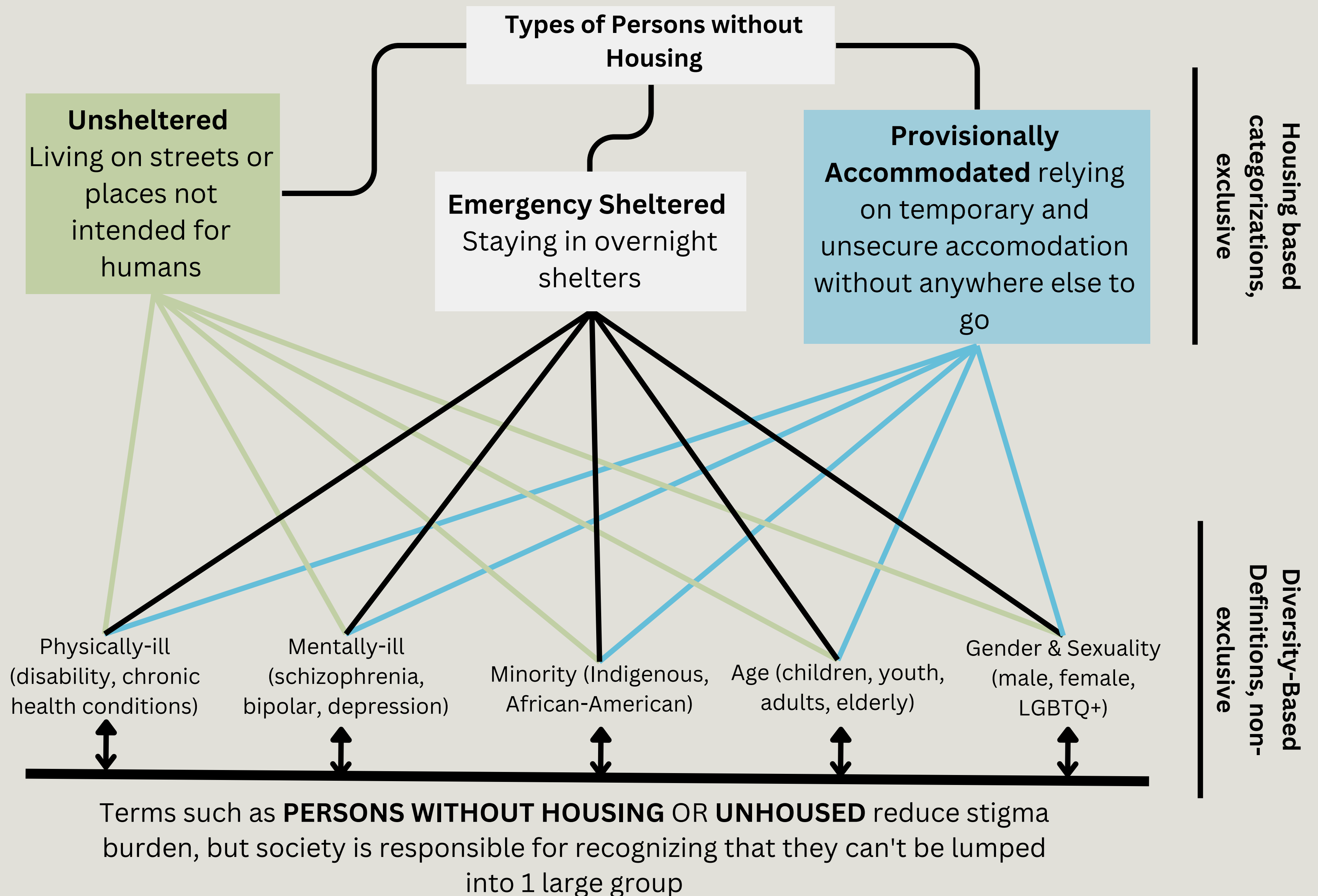
They experience **disproportionately poor health** with the city needing to invest up to **\$55,000/person**

100% of Vancouver Downtown Eastside residents report being **negatively affected** by drug use of people around them

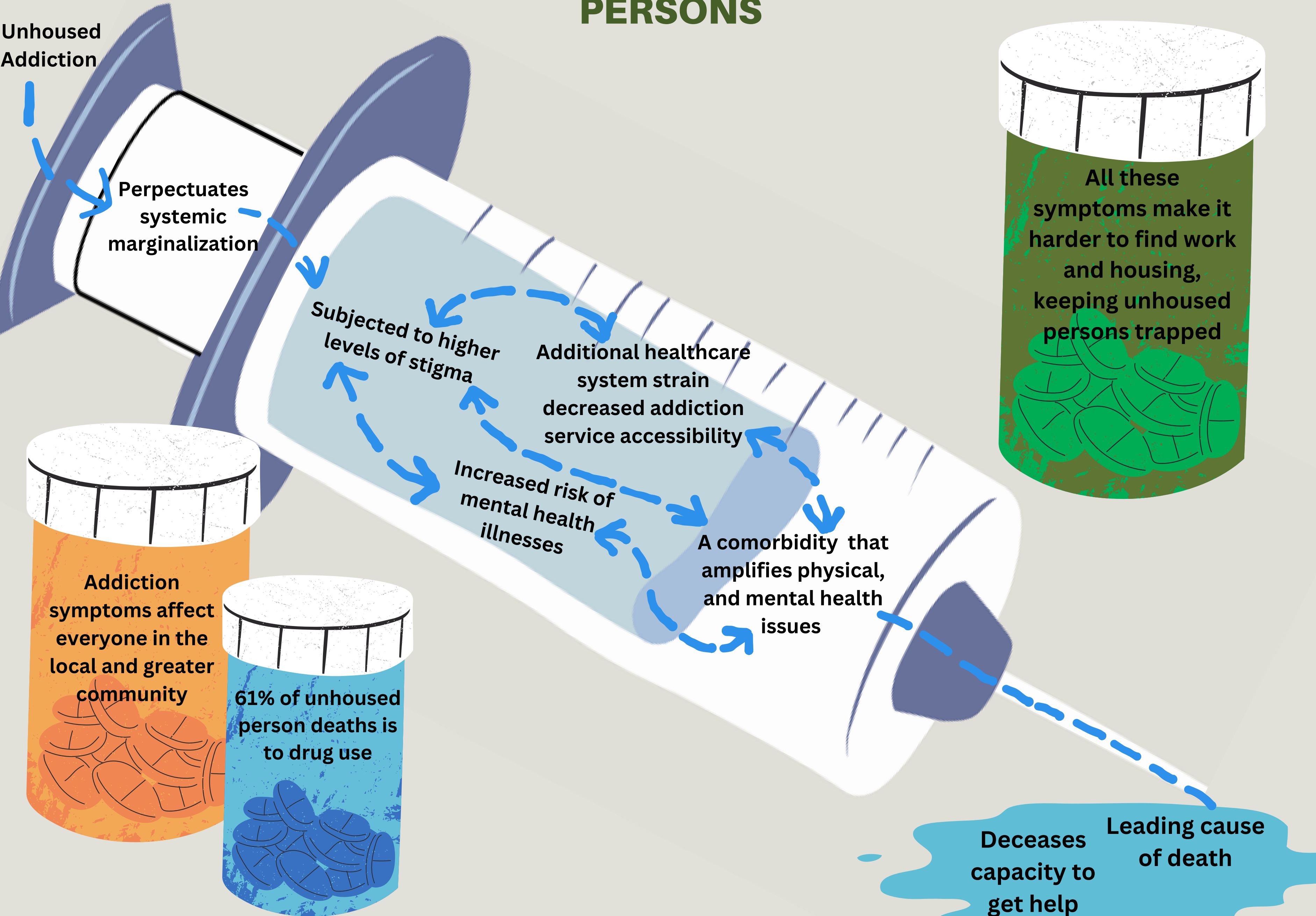


HOMELESSNESS AS A MONOLITHIC TERM

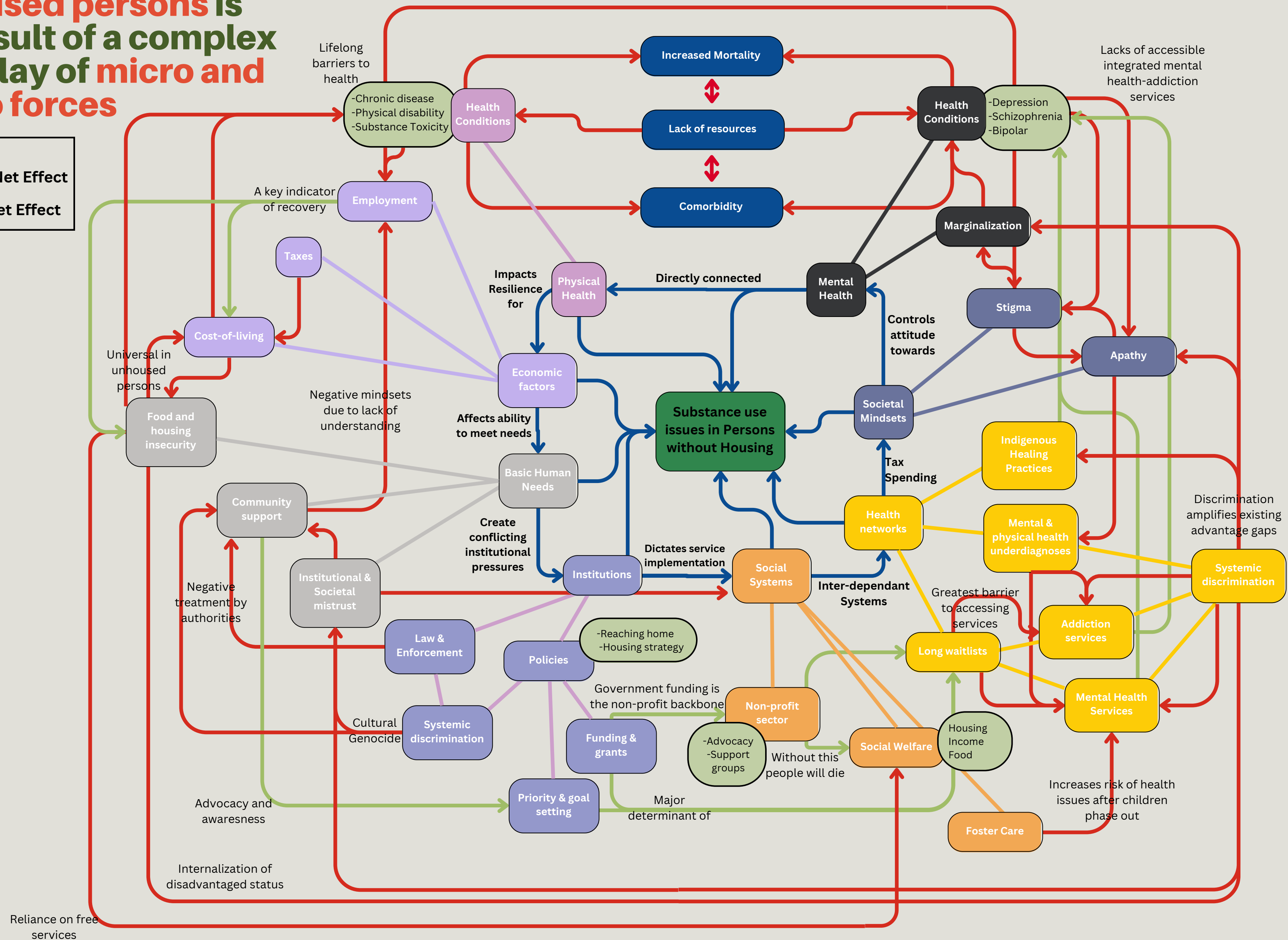
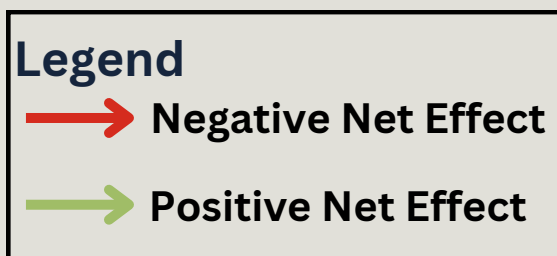
Homelessness is an outdated **monolithic term**, oversimplifying the diversity of **unhoused populations** and carries connotations **perpetuating societal stigma**



SYMPTOMS OF ADDICTION IN UNHOUSED PERSONS

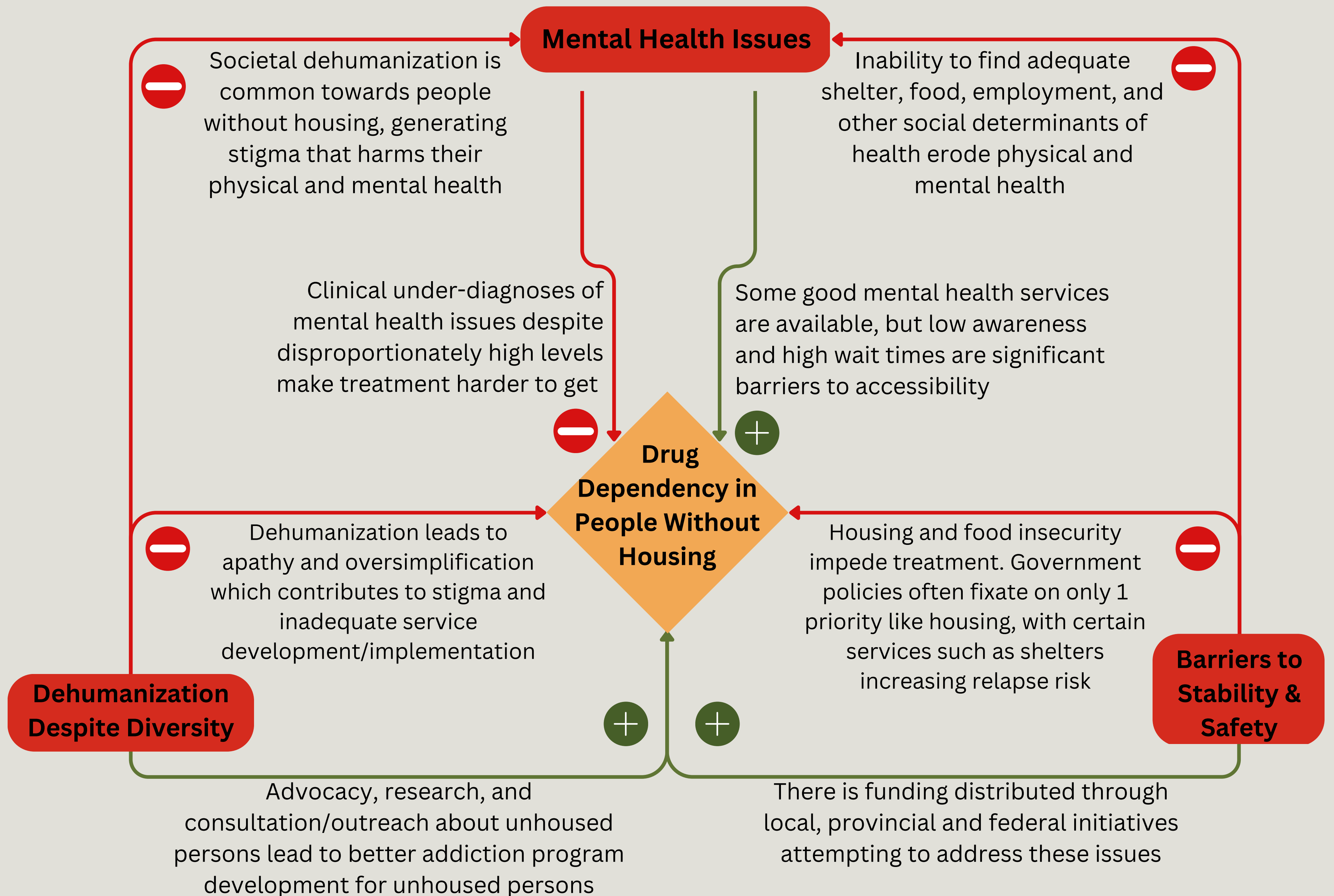


**Substance use in
unhoused persons is
the result of a complex
interplay of micro and
macro forces**

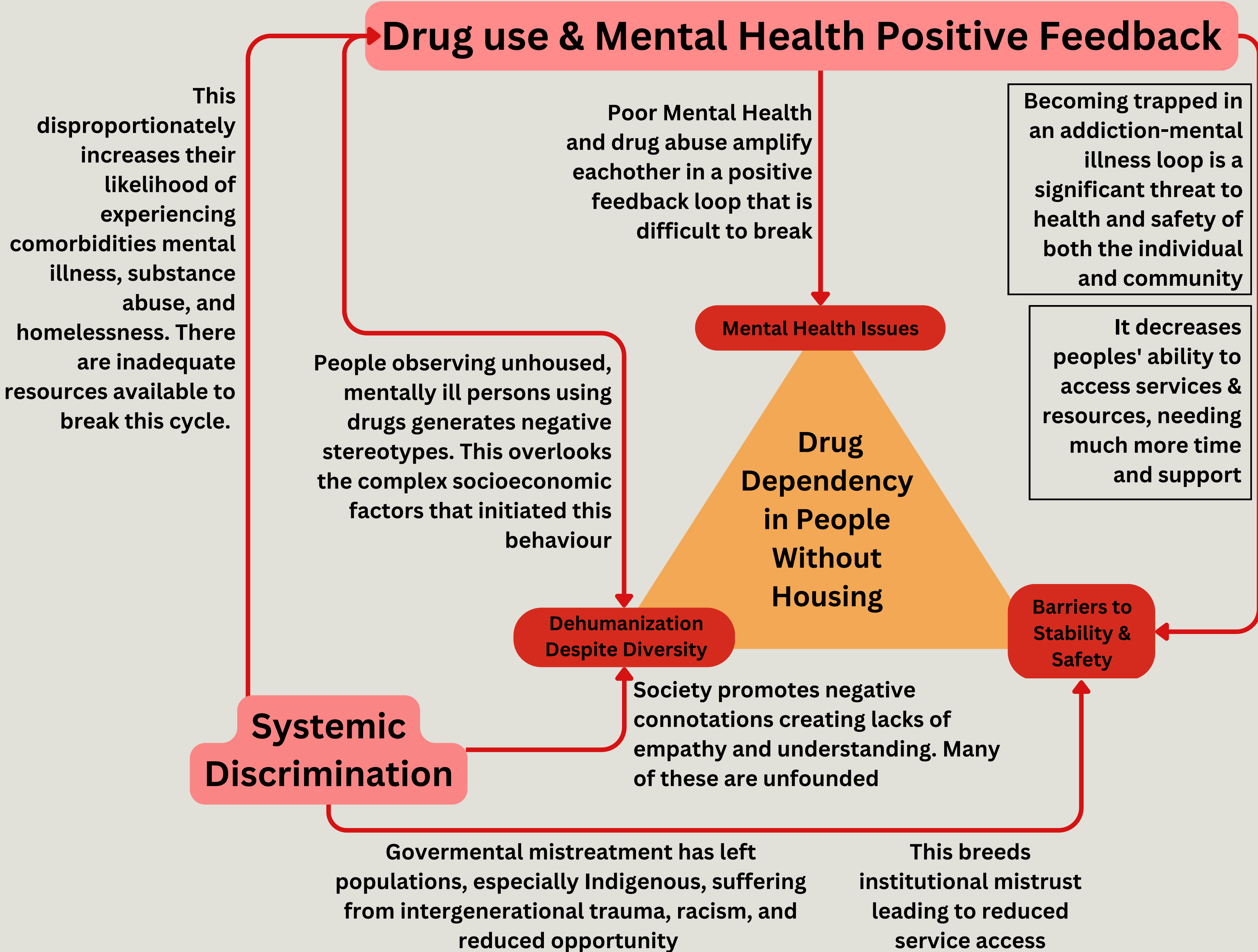


Mental health and Governments have the greatest impacts

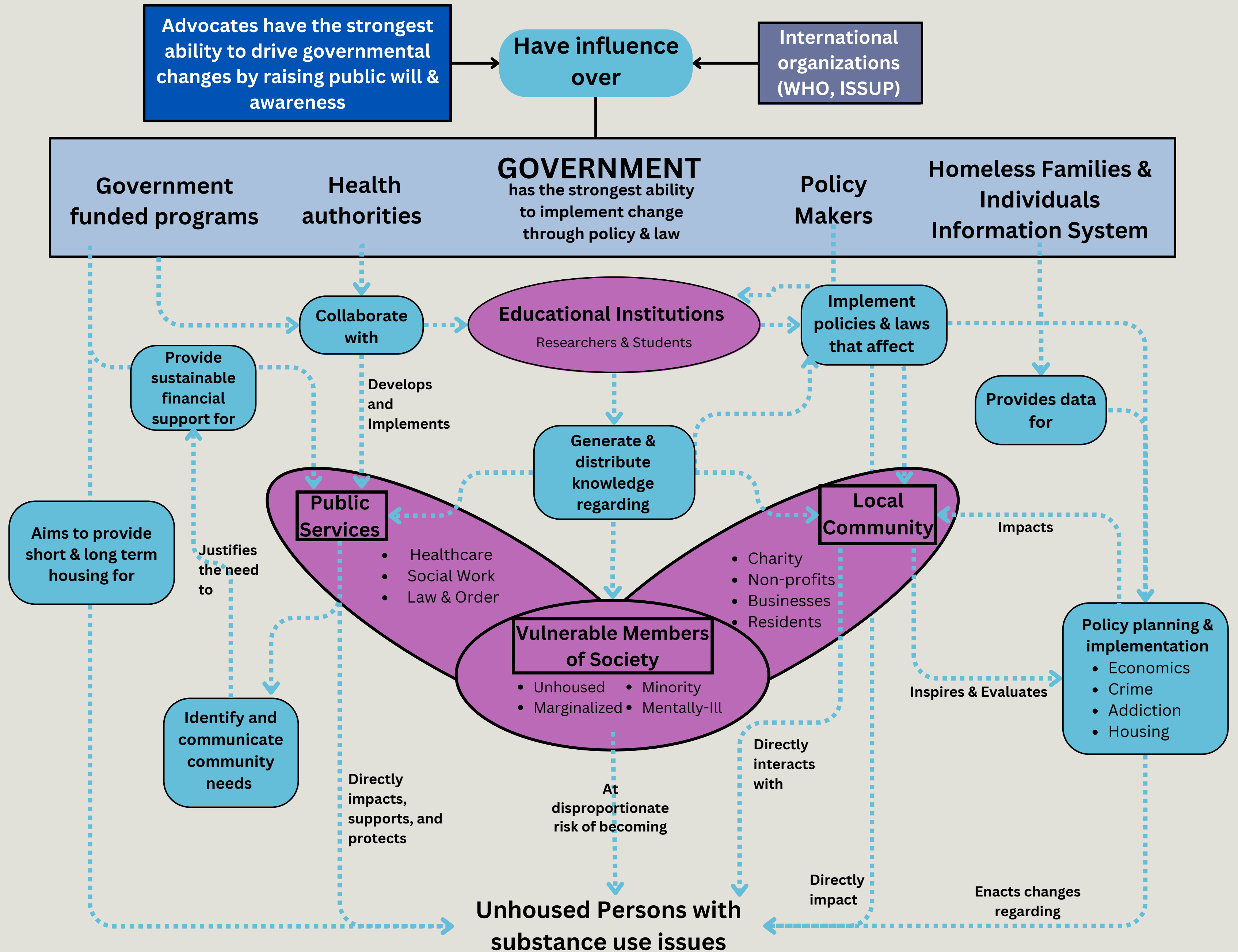
INVESTIGATING THE **KEY ROOT CAUSES**



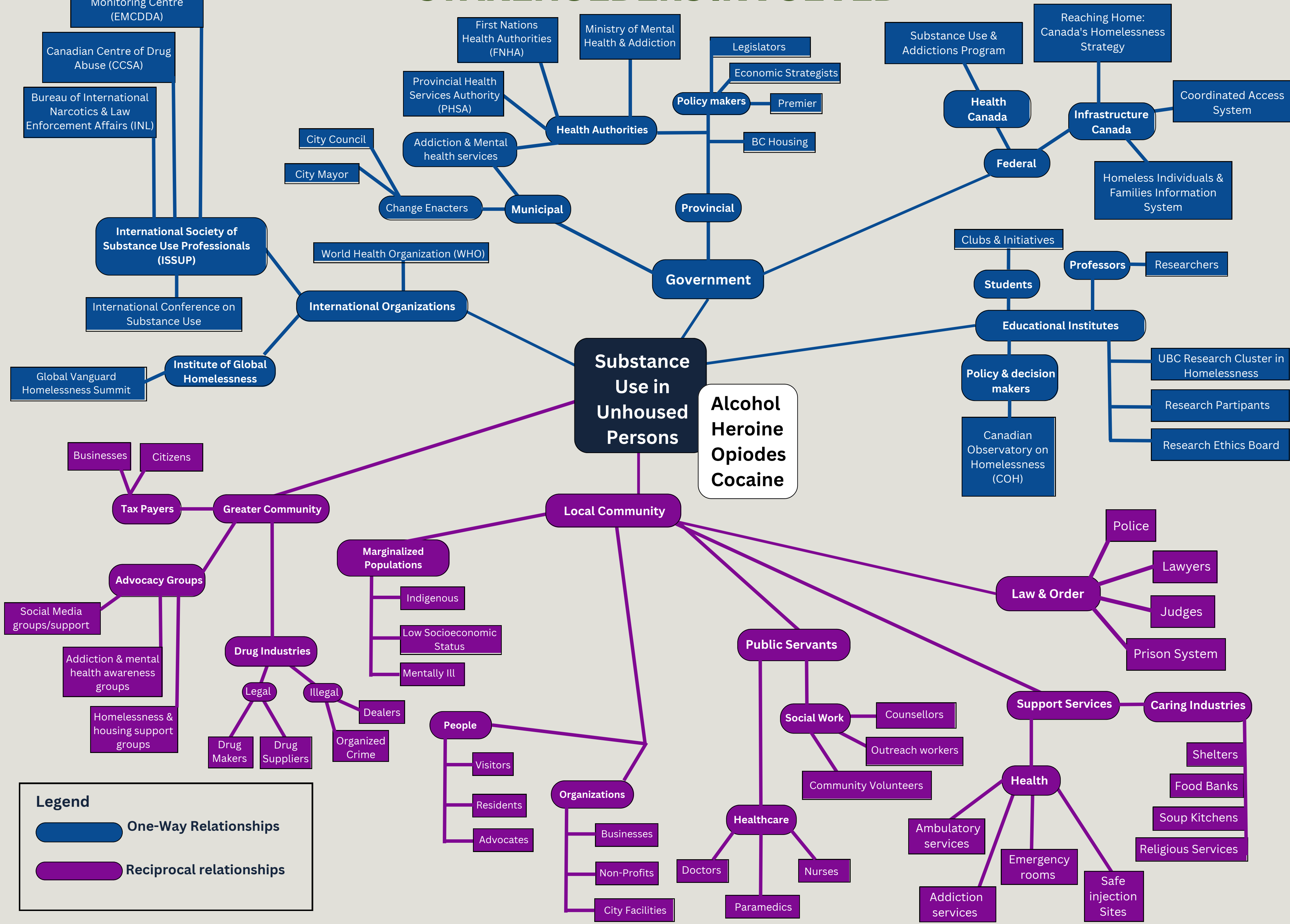
WHAT IS HOLDING THE STATUS QUO



HOW ARE STAKEHOLDERS CONNECTED



STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED



SOLUTIONS ACROSS SOCIETY

- Positive Impact on Addressing Addiction
- Neutral Impact on Addressing Addiction
- Negative Impact on Addressing Addiction



International Strategies

The Netherlands uses a decentralized continuum of care model. Municipalities have primarily adopted a "**Continuum of Care**" model where persons without housing must improve their health first before they **can move up the "housing ladder"**. This has led to a 12-19% decreases in common drug dependences



National Strategies

Reaching Home is Canada's first federal Strategy for homelessness, overprioritizing housing. Direct funding for addiction or mental health services is not available

Coordinated Access System & Homeless Individuals & Families Information System collect and provide homelessness data to inform policy making. Implementation has been slow due to leadership uncertainties



Provincial Strategies

Housing First Initiatives focus on supplying stable housing. These can lower substance rates but don't address other root causes such as mental health illnesses

Safe injection sites provide clean needles and health professionals. This decreases mortality and healthcare system strain

Local Strategies



Complex Care Housing provides levels of support exceeding current housing programs. Facilities come equipped with specialized staff and resources for health, mental health, and substance-use challenges

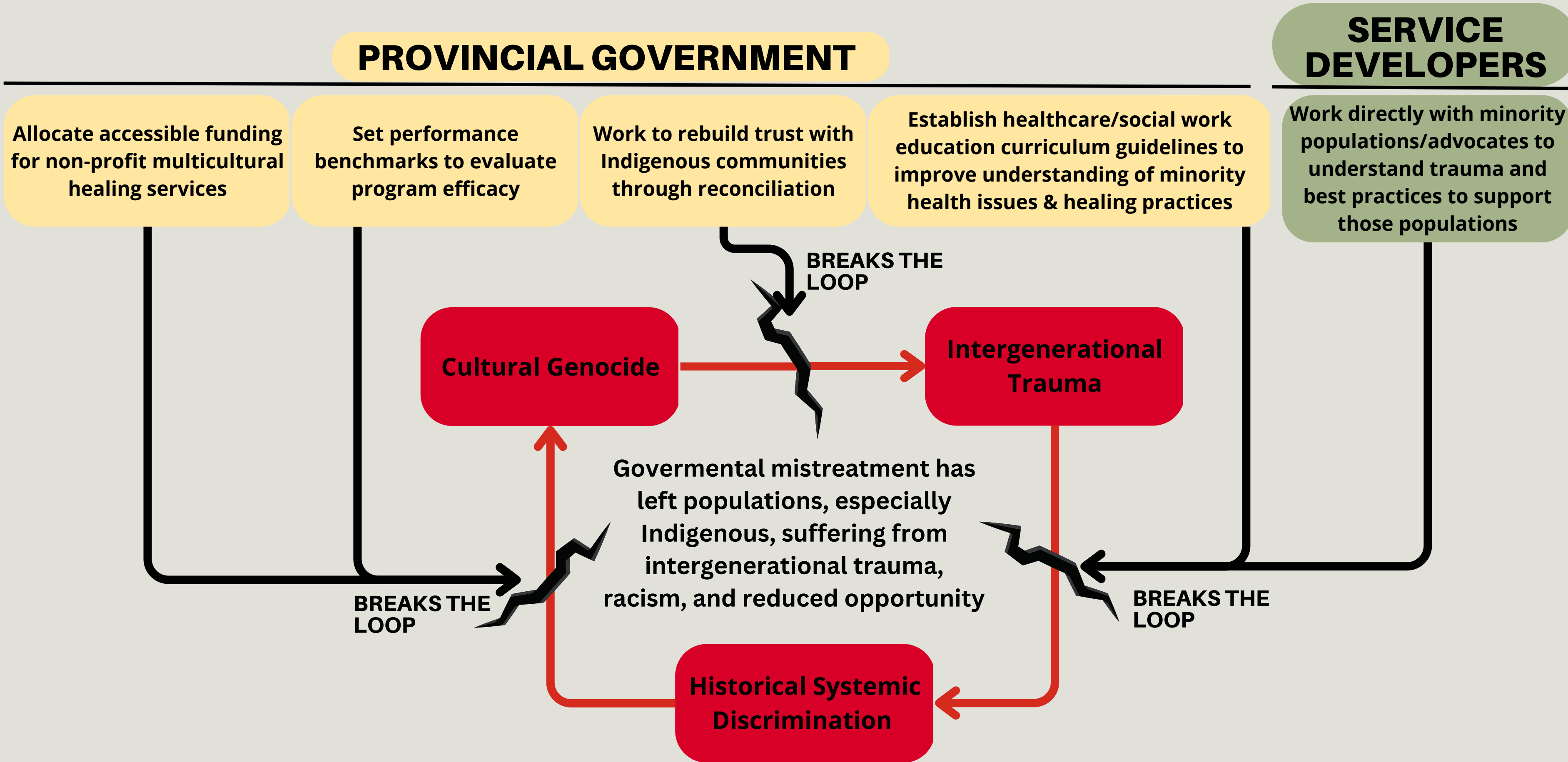
Decriminalization of drugs for personal use reduces stigma and barriers to accessing treatment, employment and housing

Psychiatric Deinstitutionalization closed mental health facilities leaving many patient on their own. This directly increased rates of homelessness and addiction

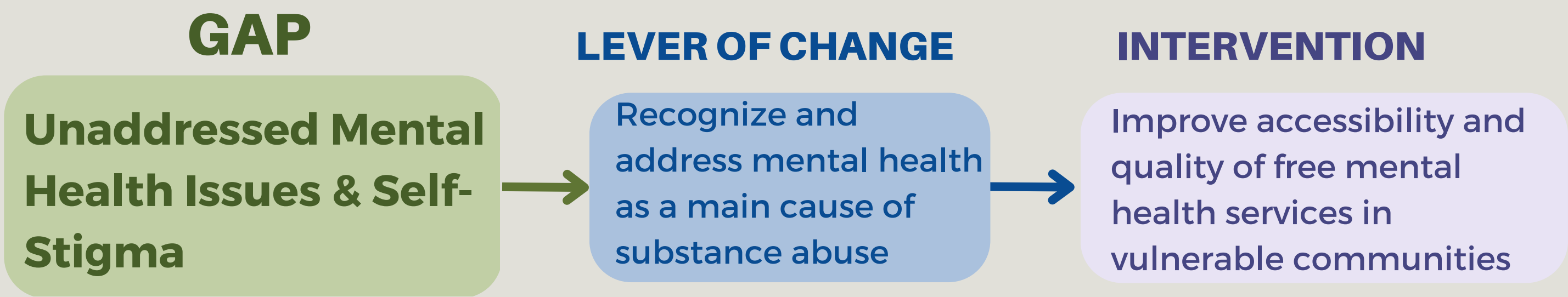
GAPS AND LEVERS



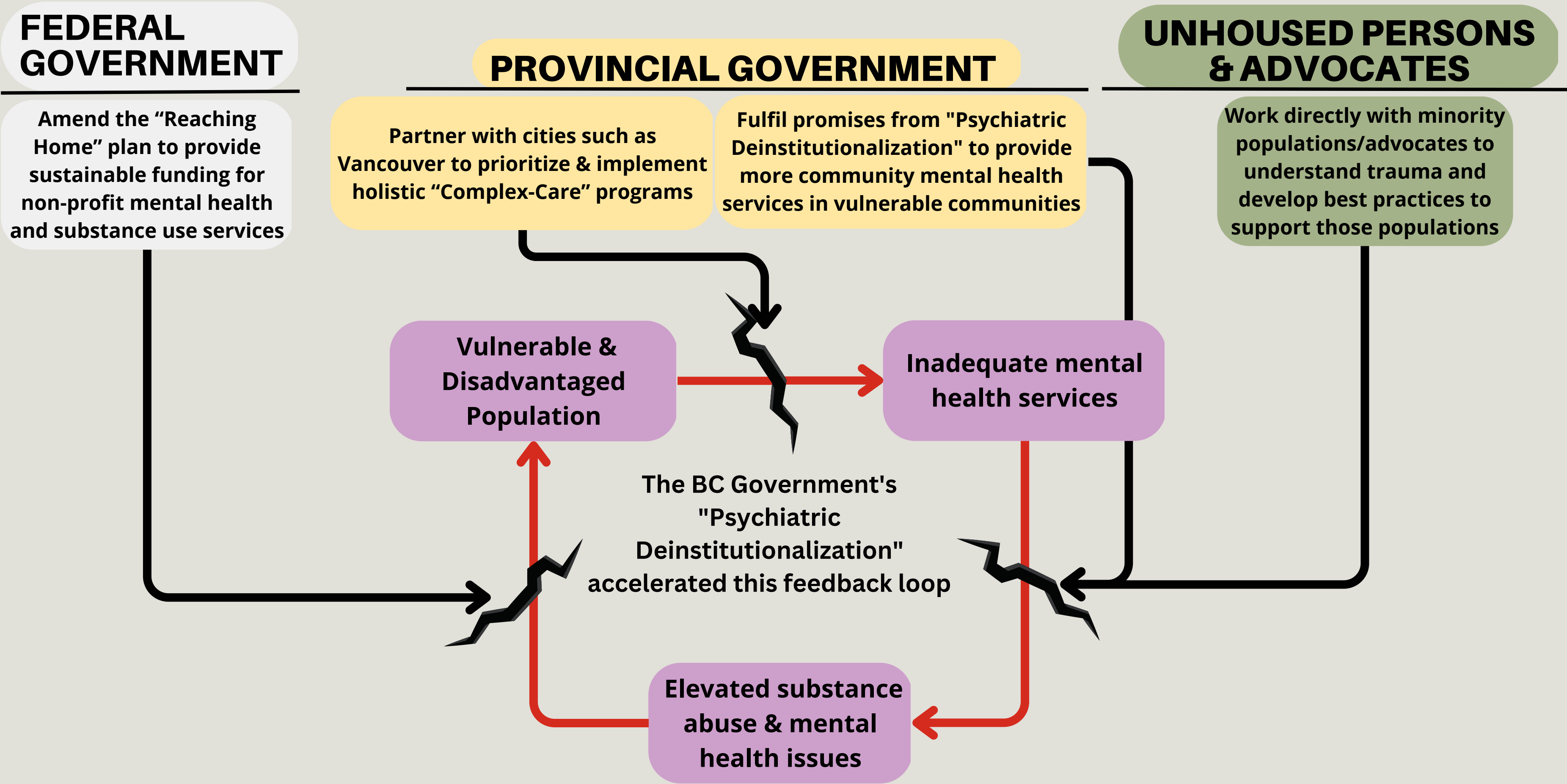
STAKEHOLDER ACTIONS



GAPS AND LEVERS



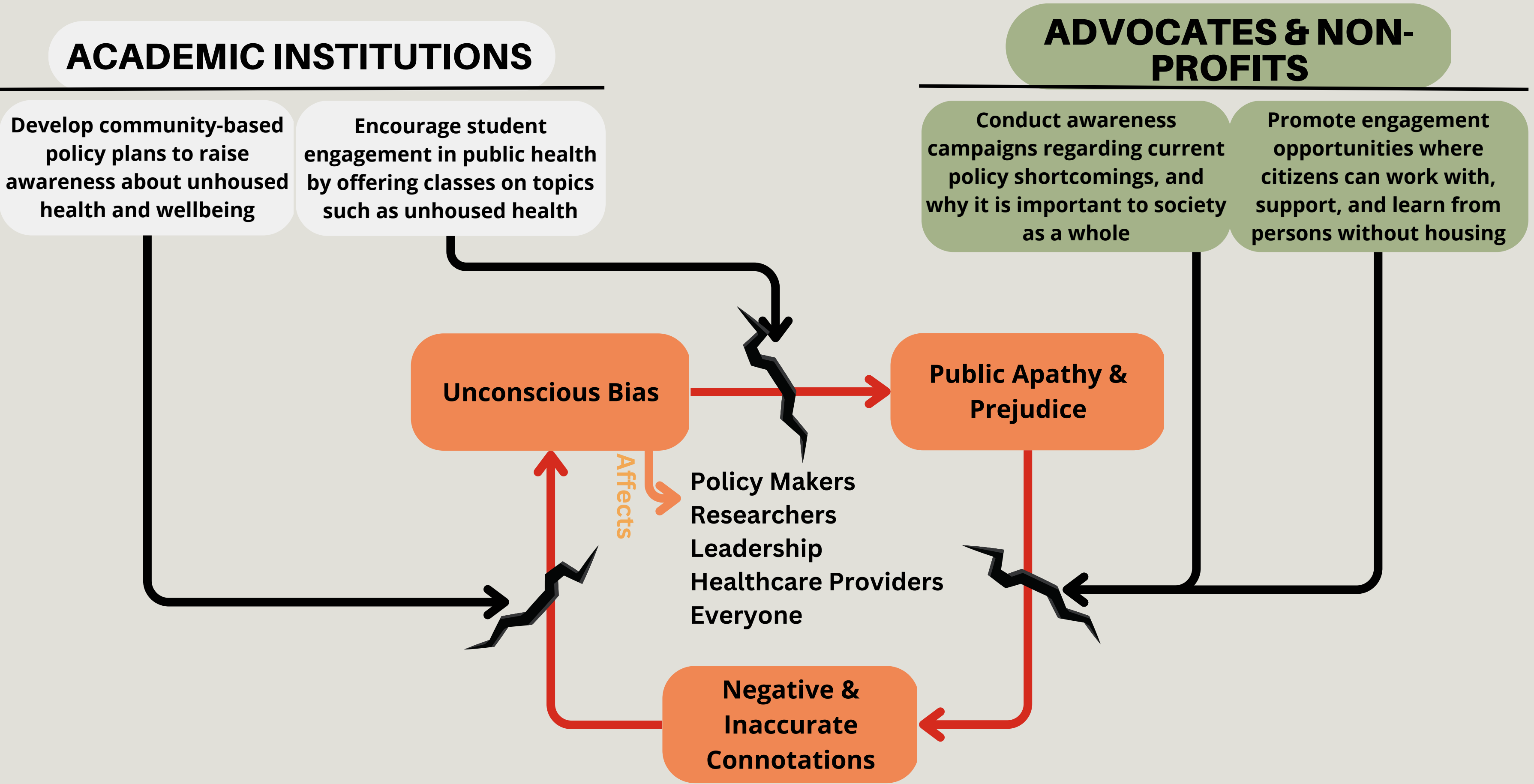
STAKEHOLDER ACTIONS



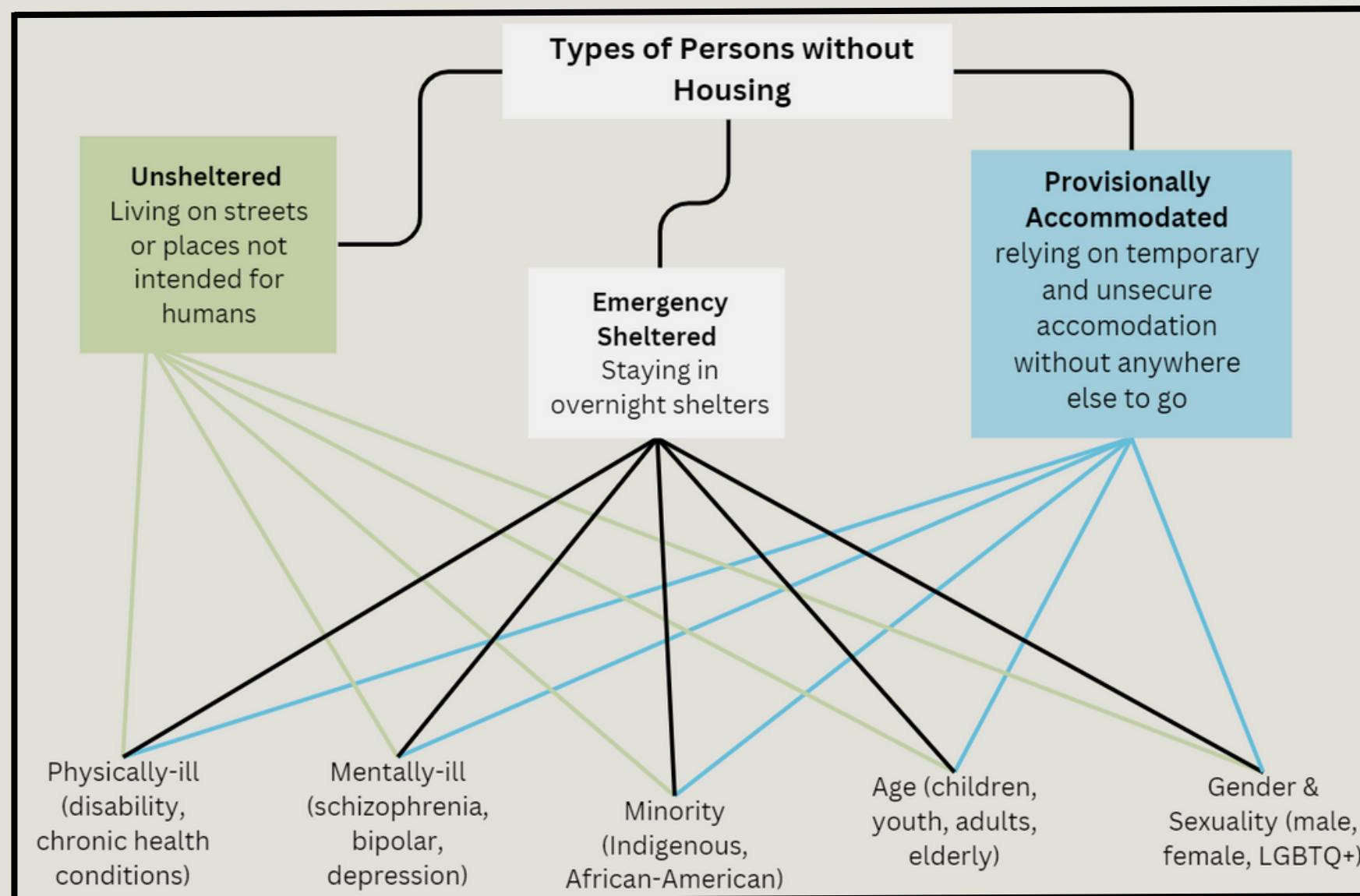
GAPS AND LEVERS



STAKEHOLDER ACTIONS



GAPS AND LEVERS



RECALL THAT:

- Every unhoused Person has unique circumstances and unique needs
- These needs decrease ability to get help for addiction
- Terms like Homelessness are monolithic and oversimplify this issue

STAKEHOLDER ACTIONS

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Encourage governments and other institutions to abandon the usage of the term "homelessness"

VANCOUVER GOVERNMENT

Acknowledge that unhoused persons have unique stressors & needs, so a one-size-fits-all "Housing-First" strategy is inadequate

Directly engage & consult with persons without housing to inform and refine holistic policy

Create sustainable programs that address substance use and remove barriers to employment