

Remediation and Health: A Systematic Review of the Role of Resulting Displacement in Damaging Health and Wellbeing

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Abstract : The connection between poor health outcomes and living near contaminated land has long been understood. Less examined has been the impact of remediation on residents' health. The cleaning process undoubtedly changes the local area in which it occurs, leading to the possibility that local housing and rental prices could increase resulting in the displacement of those least able to cope. Whether or not this potential displacement resulting from remediation has a considerable impact on health remains unknown. This review aims to determine how these health effects have been approached in the health geography literature. A systematic review of health geographies literature was conducted, searching for two-word clusters: 'health' and 'remediation' (100 articles); and 'health', 'displacement' and 'gentrification' (43 articles). 43 articles were selected for their relevance (7 from the first cluster, 20 from the second, and 16 from those cited within the reviewed articles). Several of the reviewed cases identified that potential displacement was a contributor to stress and worry in residents living near remediation projects. Likewise, the experience of displacement in other cases beyond remediation was linked with several mental health issues. However, no remediation cases followed-up on the ultimate effects of experiencing displacement on residents' health. A reason identified for this was a tendency for reviewed studies to adopt a contextual or compositional approach, as opposed to a relational approach, which is more concerned with dimensions of mobility and temporality. Given that remediation and displacement both involve changing mobility and temporality, focussing solely on contextual or compositional factors is problematic. This review concludes by suggesting that more thorough, relational research is conducted into the extent to which potential displacement resulting from remediation affects health.

Keywords : contamination, displacement, health geography, remediation

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