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**About 30 percent of the chronically homeless population is estimated to have severe mental illness.**

**More than 1.8 million people with severe mental illness are booked into jails every year, and they account for 20 percent of jail and prison inmates.**

In the United States, 8.8 million people—roughly the size of the population of New York City—suffer from severe mental illness, and nearly half of them go untreated in any given year.

Since 1955, when the United States had its most psychiatric beds, the number of state hospital beds had fallen by 97 percent by 2016. That's left few beds for people in need of care.

Care is left to family members, for those who have someone able to help. **Others often end up alone, homeless, or in prison as they try to find their way while living with a thought disorder.**

**Each year, 21 percent of total law enforcement staff time is used to respond to and transport individuals with mental illness.**

Severe mental illness involves psychosis, or a patient losing touch with reality. Often, these are people with schizophrenia or bipolar disorder. While in psychosis, the behavior is unpredictable and sometimes dangerous. They may walk out into traffic, fear others are trying to harm them, or find a weapon and harm the public. About half of them don't understand that they have a mental illness, refuse to take medication, and won't go for treatment.

**Beyond the prevention of homelessness or a criminal incident, the goal is to find long-term solutions that will allow homeless persons with mental illness to live a safe, dignified life with meaning and purpose.**

*Statistical data is from the Treatment Advocacy Center in Arlington, Va. as it appeared in the Epoch Times Nov. 2023.*