

Proposal For Healthcare Promotion Program

Posted on October 30, 2018

Background

Homelessness has existed in the United States since the very beginning and rose rapidly after the Great Recession. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's January 2024 point-in-time count estimated that 771,480 people were experiencing homelessness, an 18.1% increase from 2023. This can be blamed on the rising poverty, unemployment, and the high rates of rent and expensive houses. Most poor Americans are not able to meet their basic needs, which include food, clothes, shelter, and, most importantly, health care.

The purpose of this proposal is to initiate a healthcare program for the homeless population. It addresses their needs and requirements, including offering possible solutions and their implementation.

The Problem

The homeless population lacks the resources to meet their basic requirements to lead a healthy life, which means they are unable to have proper food that damages their diet and can cause serious illness, a shelter that protects them from the harmful germs and spread of diseases, and healthcare services so that they can see the doctor when they face health complications and be provided with relevant treatment.

The rising cost for efficient and quality healthcare services is forcing people below the poverty line and out of their homes, as the bills are unaffordable. The homeless population is least concerned about their health and diet; their basic purpose is to survive as long as they can. Therefore, they never make an effort to seek health care options.

Additionally, people who do not have any shelter are involved in crimes and drug abuse as they do not have enough money and suffer from extreme depression. This makes them vulnerable to viral flu and infections, as well as easily transmitted diseases such as tuberculosis, sexually transmitted diseases, Chlamydia, gonorrhea, hepatitis B, and many others. There is a comparatively much higher rate of health problems among homeless people than in the non-homeless population (People, I. 1988).

Bad diet and unavailability of food have resulted in malnutrition, weakness, mental problems, and deficiency of vitamin D, Calcium, and Iron. These result in further serious sickness, which can be fatal if not treated. Most homeless people do not consider seeing a doctor and are unaware of their health

situation because they feel weak and unhealthy at all times due to the use of harmful drugs and deficiency of food (Chong, M. T., Yamaki, J., Harwood, M., d'Assalenaux, R., Rosenberg, E., Aruoma, O., & Bishayee, A. 2014).

Requirements of the Homeless

People who are in poverty don't have access to proper healthcare services, food, and shelter. Food is the key to survival, yet it is a deficient source for the homeless and the poor population of America. This makes the immune system weaker, and the homeless are vulnerable to infections. Hence, they require a healthcare system that allows them to seek treatment and receive vitamins for better nutrients.

Since the homeless population does not have enough money to afford expensive healthcare services, they must be catered to by a non-profit organization that provides free services without any need for insurance or loans. This is because there is an increasing rate of diseases and poor health conditions.

The conditions in which homeless people live are too harsh and threatening to their health, both physically and mentally. There is also a fear of rape and murder on the streets. A high rate of rape cases results in an increased rate of sexually transmitted diseases that people are unaware of. Hence, they require protection from such incidents and the use of contraceptives in case of consent to sexual intercourse.

Awareness is the most important requirement of the homeless population. This is because they aren't aware if they need to see a doctor and seek medical help. Therefore, there is a major requirement for health awareness and the importance of it for people and their survival. Most people living without a shelter are involved in drug abuse because they aren't aware of the damages that those drugs cause them both mentally and physically. Hence, they need to know more about what they consume and how it damages their health, peace of mind, and overall performance in life, which leads to unemployment.

The major requirements of this particular population are food, shelter, free and quality healthcare services, awareness of drug use and side effects, knowledge about their health condition and when they should seek treatment, and the availability of primary health aid and medicines.

Objectives

The primary mission of the Healthcare Promotion Program is to provide healthcare services to the homeless population and spread awareness regarding the basics of healthcare and leading a healthy life. Other objectives are the following:

- Improve the health conditions of the homeless population by minimizing the spread of

communicable diseases and infections that are easily transmitted to homeless people as they are vulnerable.

- Provide free multivitamin supplements near every pharmacy to the people who can't afford them in order to improve their nutrient intake.
- Promote equal distribution of high-quality healthcare services among people belonging to different income levels.
- To reduce the side effects and the use of drugs among homeless people.
- Improve the basic and primary health conditions for the people who do not have access to first aid and basic medicines.
- Take preventative measures in order to reduce the spread of easily transmitted diseases such as tuberculosis.

How to Achieve These Objectives and Implementation

In order to provide better healthcare services to the homeless population, it is important to consider that they aren't easy to approach, and there is a high chance they won't come to seek help. Instead, there is a need for education and awareness of the healthcare problems they are facing due to the activities they are involved in and the conditions they live in. Hence, the first step to achieving the objectives is to create awareness through campaigns in areas with the highest homeless population.

Once there are enough people who seek treatment for their health conditions and require solutions, the program should be able to provide them with high-quality healthcare services. This will also need camps at multiple locations so that it is accessible to everyone. Laziness often comes in the way of seeking help. Hence, these services need to be available everywhere.

Secondly, there needs to be an obligation for the different pharmacies to provide first aid and basic medicines to the homeless population. This is because a lack of primary health care can lead to serious diseases which can prove to be fatal. Basic health and treatment are ignored due to the high costs and unaffordability of homeless people. Hence, these services must be conveniently available at every other pharmacy or healthcare hub.

Possible Results

The Healthcare Promotion Program will improve the health conditions of the homeless population. There will be more awareness and knowledge about the side effects and health threats of certain activities, such as drug abuse, sexual intercourse without contraceptives, and ignorance of basic health problems.

This will result in a major decrease in the spread of easily transmitted diseases, which are at a high

rate. Additionally, it will reduce the threat to the health of the homeless population as well as the non-homeless population because they are involved in some kind of interaction with these people on a daily basis. The overall health condition will be improved.

References

Chong, M. T., Yamaki, J., Harwood, M., d'Assalenaux, R., Rosenberg, E., Aruoma, O., & Bishayee, A. (2014).

Assessing health conditions and medication use among the homeless community in Long Beach, California. *Journal of research in pharmacy practice*, 3(2), 56.

Gee, A. (2017). America's homeless population rises for the first time since the Great Recession. *The Guardian*.

Retrieved from

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/dec/05/america-homeless-population-2017-official-count-crisis>

People, I. (1988). *Health Problems of Homeless People*. National Academies Press (US).

Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK218236/>