



AUTHORS

Jonathan Tang; Athena Xue; Alicia Garcia, MA; Neil Wary; Jiwoo Lee, MS; Tamara Montacute, MD

TITLE

Creating and Conducting Trauma-Informed Health Education Classes at a Local Homeless Shelter

ABSTRACT

Introduction/Problem: More than 35,000 individuals experiencing homelessness (IEH) face challenges in reliable healthcare and health education in the South Bay Area. Aiming to broaden the accessibility of health information to homeless populations, the Cardinal Free Clinics (CFCs) partnered with a local homeless shelter, WeHope (<https://www.wehope.org>), to create a series of culturally-appropriate, trauma-informed health education seminars for their residents.

Methods/Interventions: Our specific aims were to (1) engage patients in goal-setting and empower them to seek care, and (2) empower volunteers to provide health education and address inequities in health literacy. We collaborated with shelter leadership, assessing their top needs and interests in health education. We developed curricula based on CDC health education recommendations to shape personal values through motivational goal-setting.

Results: We developed and presented a 5-week curriculum on: hypertension, diet and exercise, hyperlipidemia, diabetes, and primary care referrals/accessing Medicaid. Volunteers were trained in trauma-informed care and provided counseling and screenings after presentations. Across five weeks, 21 unique volunteers presented on the five topics and offered BP screenings, 1-on-1 goal setting, and social services counseling to a total of 40 shelter residents. WeHope residents found the seminars to be engaging and informative, setting attainable goals in lifestyle changes and connecting with long-term sources of care.

Conclusion: In the 5-week curriculum, we were able to motivate and empower IEH to seek healthcare, provide culturally-appropriate resources to medical and social care, and empower volunteers to give health education and hands-on interventions.

Preliminary results: 21 unique volunteers presented on the 5 topics below to a total of 40 residents at the shelter. Below are the preliminary results and number of shelters served-

Weekly Interventions, Total Shelter Residents and Volunteers:

Week 1: Hypertension, Intervention: BP Screenings, 7 Shelter Residents Served, 5 Volunteers

Week 2: Diet and Exercise, Intervention: 1 on 1 Goal-Setting, 6 Shelter Residents Served, 5 Volunteers

Week 3: Hyperlipidemia, Intervention: 1-1 Goal-Setting, 10 Shelter Residents Served, 4 Volunteers

Week 4: Diabetes, Intervention: 1-1 Goal-Setting, 6 Shelter Residents Served, 4 Volunteers

Week 5: PCP Referrals, Accessing Medicaid, Intervention: Social Services Counseling, 12 Shelter Residents Served, 3 Volunteers

Anecdotally, the residents of WeHope found the classes engaging and useful, with a resident saying, "I've shown my social worker my goals, and we were able to talk about my medical needs. I'm going to see a doctor next week about this."

COMMUNITY PARTNER

WeHOPE, Homeless Shelter

CATEGORY

Improving Health Equity, Healthcare Access, Service, and Quality,
Promotion of Health Awareness and Healthcare Access Through Education