

4.07 Providing Shelter for People Living with Complex Healthcare Needs



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People experiencing unsheltered homelessness typically have complex medical needs. When barriers to obtaining and staying in shelter are high, those who are excluded tend to be the most vulnerable in terms of health and safety. In this workshop, panelists will share how they are modifying their programming and implementing strategies to respond to the complex needs of those who seek shelter services.



Presentation Objectives

- 1) Highlight the special needs and considerations of unhoused people with disabilities
 - Special Focus – Older adults with disabilities
- 2) Provide strategies for homeless service providers to implement

Disability and Homelessness



HUD 2024 Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Programs Homeless Populations and Subpopulations

Important Notes About This Data: This report is based on point-in-time information provided to HUD by Continuums of Care (CoCs) as part of their CoC Program application process, per the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the Fiscal Year 2024 Continuum of Care Program Competition. CoCs are required to provide an unduplicated count of homeless persons according to HUD standards (explained in HUD's annual HIC and PIT count notice and HUD's Point-in-Time Count Methodology Guide <https://www.hudexchange.info/hdx/guides/pit-hic/>). HUD has conducted a limited data quality review but has not independently verified all of the information submitted by each CoC. The reader is therefore cautioned that since compliance with these standards may vary, the reliability and consistency of the homeless counts may also vary among CoCs. Additionally, a shift in the methodology a CoC uses to count the homeless may cause a change in homeless counts between reporting periods.

Summary of chronically homeless households by household type reported:

	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing*		
Chronically Homeless households with at least one adult and one child ²	3,809	0	1,063	4,872

Summary of chronically homeless persons in each household type:

Chronically Homeless persons in households without children ¹	52,156	811	99,431	152,398
Chronically Homeless persons in households with at least one adult and one child ²	12,021	0	3,385	15,406
Chronically Homeless persons in households with only children ³	53	0	134	187
Total Chronically Homeless Persons	64,230	811	102,950	167,991

Summary of all other populations reported:

Severely Mentally Ill	59,985	12,744	67,235	139,964
Chronic Substance Abuse	34,521	10,366	67,733	112,620
Veterans	9,896	9,135	13,851	32,882
HIV/AIDS	5,103	2,134	3,490	10,727

Disability and Homelessness

Exhibit 6-4: Estimates of Individuals Experiencing Chronic Patterns of Homelessness by State, 2024

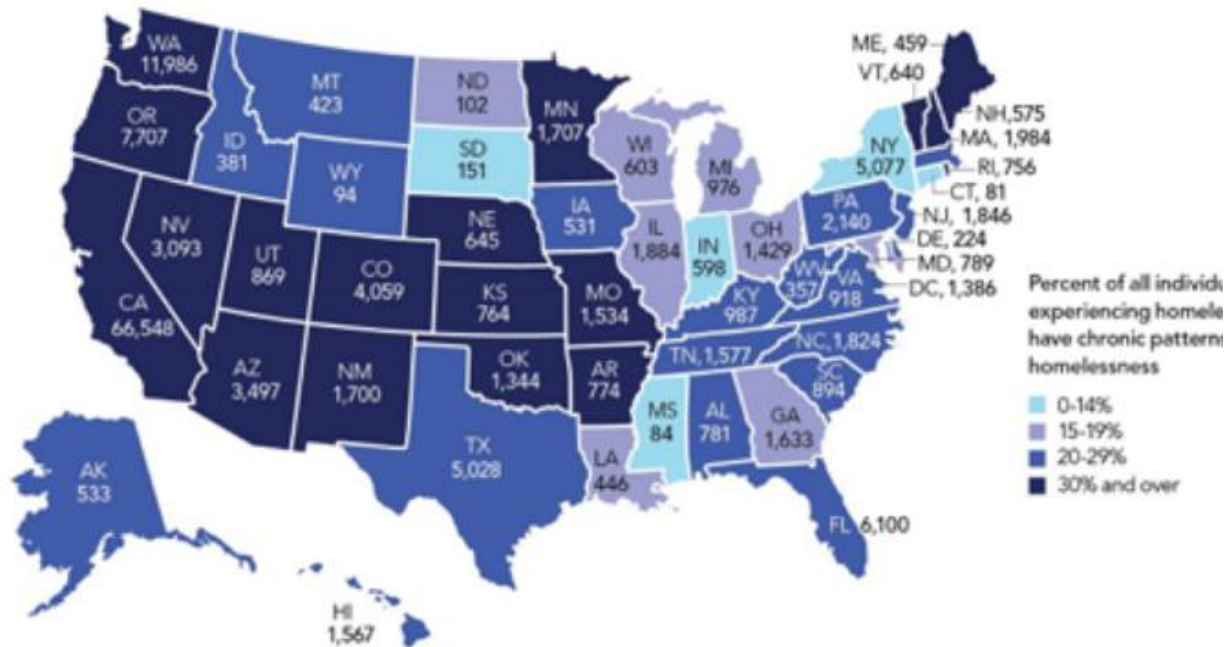
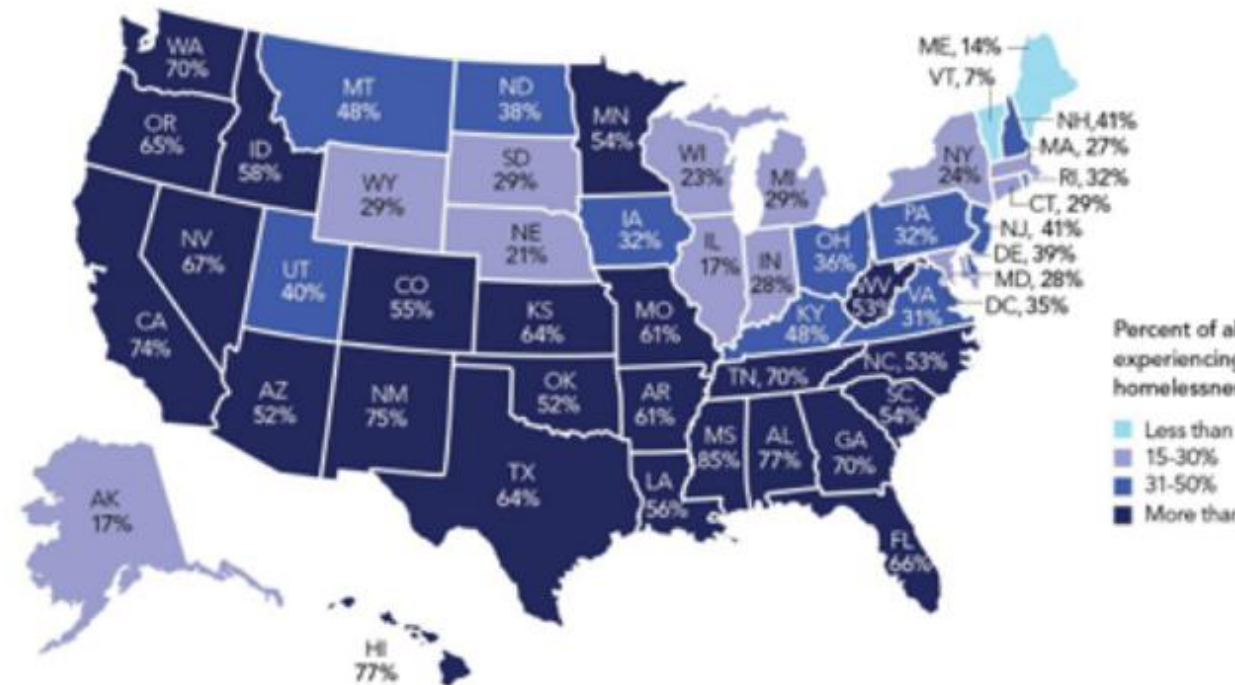


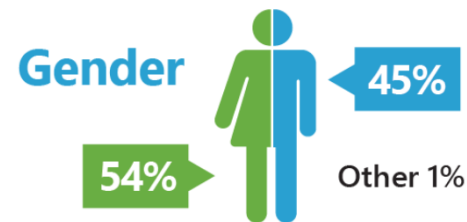
Exhibit 6-5: Percentages of Individuals Experiencing Chronic Patterns of Homelessness Were Unsheltered, 2024



Serving Seniors- Overview

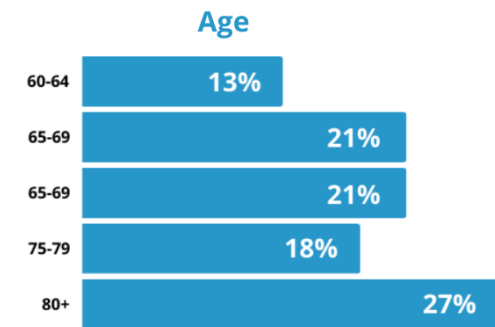
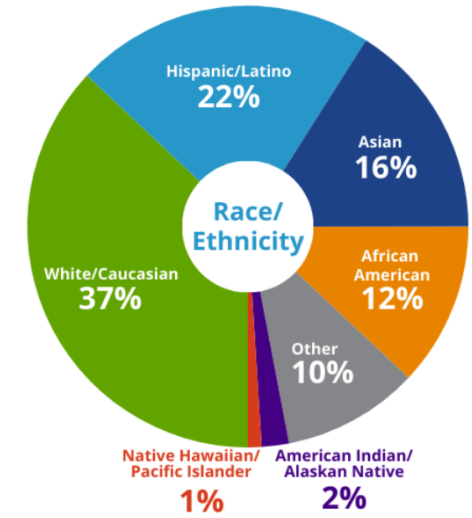
"Helping Seniors in Poverty Live Health and Fulfilling lives"

Unduplicated
Seniors Served
10,765



Median Income
\$1,125 /month

Below the Federal
Poverty Level
88%



Bringing People Home.

Serving Seniors- Programs



Nutrition



Housing/Homelessness



Health and Social Services



Enrichment and Activities



Advocacy

Central Arizona Shelter Services (CASS)



**SHELTER.
SUPPORT.
CHANGE LIVES.**

MISSION

To prevent and end homelessness among individuals and families while advancing compassionate community solutions.



Central Arizona Shelter Services (CASS)

CASS is the largest emergency shelter provider in Arizona



Single Adult Shelter – 600 beds in a congregate setting

Vista Colina Family Shelter – 30 apartment-style units for families of all household sizes

The Haven – 130 motel-style units for people 55+ experiencing homelessness

Bringing People Home.

Older Adult Homelessness- Assessment

Serving Seniors

- Homeless due to **lack of an economic safety net**, catastrophic event (confirmed by UCSF study)
- 56% said **\$300** or less would have prevented homelessness
- Less than 45% of service providers had **gerontological training**

Older Adult Homelessness- Challenges

- Avoiding shelters
 - **Safety** concerns
 - Improve **person/environmental fit/signage/staffing**
 - **Denied entry** because of **ADL/IADLs, substance use disorders, medication needs**
- Hospitals have **few discharge options** for seniors experiencing homelessness with **ADL issues**

Older Adult Homelessness- Health

- Older unhoused adults age faster than their housed counterparts
- High rates of depression and cognitive impairment
- Inability to afford co-payments and deductibles

Older Adult Homelessness- Low-Income

- Unemployed or under-employed
- Fixed incomes with SSI or SSDI
 - Signing up for these benefits is usually not a seamless process
 - Only 21% pass the initial application
 - 67% are denied overall



As the cost-of-living surges, financial assistance stretches less and less!

Bringing People Home.

Older Adult Homelessness- Solutions

- **Prevention** – Shallow Rental Subsidies/One-time payments
 - Pilot Programs – City of San Diego / County of San Diego
 - Key Findings – Need for long-term support
- **Family Reunification**
- **Shared Housing**
- **Age-Friendly Shelters**
- **Gerontological Training** for Case Managers

Older Adult Homelessness- Solutions

CoC Age-Friendly Shelter Recommendations

Medical

- Need for on-site, dedicated, caregivers/nursing assistants for medication management and ADL support.
- Caregivers familiar with memory-related conditions (dementia/Alzheimer's) & co-occurring mental health concerns
- Caregivers managed by case manager initially
- Regular case conferences with relevant community partners to facilitate care and quick referrals
- Referral to OT, PT, behavioral health
- Incontinence supplies

Older Adult Homelessness- Solutions

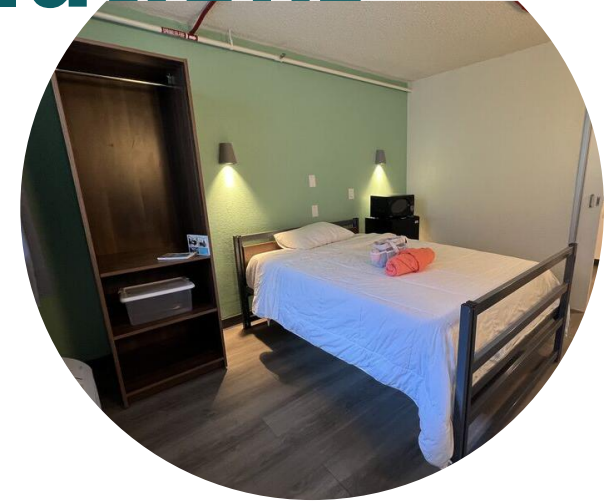
Dietary Concerns

- Dental issues-may need soft food options
- Special diets, e.g., diabetic
- Meal supplements, e.g., Ensure
- May need assistance with eating

Older Adult Homelessness- Solutions

Shelter Space

- Regular beds vs. Bunk beds
 - Lower bed heights increase accessibility
- Private bathing facilities with accessible shower stalls
- Vibrant colors to help orient residents around the facility (i.e., wayfinding)
- Rooms for wheelchairs and walkers to maneuver
- Facilities for pets



Older Adult Homelessness- Solutions

Training for Staff

- Identifying and working with complex or co-occurring conditions
- Navigating healthcare and payor systems
- Aging-related resources

Specialized roles, such as BHTs or SOAR Specialists

Older Adult Homelessness- Solutions

Case Management

- Comprehensive assessments
 - Cognitive screenings
 - Screening for fall risk/mobility
 - Social Determinants of Health
- Lower caseloads
- Primary point of contact for navigating issues and services

Older Adult Homelessness- Solutions

Collaboration—No one can do it alone!

- Federal qualified health centers (FQHCs) bring primary care and healthcare navigation services onsite at shelters
- Public benefits can be onsite to help people apply for benefits like Medicaid and SNAP
- Behavioral health services can be provided and co-located
- Area Agency on Aging can provide aging-related services
- Transportation agencies can help people get to appointments

Older Adult Homelessness- Next Steps

- Dedicated caregivers in shelters
 - Funding, liability, Role of IHSS, Managed Care plans
- System to quickly move older adults to permanent housing with appropriate supports
- Agency assessment and work plan to close gaps in service delivery

Thank You!



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