Findings from the 2007 Annual Needs Assessment

Healthcare for the Homeless—Houston

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Background

- Convenience sample of 383 currently homeless individuals
- Clients and patients solicited from the general population at a site
- 29 participating agencies
- Conducted June-July 2007
- 26 volunteers
- 75% multiple choice and Likert scale; 25% open ended questions
- Average length = 20 minutes
Topics Covered

- Access to services
- Opinions about healthcare services
- Use of healthcare and social services
- Homeless status
- Health status
- Demographics
Access to Health-Care Services

- 38% had no healthcare coverage (32%*)
- 26% had Gold Card (39%*)
- 8% had Medicaid
- 10% used VA

- 18% unsuccessful at getting Gold Card

*2006
Opinion of Health-care Services

- 49% satisfied or very satisfied with care
- Biggest problem: Long waiting times
- Most important: dental care, housing, medical care and respect
- Major theme: Respect/How treated by staff
Use of Health-Care Services

- ER as usual source of care: 40%
- Frequent flyers: 12% went to ER ≥6 times (41% total ER visits)
- Clinic as usual source of care dramatically decreased: 38% to 29%
  - More visits made to clinics than all other sources of care; ER still most self-reported as usual source of care
Type of treatment received at ER

- Emergency/Hospital Care: 33%
- Dental: 2%
- Other/Inappropriate Response: 6%
- Primary Care/Non-emergent care: 59%
Use of Health-Care Services

- 30% hospitalized in last 12 months
  - ~11% average for general population
  - www.cdc.gov

- 37% wanted or needed drug treatment
  - 32% attempted to get treatment
  - 27% received treatment

- 77% wanted or needed dental
  - 25% received dental
Homeless Status

- 33% homeless ≥12 months (chronic homelessness) (24%*)
- 55% homeless for the first time
- Perceived barriers to permanent housing: Lack of money and employment; drug/alcohol use

*2004
Health Status

- 61% had TB skin test within last 12 months
- 58% had HIV test within last 12 months
- 23% felt health *always* limited their daily activities (15%*)
- 43% mental health was *fair* to *very poor*
- 71% dental was *fair* to *very poor*
- 45% overall health *fair* to *very poor*

*2006
Demographics

- 56% men; 38% women
- Average age=43; range 19-73 years old
- 51% African American (64%*); 29% White (23%*); 10% Hispanic (9%*)
- 37% single/never married (46%*)
- 46% divorced/ separated (39%*)
- 6% married/living with partner

* 2006
Demographics

**Education**
- 4% grade school
- 21% some HS
- 30% completed HS/GED
- 28% some college
- 6% college graduate

**Employment**
- 15% working full/part time (21%*)
- 52% unemployed
- 19% disabled
- 19% veterans

*2004
Highlights

- Significant decrease in Gold Cards
- Increase ER use for non-emergent care
- Dental continues to be high demand
- Increase number who felt health *always* limited their daily activities
- Decrease in employed
The Good, the Bad and the Future

- Collected more surveys; Still too long
- Findings not dramatically different than in the years before
  - Use the past Needs Assessments to develop specific assessments on health status
  - Future assessment to target emerging themes: medical homes, continuity of care, reduction of inappropriate ER use, etc.
Themes from the Gaps Analysis

- Expanding access (primary care and mental health)
- Respite, transitional and short-term care
- Continuity of care
- Advocacy for SSI and SSDI
- Transportation
- MORE services: housing, beds, detox, meds, etc.