

## BACKGROUND

Homeless individuals experience many barriers that limit access to quality healthcare, contributing to significant health disparities and increasing the vulnerability of the homeless population

## PROJECT AIM

The purpose of the CARES project is to provide healthcare services, support, and education that focus on health promotion, disease prevention, and management of disease to residents at a local rescue mission

## PROJECT DESIGN/STRATEGY

This Quality Improvement project was divided into four components:

- Primary Prevention and Education
- Secondary Prevention and Screenings
- Primary Care Clinic
- Healthcare Management Program
- Community Outreach

Each student worked with the Rescue Mission staff to design, implement, and evaluate components of the program to improve access to care for the rescue mission residents.

## CHANGES MADE (PDSA CYCLES)

### Primary Prevention and Education

- Lack of knowledge on prevalent healthcare needs of population
- Provided education to staff on top healthcare concerns
- Educator resource list developed for staff

### Secondary Prevention and Screenings

- Lack of communicable disease screening and formal intake process
- Standardized intake process and communicable disease screening
- 3 education sessions with Rescue Mission staff, weekly PDSA and revisions to intake forms based on staff feedback

### Primary Care Clinic

- Lack of resident access to primary care services
- Developed clinic including policies and procedures for on call situations
- Emergency Medication Fund

### Community Outreach

- Lack of Community Resource List
- Developed a spreadsheet of names, contact information, and service types
- Participated in community events to increase community awareness

## RESULTS/OUTCOMES

- Development of Primary Care Clinic
- Addressed and educated staff on healthcare needs
- Increased access to Community Resources
- Increased Community awareness of Rescue Mission
- Staff education on health programs and communicable disease
- Implementation of Infectious Disease Screening



## LESSONS LEARNED

- Transparent communication
- Importance of Stakeholder Engagement
- Importance of community resources and community buy-in for sustainability
- Importance of volunteers
- Importance of funding

## NEXT STEPS

- Sustainability at the Rescue Mission
- Dissemination of CARES program as a healthcare management model for Rescue Missions and Homeless Shelters
- Improve access to specialty care, including onsite mental health services
- Further evaluation of other healthcare needs of this populations

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Site Champion, Dr. Carol Ann King  
 Course Faculty, Dr. Tomika Williams  
 Staff at the Rescue Mission  
 Volunteers and Community Members  
 Generous Donors, VCAN Grant