



# Medical Respite: Shelter for Medically Fragile People Experiencing Homelessness

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## “What?”

### The Medical Respite

- In January 2024, the Community Crossroads Center (CCC) reopened its respite services.
- A medical respite is “acute and post-acute care for persons experiencing homelessness who are too ill or frail to recover from a physical illness or injury on the streets but are not ill enough to be in a hospital<sup>1</sup>”
- Prior to the respite reopening, CCC was only open from 6 pm-8 am
- Classmate Kirby Armel and I assisted with reopening respite services
  - Assisted with furnishing the respite space
  - Purchased AED with grant money
  - Provided CPR training to respite employees and volunteers
  - Provided nutrition counseling to diabetic resident

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## “So What?”

### Effects on Communities

- An average of 20 medically fragile people experiencing homelessness utilize the CCC respite services on a monthly basis
- Medical respites have been shown to allow for more timely hospital discharge and reduced emergency department recidivism<sup>2</sup>
- There is less data to show the effect medical respites have on the health of the people who utilize them
- We plan to evaluate both healthcare costs saved, as well as the respite’s effects on the health of people experiencing homelessness.



## “Now What?”

### Future Directions

- Average length of stay and the number of times a person returned to the emergency department for people experiencing homelessness who utilized the respite will be compared between before and after the respite’s reopening
- Patient reported outcome measures (PROMs) will be compared between people experiencing homelessness who utilize the respite and the general population in order to gauge whether the respite is benefitting the health of the people it serves
- The NC Albert Schweitzer continuation grant will be used to further furnish the respite.
- Other future directions
  - CPR training for residents
  - Mental health first aid training for employees and volunteers
  - Collaborate with PT and nursing schools
  - Increase awareness of hospital case managers
  - Position within GCSC board

#### References:

1. Medical Respite Care | National Health Care for the Homeless Council. (n.d.). Retrieved July 6, 2022, from <https://nhchc.org/clinical-practice/medical-respite-care/People-Experiencing-Homelessness>. <https://doi.org/10.26099/a5fb-y096>
2. Doran, K. M., Ragins, K. T., Gross, C. P., & Zerger, S. (2013). Medical respite programs for homeless patients: A systematic review. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, 24(2), 499–524. <https://doi.org/10.1353/hpu.2013.0053>