Leveling the Playing Field
Mobile Healthcare for Those Without Housing

Mobile Health Services
Open Door Community Health Centers
Thomas Steenblock
Clinic Manager
Suboxone Program Manager
Telehealth and Visiting Specialist Center/Mobile Health Services
Open Door Community Health Centers
A Federally Qualified Health Center
Dedicated to Serving the Whole Community
• Federally Qualified Health Center founded in 1971
• Serves a diverse community in Humboldt and Del Norte Counties
• Area larger than the state of Connecticut with 2% of the population
• 11 clinics and a member services department
• 160,000 residents in total. Served over 70,000 unduplicated patients over the last 3 years
• Offers a full range of services- family medicine, behavioral and mental health, case management, lab, drug and alcohol services and more.
What are we all about?

The Mission

“Open Door exists to level the playing field of human dignity”
Mobile Health Services
Full Staff

- Providers: D.O.s, PA, FNP
- Medical Assistants
  - Lab Tech
- Social Work Case Manager
- Behavioral Health: LCSW, MFT
- Drug and Alcohol Counselor
- Promotoras (Community Health workers)
Full Services

- General medical care
- Family planning
- Mental/behavioral health
- Support groups
- Drug and alcohol services
- Social work services
- Skilled nursing services
- Lab services
- Health education
- Referrals to and help navigating other community resources
More than One Approach

1. Grant Funding
   a. Federal Health Care for the Homeless
   b. Intensive Outpatient Case Management (IOPCM)

2. Satellite Model
   a. Tied to fixed clinic site reimbursement rate
   b. Work with patients to ensure coverage wherever possible
   c. Revenue from all billable services
Best Practices and Challenges

- Ask questions and follow where they lead
- Create strong community partnerships
- Treat it as a real medical home
- Diversify funding
- Listen to your team and your patients
- Lack of housing - Housing is Healthcare
- Staffing - requires commitment, flexibility, strong teamwork, and resilience
- Electrical needs
- Being where the patients are
Thank You

Mobile Health Services

opendoor
Community Health Centers
www.opendoorhealth.com
Safe and Effective Backpack Homeless Healthcare Street Medicine Program

Mercy Egbujor, DNP, MSN, FNP-BC
Doctor of Nursing Practice
Family Nurse Practitioner
Santa Clara County Valley Homeless Healthcare Program (VHHP)
Santa Clara Valley Medical Center (SCVMC)
Santa Clara Valley Homeless Healthcare Program: Backpack Homeless Healthcare Program (BHHP)

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<th>Objective</th>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
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<td>1. Describe Backpack Homeless Healthcare Program—a form of street medicine</td>
<td>1. After the session participants will gain increased understanding of BHHP/street medicine</td>
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<td>2. Discuss resources necessary to implement a safe and sustainable street Medicine Program</td>
<td>2. Participants will be able determine resources necessary to enhance or implement street medicine program</td>
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What is Street Medicine?

Street Medicine is a term used to define the provision of medical care directly to persons who are unsheltered living and sleeping on the street through mobile services such as walking teams, medical mobile vans, and outdoor clinics.
Street Medicine Motto: “Go to the People”

• **The term Street Medicine** was coined by Dr. Jim Withers, the Pioneer of Street Medicine Movement.

• Dr. Withers is revered as the father of Street Medicine in US and is one of the founding members of Street Medicine Institute.
Street Medicine

• Reality based
• Patient centered
• Validates patient’s reality
Homeless Census Data

• Between 2.5-3.5 million people experience homelessness annually in the United States

• SCC has the 5th highest rate of homeless population in the United States behind only

  • »LA
  • »NYC
  • »San Diego
  • »Las Vegas
Santa Clara County Homeless 2015 Census (N=6,556), 2013 Census (N=7,300); (a 14% decrease)

**Sheltered Homeless Persons**

(n=1,929)

29% Sheltered (1,929)

- Sheltered includes:
- Emergency Shelter =12%
- Transitional Housing =17%
- Safe Haven=1%


HomelFirst Homeless Shelter: Largest shelter in SCC
Santa Clara County 2015 Homeless Census (N=6,556)

**Unsheltered Homeless (n=4,627)**

71% Unsheltered (4,627)

Unsheltered includes:
- On the Street=30%
- Encampment Areas =14%
- Cars/Vans/ RVs =23%
- Abandoned Buildings =4%

Chronically homeless: 2,169 in 2015 compared to 2509 in 2013

Health Report of Homeless Persons in SCC

- 65% reported one or more health conditions
- 52% reported inability to work due to health condition
- 39% reported emotional condition
- 38% reported alcohol/drug abuse
- 30% reported physical disability
- 25% reported suffering from PTSD
- 12% reported TBI
- 27% reported history of Domestic violence

Ill effects of homelessness

- Homelessness is a medical problem
- It can make people sick
- It relegates people to a life of loneliness
- Mental illness is rampant among the homeless
- Between 26-30% of homeless people have more than one chronic illness
Barriers to Health Care Among Homeless Persons

• Lack of available clinics close to shelters and encampments site
• Lack of transportation
• Lack of insurance
• Feeling of being discriminated against
• Real or perceive rude staff
• Inability to bring their pets
• Fear of losing their belongings into bus and clinic
Santa Clara Valley Homeless Healthcare Program (VHHP)

- VHHP--Safety Net Health care provider for homeless persons in Santa Clara County
- A program run by Santa Clara Valley Medical Center (VMC)
- Largest county hospital in San Francisco-Bay area
- VMC is a 574 bed Tertiary Hospital
- VMC-- A Federally Qualified Health Care Center
- VMC -- Safety Net Hospital for the poor and indigents in SCC
Santa Clara Valley Homeless Healthcare Program (VHHP)

• **Core Values - the guiding principles of VHHP**
  - * Innovation and creativity
  - * Providing compassionate, patient-centered care
  - * Service via an integrated, team-based approach

• **Core Purpose – VHHP’s most fundamental reason for being**
  “To promote human dignity, to relieve suffering and to provide hope so that people can achieve their full potential and improve their quality of life”.
Access to Health Care in Santa Clara County

- Santa Clara Valley Medical has 8 Hospital outpatient clinics
- Santa Clara Valley Homeless Healthcare Programs including
  - 2 Free standing clinics
    - Homeless Clinic at Alexian Drive
    - Homeless clinic at HomeFirst Homeless Shelter
  - **Backpack Homeless Healthcare Program**
  - Mobile Medical Units
  - Medical Respite Program (20 beds) located at HomeFirst Homeless Shelter
  - Re-Entry Medical Program
  - Saludos for Migrant farm worker
  - Teen Van (goes to continuation schools)
  - Mobile Dental Unit

- Other hospitals and community partner clinics
Santa Clara Valley Homeless Healthcare Program (VHHP)

• Multi-disciplinary team approach
• Integrated and holistic health care services
• Primary and episodic health care services
• Provides health care at different access points
• Operates on a walk-in basis--first come first served
VHHP/Backpack Homeless Healthcare Program Services

- Primary care services in 2 fixed clinics
- Backpack Homeless Healthcare Program
- Suboxone for Opiate Addiction
- Transgender clinic
- Acupuncture clinic
- Psychiatric services
- Psychology/counseling
  - Medical Social Workers
- High Utilizer Program
- Drug and alcohol counseling in the clinics/partnership with DAD
- Housing Assessment/partnerships
- SSI Advocates
- Partnership with housing Programs—assessment and disability verification
- Legal services from Public Defenders’ officer/Mental Health Advocate
Backpack Homeless Healthcare Program uses Street Medicine Model to reach the most Vulnerable Homeless Persons in Santa Clara County
Backpack Homeless Healthcare Program and Mobile Medical Unit

- Established 2012
- A Street Medicine Program
- An expansion of the Mobile Medical Care
- Staff goes to the people
- Flexible and Effective
- Adapts to patient needs
Backpack Homeless Healthcare Programs (BHHP)

Health care is provided on the streets, parks, homeless encampments and along railroad tracks, freeway on/off ramps etc.
Essentials for a sustainable Street Medicine Program

- Patient Trust
- Mutual Respect
- Staff and patient safety
- Willing and compassionate staff
- Partnerships with local agency outreach workers
Backpack Homeless Healthcare Program: Street Medicine

• Increases access to health
• Facilitates emergency care services as needed
• Saves money for local hospitals
• Saves lives
Backpack Homeless Healthcare Optimal Team

- Public Health/Community specialist/Registration person/Driver
- RN
- MA
- Financial Counselor
- MSW (by Phone)
- Psychologist
- Medical Provider/NP or MD
- Outreach Worker from HomeFirst Homeless Shelter (Community Partner)
Supplies brought during BHHP Medical Outreach

- Briefcase with Medications
- Backpack with needed supplies and equipment
- Thermometer
- Laptop Computer
- BP cuff
- Glucometer
- Pen and paper
- Snacks
Medications brought on BHHP Medical Outreach

Some medications we bring include but not limited to:

- Hypertension meds
- Diabetes meds
- Antibiotics
- Asthma inhalers
- OTC pain medications
- Dermatitis and anti-fungal
- Depression and Anxiety,
- Anti-psychotic and insomnia
Services provided by MMU/BHHP team

- Primary and episodic health care
- Brief Psychological counseling
- Check Vital signs, blood glucose, do blood draws
- STD and HIV Screening
- Provide vaccinations such Flu vaccine, TDAP etc.
- Provide housing assistance
Common illness encountered during BHHP Outreach

- Uncontrolled Diabetes
- Uncontrolled Hypertension
- Untreated or uncontrolled mental illness especially Schizophrenia and Bipolar
- Drugs and alcohol
- Hepatitis
- Dermatitis

- STDs especially GC/C
- Medication refills
- Poor Dental Health
- Tobacco Dependency
- Trauma
Health Assessment during Backpack Street Medicine

Assess all patients for
Trauma
Assault
Domestic Violence
Challenges to care delivery during Backpack Homeless Healthcare

What are some of the challenges to implementing a street/creek medicine?
Challenges worsened by frequent encampment abatement

- Rough Terrains
- Difficulty reaching the patients
- Frequency sweeps of encampments
- Patients losing their belongings and medications due to instability
Challenges to Successful Backpack Street Medicine

Environment
Safety issues
Staff fatigue
Staffing issues
Weather
Inadequate supplies
Lack of medications
Safety During Backpack Street Medicine Outreach

• Travel at least in pairs
• The HomeFirst Outreach workers monitor and scan the environment for unsafe situations while the staff deliver health care services
Dangerous Situations:

• Dogs
   **Need a dog charmer**
   Many homeless people have dogs and pets that may be protective of them

• Snakes
   Be careful not to step on the snakes

• Dangerous people
   Criminals may hide among the homeless
Funding for VHHP/Backpack Homeless Healthcare Program

• All staff are employees of Santa Clara Valley Medical Center (VMC)
• Valley Medical Center is an FQHC center/HUD grants
• VMC is owned and funded by the largest county in San Francisco area
• Billing Medi-Cal/Medicare
• Every patient is registered regardless of ability to patient
• Every patient is assessed to see if they qualify for any insurance
• Proper charting and documentation is crucial

• JUST KNOW STREET MEDICINE IS NOT ONLY ABOUT NUMBER OF PATIENTS SEEN DAILY!!!
Sustainability

• Leadership Support:
  • Staffing
  • Funding
  • Medicine
  • Essential Supplies

• Show and tell
  • Bring your bosses to work
Importance of Advocacy

- Community Partners
- Know your Champions
- Know your Advocates
Get involved in local homeless programs and activities

BHHP Team Involvement In The Community:

- Participated in the city of San Jose/Gardner Health Center’s Annual Homeless Faire
- Participated in the inauguration of Downtown Street Team’s Dignity on Wheels
Thank you
Any Questions?

Core Purpose – VHHP’s most fundamental reason for being:
“To promote human dignity, to relieve suffering and to provide hope so that people can achieve their full potential and improve their quality of life”