

Legacy Project

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Introduction

Cannon Place is low-income housing available to veterans and their families. This nonprofit organization's prime goal is to build a more humane world where communities are healthy and people can develop their full potential. Cannon Place does this by acquiring and renovating existing housing and developing new affordable rental properties.

We contributed to the service today by engaging with veterans already at The Canon Place, learning the organization's history, and seeing the organization support veterans and their families. We came up with new ideas to help outreach and bring more awareness to the services available by the organization, as there are services of dental assistance, mental health groups, and health fairs that they could go to to help better the population in psychological and physical health.

The Cannon Place is at 1900 E. Main Street, Danville, IL, 61832. They are open Monday-Thursday, 8:00 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. Friday, 8:00 am-1:00 pm

We chose Cannon Place due to its support for Danville's homeless and veteran communities. Without them, a large population would struggle to get on their feet, which could cause even more harm to the community. We went to Cannon Place on various dates from 9/16/24 to 9/19/24 and 10/3/24 since we were all unable to go on the same days as a group. We had to go on different days to meet the clinical requirement in hours.

Destiny Bell

Health Service Access Among Homeless Veterans: Health Access Challenges Faced by Homeless African American Veterans

In the article, *Health Service Among Homeless Veterans: Health Access Challenges Faced by Homeless African American Veterans*, the authors Crone et al. discuss the public health crisis of veteran homelessness, mainly focusing on veterans in the homeless population who are of ethnic minority. Ending homelessness among veterans has been a national policy goal for nearly 20 years. However, thousands of veterans still have nowhere to call home. An annual survey conducted on homelessness found that 37,878 veterans were homeless on a single night, and around 118,000 veterans accessed an emergency shelter over one year (Crone et al., 2022). Studies have shown that race is a common risk factor for homelessness. It was found that being African American was associated with a 1.5 times increased risk of homelessness in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (Crone et al., 2022). In a recent study of VA mental health service users, it was found that being African American increased the odds of homelessness by almost four times compared to their white peers (Crone et al., 2022).

African American veterans are often disproportionately overrepresented among the homeless veteran population. While many fields play a role in addressing the disproportionate lack of access amongst African American veterans, the healthcare system, including the VA, is positioned to meet the needs of these veterans (Crane et al., 2024). Four fundamental essentials noted in helping homeless veterans were Affordable housing, primary care enrollment, virtual resources, and colocation (Crane et al., 2022). Local advocates can work with public housing authorities to increase their project-based allocations of housing vouchers

and ensure sufficient HUD-VASH vouchers and other case management services to meet the needs of veterans as they transition into independent housing (Crane et al., 2022). By enrolling homeless veterans in primary care services, we should ensure that we tailor the outreach services. Hence, they are accessible to the veteran and targeted to their specific focus (Crane et al., 2024). To ensure collocation, The VA could expand and continue using virtual appointments and support local community providers by providing office, meetings, and training spaces within the community-based clinics (Crane et al., 2022).

The Problem of Veteran Homelessness: An Update for the New Decade

In the article "The Problem of Veteran Homelessness: An Update for the New Decade" by Tsai et al., the authors discuss the federal commitment to prevent and end homelessness amongst U.S. military veterans and the progress made. In 2009, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced its commitment to prevent and end homelessness among veterans (Tsai et al., 2021). During this period, nearly 12% of the homeless adult population were veterans (Tsai et al., 2021). There has been considerable progress made in terms of the creation of programs and reduction in annual counts of homeless veterans; from 2007 to 2017, there was an overall 44% decline in sheltered homeless veterans (Tsai et al., 2021).

This study uses two data sources: a nationally sensitive community sample of veterans and national administrative data from the V.A. and homeless programs. The national representative sample comprised 4069 surveyed veterans (Tsai et al., 2021). Results of the study displayed that the lifetime prevalence of adult homelessness was 10.2 percent, with the highest being in participants aged 30 to 44 years old. The data obtained from Veterans Affairs

shows that 4.2% of all Veterans Affairs service users used homeless services, and nearly 27.9% were first-time V.A. homeless service users (Tsai et al., 2021). It was found that veterans who were racial or ethnic minorities were more likely to report homelessness; however, there was no Sykes difference in the lifetime prevalence of homelessness. However, it showed that male veterans were more likely to use the homeless programs (Tsai et al., 2021).

Whisper Brown

Peer Support Activities for Veterans, Serving Members, and Their Families: Results of a Scoping Review

This article discusses peer support activities for veterans, serving members, and their families. This article explores how peer support, a network of people who have experienced similar things, has long been used by many people, especially war veterans and their families, to assist one another through various difficulties. This article aimed to characterize and catalog the nature of peer support activities and related outcomes in veterans, serving members, and family member populations. It was based on previous reviews and guided by the seven domains of well-being in the Canadian framework for veteran well-being. The following inquiry served as the basis for this scoping review: What is the current state of knowledge regarding peer support programs assessed in the literature for veterans, active-duty personnel, and their families? This review covered 101 publications from 6 different countries in total. The publications were grouped according to publication features, participant information, peer information, and peer support activity information. The article explores how peer support initiatives enhance the overall, multifaceted well-being of veterans, active-duty personnel, and their families. In

addition to highlighting the gaps in the existing literature, this scoping review lays a crucial foundation for upcoming studies on peer support for these populations, particularly in the Canadian setting.

During this study, it became clear that the evaluation methods used in the literature for peer support activities vary and are frequently predicated on pilot studies. When analyzing the review's findings, it was essential to consider the existence of numerous pilot studies because the conclusions drawn from these kinds of publications may vary when sample sizes are more extensive. The literature in this field was still in its infancy, as evidenced by the rise in publications and the abundance of pilot studies. Additionally, peer support programs were identified as becoming more and more popular among veterans, serving members, and their families. The authors were able to locate the vast range of elements that are now being used and assessed in the provision of peer support to veterans, active military personnel, and their families because of the review's broad focus. Although most of the publications in this article assessed programs that were offered synchronously to male veterans suffering from mental health issues, there was a great deal of variation when it came to the other listed attributes of the participants and activities.

Furthermore, this study aimed to characterize the type of peer support programs tailored to veterans, active-duty personnel, and their families and to integrate their results into Veterans Affairs Canada's framework for Canadian veterans' well-being. Peer support programs for these populations, which are already in use by several government agencies, are getting more attention in this literature and have the potential to enhance well-being in all spheres. This scoping review lays the groundwork for a further study on peer support among Canadian

veterans, active military personnel, and their families. This evaluation expands upon prior findings by employing a collaborative methodology with diverse advisors. It represents a further stride toward harmonizing the vocabulary of peer support and the planning, implementation, and assessment of these initiatives.

A Sector Wheel Approach to Understanding the Needs and Barriers to Services among Homeless-Experienced Veteran Families

This article examines how veteran families facing homelessness face a severe problem, yet little is known about their needs and the obstacles they face in accessing resources. To better inform service providers for this significant demographic, this qualitative study looked at the needs, experiences, and obstacles to assistance among veteran families who have experienced homelessness. Twenty-five experienced veteran parents with a history of homelessness were interviewed for this paper through semi-structured interviews between February and September of 2016, comprising nine moms and nine fathers, as well as seven homeless support providers from Los Angeles County. The interviews were conducted using the "Sector Wheel for Under-Resourced Populations" data elicitation approach, which allowed the participant to steer the conversation by outlining the various aspects of a family's life that are impacted by homelessness. The audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed, and topics were assigned codes using a unique coding system.

As the study progressed, interviews with homeless veteran families revealed increased stress related to parenting and declining mental health. The lack of family-focused services, not knowing where to turn for assistance, trouble connecting to social and health services in the

community, and other obstacles were among the challenges participants mentioned when accessing housing, social, and health services with children. Parents experienced prejudice from landlords and could not obtain long-term accommodation in secure communities. Furthermore, the results also showed that veteran families that have experienced homelessness require family-centered, all-encompassing programs that take into account their unique requirements. The discrimination against veterans who are facing family homelessness must be addressed, and more access to reasonably priced permanent homes in family-friendly neighborhoods must be provided through advocacy efforts.

Amanda Johnson

Changes in Homelessness Among U.S. Veterans After Implementation of the Ending Veteran Homelessness Initiative

The study explored the impact of the Veterans Health Administration's Ending Veteran Homelessness initiative, launched to rehouse homeless veterans. Between 2007 and 2022, veteran homelessness decreased by 55.3%, while general population homelessness dropped by only 8.6%. This success is attributed to a "housing first" approach, offering low-barrier housing, increased housing vouchers, and support services for veterans (O'Toole et al., 2024).

The findings emphasize the role health systems can play in addressing homelessness by targeting complex social determinants of health. The initiative provided comprehensive support by engaging community partners and using real-time data, contributing to sustained improvements in veterans' housing stability. Lessons learned from this program apply to other health systems seeking to address homelessness (O'Toole et al., 2024).

Understanding the Dynamics of Homelessness among Veterans Receiving Outpatient Care:

Lessons Learned from Universal Screening

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (V.A.) has prioritized addressing veteran homelessness since 2009, implementing a universal housing instability screen for all outpatient veterans. This screen has connected many veterans with essential resources and highlighted personal and systemic factors influencing their housing insecurity. Although effective, challenges remain in securing long-term, stable housing solutions for veterans (Montgomery, 2021).

Veteran homelessness, visible since the Vietnam War, spiked after 9/11. A 2009 report estimated over 73,000 homeless veterans, with 40% unsheltered. Since then, this population has decreased by 50%, though chronic homelessness remains a concern. Veterans, particularly those living in poverty, face higher homelessness risks compared to nonveterans (Montgomery, 2021).

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