

Lack of Gender Differences in Prevalence of Homelessness in the Emergency Department (Poster).

Brett Feldman MSPAS, PA-C

Lehigh Valley Health Network, Brett_J.Feldman@lvhn.org

Alexandra M. Craen BA

Lehigh Valley Health Network, alexandra.craen@lvhn.org

Osman Z. Abbasi DO

Lehigh Valley Health Network, osman.abbasi@lvhn.org

Zachary M. Dillon MD

Lehigh Valley Health Network, zachary.dillon@lvhn.org

Kenneth Dzike MD

Lehigh Valley Health Network, kenneth.dzike@lvhn.org

See next page for additional authors

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarlyworks.lvhn.org/select-program>



Part of the [Medical Education Commons](#)

Published In/Presented At

Feldman, B. Craen, A. M., Abbasi, O. Z., Dillon, Z. M., Dzike, K. Enyart, J. Fritzges, J. A., Glaubman, J. L., Kiernan, E. A., Yodor, N. M., Friel, T. J., Dusza, S. W., Greenberg, M. R. (2017, March). *Lack of Gender Differences in Prevalence of Homelessness in the Emergency Department*. Poster Presented at: 2017 SELECT Capstone Posters and Presentations Day. Kasych Family Pavilion, Lehigh Valley Health Network, Allentown, PA.

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by LVHN Scholarly Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in LVHN Scholarly Works by an authorized administrator. For more information, please contact LibraryServices@lvhn.org.

Authors

Brett Feldman MSPAS, PA-C; Alexandra M. Craen BA; Osman Z. Abbasi DO; Zachary M. Dillon MD; Kenneth Dzike MD; Joshua Enyart DO; Julie A. Fritzges DO; Jessica L. Glaubman DO; Emily A. Kiernan DO; Nathaniel M. Yoder DO; Timothy J. Friel MD; Stephen W. Dusza DrPH; and Marna R. Greenberg DO, MPH, FACEP

Lack of Gender Differences in Prevalence of Homelessness in the Emergency Department

Brett J Feldman, MSPAS, PA-C, Alexandra M Craen, BA, Osman Z Abbasi, DO, Zachary M Dillon, MD, Kenneth Dzike, MD, Joshua Enyart, DO, Julie A Fritzges, DO, Jessica L Glaubman, DO, Emily A Kiernan, DO, Nathaniel M Yodor, DO, Timothy J Friel, MD, Stephen W Dusza, DrPH, Marna Rayl Greenberg, DO, MPH
Lehigh Valley Health Network, Allentown, PA

Introduction

- Over 500,000 people are homeless each night in America
- They have substantially higher rates of Emergency Department (ED) and hospital use
- Current research has not focused on gender differences
- Awareness of the population's characteristics should help with identifying the patients and providing care

Methods

- Data was collected from 5/2015 - 2/2016 in the three LVHN EDs after IRB approval
- Patients were approached to take a prospective five-question homelessness screening survey
- To participate, patients had to be: 18 years or older, speak English, have capacity, not be critically ill, and be willing to participate

Survey

- 1 Been concerned about losing your housing
- 2 Changed residences more than twice
- 3 Lives with a friend or family member you do not normally reside with due to financial hardship
- 4 Been evicted or served an eviction notice
- 5 Slept outside, in an abandoned building, your car, in an emergency shelter, or in a motel due to financial hardship



Results

- 4494 subjects met inclusion criteria, but 99 surveys were excluded (took the survey before); 4395 subjects were analyzed in total
- The mean age of subjects was 50.8 years (SD 20.5) and 2557 (58.2%) were women
- No difference in the rate of homelessness was observed between male and female participants with 135 men out of 1835 (7.4%) and 173 out of 2557 (6.8%) women screening positive, ($p=0.472$)
- The mean age of those screening positive was 42.4 years (SD=16.2) and women was 43.7 years (SD=16.9)
- Both men (N=41) and women (N=40) admitted they had slept outside, in an abandoned building, in their car, a shelter or a motel due to financial hardship

| Distribution of Survey Questions by Respondent Gender | | | | | | |
|---|--------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------|
| Question | Coding | Gender | | | Total | P-value |
| | | Female | Male | Transgender | | |
| Change in Residence | No | 2518 (98.5) | 1799 (98.0) | 3 (100) | 4320 (98.3) | 0.53 |
| | Yes | 39 (1.5) | 36 (2.0) | 0 (0) | 75 (1.7) | |
| Been concerned about losing house | No | 2420 (94.6) | 1717 (93.6) | 3 (100) | 4140 (94.2) | 0.29 |
| | Yes | 137 (5.4) | 118 (6.4) | 0 (0) | 255 (5.8) | |
| Lived with a family member | No | 2433 (95.2) | 1739 (94.8) | 2 (66.7) | 4174 (95.0) | 0.07 |
| | Yes | 124 (4.9) | 96 (5.2) | 1 (33.3) | 221 (5.0) | |
| Been evicted or served eviction | No | 2513 (98.3) | 1813 (98.8) | 3 (100) | 4329 (98.5) | 0.37 |
| | Yes | 44 (1.7) | 22 (1.2) | 0 (0) | 66 (1.5) | |
| Slept outside or in abandoned building | No | 2517 (98.4) | 1794 (97.8) | 3 (100) | 4314 (98.2) | 0.26 |
| | Yes | 40 (1.6) | 41 (2.2) | 0 (0) | 81 (1.8) | |

Discussion

- 40 women and 41 men answered "yes" to a concrete question about sleeping outside or in an abandoned building
- Other studies showed homelessness associated with adult males that are more likely to have a psychiatric or substance abuse problem
- Current resources that are not gender specific may not meet their housing and healthcare needs

Conclusion

- We did not observe differences in the rate of homelessness between men and women who screened positive for homelessness in the ED
- This combats stereotypes that this social issue is a problem primarily affecting male populations
- Public health interventions aimed at homeless populations should be cognizant that both genders are dealing with this burden
- A deeper understanding of the demographics of homelessness may allow for better access to medical treatment since women have different health care needs than men

References:

1. US Department of Housing and Urban Development. The 2015 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress. Washington, DC: US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Community Planning and Development; 2015. Accessed September 3, 2016. <https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2015-AHAR-Part-1.pdf>
2. LaCalle E, Rabin E, Genes N. High-frequency users of emergency department care. The Journal Of Emergency Medicine. 2013 Jun;44(6):1167-1173.
3. Hwang S.W., Weaver J., Aubry T., and Hoch J.S. Hospital Costs and Length of Stay Among Homeless Patients Admitted to Medical, Surgical, and Psychiatric Services. Medical Care, 2011; 49(4):350-354.
4. Ku B, Scott K, Kertesz S, Pitts S. Factors associated with use of urban emergency departments by the U.S. homeless population. Public Health Reports 2010 May; 125(3):398-405.

© 2017 Lehigh Valley Health Network