

Impact of Supportive Housing Program Services on Loneliness and Well-Being Among Previously Homeless Individuals

Michelle Wagner MPH

Ashwini Kamath Mulki MD, MPH

Hoonani M. Cuadrado MSPAS, PA-C

Autumn Kieber-Emmons MD, MPH

Susan E. Hansen MA

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarlyworks.lvhn.org/posters>



Part of the [Mental and Social Health Commons](#)

This Article 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.

Impact of Supportive Housing Program Services on Loneliness and Well-Being Among Previously Homeless Individuals

Michelle Wagner, MPH,¹ Ashwini Kamath Mulki, MD, MPH,¹ Hoonani Cuadrado, MSPAS, PA-C,¹ Autumn Kieber-Emmons, MD, MPH,² Susan Hanson, MA²

Roya Hamadani, MPH, Abigail Letcher, MD, Sherri Brokopp-Binder, PhD, Benjamin Stephens, BSW, Bennie Eliason, BS, CHW, Seth Campbell, PA-C

¹Valley Health Partners, ²Lehigh Valley Health Network Department of Family Medicine, Allentown, PA

INTRODUCTION

Individuals experiencing homelessness and housing instability are highly susceptible to loneliness and social isolation.¹ Supportive housing programs emphasize re-integrating individuals experiencing homelessness to the community and provide individualized support. Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) is a housing model authorized through the McKinney-Vento Act, where permanent community-based housing is paired with long term supportive services for individuals with a disability. In 2020, 184,394 more PSH beds were available across the United States than in 2007.²

- Loneliness and social isolation are associated with negative effects on both physical and psychological health, as loneliness is a source of both acute and chronic stress.³
- A limited or non-existent social network with less medical support may exacerbate negative physical or psychological health issues.⁴
- Access to safe and affordable housing can be the foundation upon which people build their lives, however housing itself does not solve social isolation and the negative health implications associated.⁵
- Among individuals who were recently housed, literature lacks evidence to demonstrate an increase in well-being among those who have been housed without supportive services.⁶

This study intends to explore benefits of supportive housing programs, particularly the impact supportive housing programs have on loneliness and well-being. The participants are from two supportive housing programs in the Lehigh Valley, Ripple Community Inc (RCI) Village and The Lehigh Conference of Churches.

PURPOSE

Improved quality of life among individuals with access to supportive housing services has been demonstrated in Allentown, Pennsylvania.⁷ This study aims to build upon local research to measure the impact of loneliness and well-being among previously homeless individuals utilizing supportive housing services. Our team intends for this study to be the first phase of continued research on the impact that supportive housing services have on previously homeless individuals' loneliness and well-being. We aim to collaborate with the local housing authority to inform increased programming to support quality of life and social connectedness among previously homeless individuals.

METHODS

Each organization runs a supportive housing program, where the team will recruit 30 participants for the study. This study intends to explore benefits of supportive housing programs, particularly the impact supportive housing programs have on loneliness and well-being. The participants are from two supportive housing programs in the Lehigh Valley. Housing program leaders who are actively engaged in this project are included on the study team. Participants will complete two survey tools – 20 Question UCLA Loneliness Scale and the 5 Question World Health Organization Well-Being Index. Additionally, qualitative in-depth interviews will run with a subset of the participants until saturation in themes is reached.

The target population is individuals who have previously experienced homelessness and are now housed in a supportive housing program.

For the purposes of this study, participants will be included if they

1. are previously homeless
2. have been housed in a supportive housing program at Ripple Community Inc (RCI) or The Lehigh Conference of Churches (TLCC) and
3. are 18 years of age or older.

The UCLA Loneliness Scale and the World Health Organization Well-Being Index will be administered to participants at RCI and TLCC after recruitment and informed consent protocol is complete.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

The project team is working collaboratively with Ripple Community Inc. Community Center and The Lehigh Conference of Churches Daybreak Community Center in Allentown, Pa. Pictured below is a housing unit within Ripple Community Inc. (RCI) Village's Permanent Supportive Housing Program.



REFERENCES

1. Perron, J. L., Cleverley, K., & Kidd, S. A. (2014). Resilience, loneliness, and psychological distress among homeless youth. *Archives of Psychiatric Nursing*, 28(4), 226-229.
2. HUD: The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (2021). The 2020 Annual Report (AHAR) to Congress. January 2021.
3. Leigh-Hunt, N., Bagguley, D., Bash, K., Turner, V., Turnbull, S., Valtorta, N., & Caan, W. (2017). An overview of systematic reviews on the public health consequences of social isolation and loneliness. *Public health*, 152, 157-171.
4. Mushtaq, R., Shoib, S., Shah, T., & Mushtaq, S. (2014). Relationship between loneliness, psychiatric disorders and physical health? A review on the psychological aspects of loneliness. *Journal of clinical and diagnostic research: JCDR*, 8(9), WE01.
5. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2020). *Social isolation and loneliness in older adults: Opportunities for the health care system*. National Academies Press.
6. Aubry, T., Bloch, G., Brcic, V., Saad, A., Magwood, O., Abdalla, T., & Pottier, K. (2020). Effectiveness of permanent supportive housing and income assistance interventions for homeless individuals in high-income countries: a systematic review. *The Lancet Public Health*, 5(6), e342-e360.
7. Coleman, J. (2017). Increasing overall well-being is salient in treating homelessness. *Social work in public health*, 32(3), 154-165.