

Health Home Connect Project

The Health Home Connect Project (HHC) will address the health care needs of chronically homeless elderly women in the Skid Row area of downtown Los Angeles. With the support of Downtown Women's Center (DWC), a non-profit providing permanent supportive housing and a safe and healthy community, fostering dignity, respect, and personal stability, and advocating to end homelessness for women, HHC will address our older homeless population's needs, through a comprehensive array of supportive services.

Often considered to be a "hidden" segment of the homeless population, older adults who are homeless have circumstances and needs that are largely unmet by existing homeless services organizations and agencies – an issue made more dire by the growing numbers of aging homeless. The purpose of HHC will be to address the specific health care needs of chronically homeless women over the age of 55, identified by Skid Row's Coordinated Entry System (CES) as particularly vulnerable. CES targets and quickly houses the community's most vulnerable homeless individuals through two main features: a universal assessment system and a centralized housing navigation system. While CES is making substantial strides toward ending homelessness, there is not yet a coordinated system in place that connects them with health care services – the most critical component to maintaining housing and personal stability.

The proposed HHC, will utilize the current CES database to identify individuals who are older, female, and not connected to a medical home. Each individual will be linked to comprehensive case management services to ensure they are connected to a medical home of their choosing and are receiving quality health care services, whether at DWC or an offsite facility. HHC will provide an opportunity to engage in discussion with local health care providers and policy makers that are involved in serving Skid Row, such as the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Health Services. By the end of the first year of the project period, we will aim to link 30 chronically homeless older women to a medical home.