

UCLA Health Homeless Healthcare Collaborative Executive Summary

Los Angeles County has over 66,000 people who are unsheltered or have temporary shelter. The COVID-19 pandemic caused an increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness due to unforeseen economic hardships. Over the last five years, UCLA Health's emergency departments have treated approximately 15,000 individual people experiencing homelessness (PEH) for various medical, psychiatric, and social needs. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, UCLA Health recommitted to strengthen the clinical and preventive services for this unique and highly vulnerable population. The UCLA Health Homeless Healthcare Collaborative program will expand access of efficient, equitable and high-quality healthcare to unsheltered and temporarily sheltered people throughout the greater Los Angeles area. The program will directly partner with academic, community health, and social service organizations to achieve improved health outcomes and connect these patients to critical social services, including housing and employment opportunities.

The UCLA Homeless Healthcare Collaborative academic, community health, and social service partners include:

- UCLA Health hospital & clinic system, UCLA campus, the school of medicine at UCLA, the school of public health at UCLA, and the school of public policy at UCLA
- Community organizations (e.g. The Venice Family Clinic, The People Concern, other Federally Qualified Health Centers)
- City/county agencies and elected officials

While the Homeless Healthcare Collaborative will focus more broadly on improving coordinated healthcare services for PEH, the initial phase of this strategy will include the launch of a direct community care program. This program will be comprised of a team of nurses, physicians, social workers, residents, and health science students who will travel to areas of need in two customized medical vans. The teams will provide comprehensive primary and urgent care services in high-density areas (street and encampment outreach) and to individual people who would benefit from post-discharge evaluation following a recent hospital, emergency room, or clinic visit (referral-based services). After an initial period of 3-6 months, the medical teams and fleet of vehicles will scale up in size and scope of healthcare services based on identified community needs.

To support this program, UCLA Health will combine philanthropy with future reimbursable care, a strategy that would be aided by state bill AB 367: The Street Medicine Act (currently in the CA assembly), to make primary and specialty care available to as many PEH as possible.

The overall goal of the UCLA Health Homeless Healthcare Collaborative is to promote greater health equity and improved clinical outcomes for people experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles. This innovative model will improve access to comprehensive, high-quality healthcare and social services, build greater trust and rapport between PEH and UCLA Health

professionals, and enhance patient care navigation to support the receipt of the appropriate care in the appropriate clinical setting.