

The People Concern Malibu Outreach Team

December 2023 Report

Outcomes

In December 2023, the total number of contacts made by the outreach team was 279, with 68 unduplicated contacts. 14 individuals were contacted in permanent or temporary housing. Of the 54 unduplicated contacts currently on the streets, 3 were new contacts, with 1 of them becoming repeat contacts. There are currently 26 contacts considered in various stages of engagement, and 28 are refusing services at this point. The outreach team continues to contact these individuals with the goal of getting them engaged in the housing process.

Success Story

Undiagnosed mental health disorders and substance abuse issues are extremely difficult for someone to manage if they are experiencing homelessness. There are no comfortable and private places to rest, and you must constantly be vigilant about your surroundings. It is difficult for you to plan for the future and keep track of your belongings due to the constantly shifting environment and insecurity. Without a proper place to call home, mental health and substance abuse issues only get worse. It seems that both work in conjunction to worsen the other. This is why dual-diagnosis facilities are so important for our community.

TE is one of the most positive and honest individuals I've met in the field. He had no qualms about sharing his story with us. He lost his job, girlfriend, daughter and home. Traumatic interpersonal relationships and job insecurity led him to the streets. He attempted to stay with extended family temporarily but the added cost of supporting another person led to him being asked to leave. We met TE on the beaches of Malibu. A bright smile and positive demeanor hid his underlying issues. TE was looking for work and eventually found a job at a restaurant but was let go for unspecified reasons. He surmised it was because he was unable to take a shower and wash his clothes properly. There were a few cycles of him landing a job, working a few weeks and being let go. I can only guess that it was due to the same reasons as the first job. Over the next few months, his mental health and substance abuse issues were becoming more of an issue. He was put on an involuntary hold and ended up in a psychiatric facility. After he was released, he agreed to receive mental health treatment from VFC's street medicine team including long term medications that would help treat his issues while living without a home. The medications had a positive effect on his mental health and it was apparent. His dialog was more sensical than before and our conversations were more productive. TE eventually admitted he was lost and needed guidance. The Malibu team then assisted TE with receiving his previously lost disability payments, mental health support and a path to permanent housing. Then TE admitted that he needed help with his substance issues and the team secured admission for a dual diagnosis drug rehabilitation program outside of the city. We drove TE to the center in mid-December and we are proud to say that he has continued with the program and is having a positive experience.

Rehabilitation centers can help people suffering from both mental health and substance abuse issues. They will also take care of the individual's housing needs, albeit temporarily. And though it may seem like a stopgap to permanent housing, the goal is for the person to gain the tools to live a life free from substance abuse for

the rest of their life. And to properly assess a person's issues with multiple individual/group therapy sessions and behavioral reports on the client in the milieu. Therefore, the client will receive a clear and comprehensive picture of their mental health issues and a plan to manage their lives going forward. Our next step is to permanently house TE and provide wraparound support to ensure he remains housed, healthy and safe.

Community Interaction

The team continues to work with the Malibu community, city council, CART, local churches, Venice Family Clinic (VFC) and the Sheriff's Department. Through these relationships we have received help with locating and assisting the unhoused.

The team continues to work closely with several LA County agencies such as the VA, Venice Family Clinic, LAHSA, DMH and St. Josephs to provide a wide array of services and housing opportunities for our clients.

Next Steps:

The Outreach team is excited to participate in the 2024 homeless count. With the assistance of the city, the county and all of the wonderful volunteers we will be able to locate individuals experiencing homelessness in areas of the city that we may have otherwise missed. We look forward to engaging any new people we find and begin working with them on their journey to becoming housed, healthy and safe.