Reflective Journal E

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The term homelessness is defined as the people living way below the current living standards that a normal person requires. This includes people living on streets and, in the most severe cases, near the dumpsters. The term can also be used for the people who move place to place for a temporary residence like their friends home or relatives home, etc.

**Homelessness statistics**

According to the statistics, there were 552,830 people who were homeless for a night in the US in 2018 which means almost 0.3% more in 2018 than in 2017. Also, 37% of the homeless people have families with them which is extremely alarming. Another factor that is of great importance is the ethnicity like most homeless people were Africans Americans and American Indian.

**Homelessness causes**

Homelessness is caused because of the high prices of houses available. Basically, poverty and homelessness are interrelated. The other causes include:

* Divorce
* Natural disasters (earthquake, rainfall)
* Fire
* Low income
* Eviction by law
* Mental disorder ( for instance PTSD)
* Unemployment
* Substance abuse

and many more.

**Vulnerable population**

Homeless people are also vulnerable to lots of things. They lack healthcare facilities and not enough food supplies due to which there is an increased rate in the deaths of the people.

In **north-west 33rd terrace, Lauderhill, Fl 33311** most of the population is of different ethnicity and due to this the number of homeless people is more. In this specific are there is a family center named ***“Edward W. Smith, Jr. Family Center”***, provides the food to homeless people. They also give them free showers and clean clothes irrespective of their ethnicity or religion. As in the US, the poverty rate is 12.3% and among this rate, most of the people are either refugees or of different ethnicity like Hispanics, African Americans, and, etc. This is the major plus point because homeless people are already living a miserable life yet they have to face discrimination on the base of their color and, gender. They also arrange seminars and different awareness programs for the community to participate in where they can learn different opportunities to make their lives better. They also go home to home to get the volunteers of different age groups so that they can create a friendly environment. One of their main agenda is to work with different healthcare service providers so that they can provide healthcare facility to homeless people. As health is one of the major concern for the homeless people. They do not have access to the vaccines for chronic diseases and do possess lower immunity. This can also be dangerous for the people who came in contact with them because they are also exposed to the disease. It is therefore very important to first arrange the healthcare facility for the homeless. In ***Edward W. Smith, Jr. Family Center*** they first send the homeless people to their healthcare facility where they are checked and if they have any diseases they are eligible to get the treatment for free (Koh & O’Connell2016). This step also ensures the safety of the volunteers and encouraging more people to take part as volunteers.

**Improved sanitary conditions for homeless**

In ***Edward W. Smith, Jr. Family Center*** as discussed earlier that there is a complete healthcare facility but healthcare is not enough when the sanitary conditions are poor. So in this health center they have a separate sanitary facility that they have made with the help of donations in the community. Without proper sanitary facility they are bound to use the streets or other dumping sites which will be unhygienic for even the community as well.

**Mental health promotion**

In order to accumulate the homeless people in the community, there is a need to modify the available healthcare services. Although there are excellent health care services in the north Lauderhill, yet it still needs to be modified. The people who are homeless do have a past that affects them in a way that they develop mental disorders. Due to this most of them become criminals, drug addicts, and etc. this is a severe issue because this is a direct threat to the community, living around them. As in the community there are people of different age groups and mostly children and teens are vulnerable, there is a chance that they also indulge in these activities. In our area, free therapy camps are arranged weekly where the people can discuss their problems and if they have a mental disorder that needs to be treated they are immediately admitted to the healthcare facility. The counselors also notify the center if the person has violent behavior or have criminal tendencies so that they can be treated quickly. They do have a small rehab center for the homeless drug addict where they are provided education and treatment. Many educated people volunteer to teach them so that they can pursue their choice of career after releasing from the rehab. This initiative will help the homeless as well as the community and will create a secure environment worth living (Urbanoski .et.all 2018).

**Assistance for homeless people**

Another service that ***Edward W. Smith, Jr. Family Center*** offers is to provide assistance to homeless people so that they can at least get some help and can make themselves independent. They offer them different employment opportunities like selling newspapers from block to block or working in Walmart. They also give social support to the homeless people that lost their home due to natural disasters like earthquakes, rainfall, fire, and, etc (Sumalinog & Hwang 2017). Additionally, they provide counseling and different therapies for the people who lost their home because these people are already in the trauma and had to start their life and built a home for themselves.

**Working with the homeless**

Working with the homeless community is extremely tuff because they are afraid of the people. They have a constant fear that the food offered to them is limited and only some of them can get that. This causes them to react accompany with fighting and cutting lines. But, in ***Edward W. Smith, Jr. Family Center***, they make sure to avoid any kind of distress by equally dividing the food by putting them into small boxes. They also work in collaboration with our local church. This event is called “***kindness for everyone”*** on every Saturday. Most of the people love to participate in this event. They call the food boxes a gift so that no one feels embarrassed. This sends a very positive message creates awareness within the people that they need to help the people in the need.

**Strengths and obstacles**

There are a few strengths and challenges that still need to be addressed. Homeless people encounter lots of abuse and hatred from society due to which they are unable to cope up with others. Likewise, the people working in the family center for homeless also have to bear all the problems that are discussed earlier. They do have to run the center on donation which is very difficult for them as there is a lot of expenditure on the facilities provided to the homeless. It is therefore required that the government should support these organizations or provide them some funds. Also, there should be health facilities and sanitary facilities present in every community provided by the government for the homeless.so that together we built a better future.

**References**

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