

Mitigating the impact of COVID-19 in Missouri's populations experiencing homelessness

CONTRIBUTOR: *Laura Kliethermes, Grants Transformation Director, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services*

CATEGORY: **Epidemiology & Laboratory Capacity (ELC)**

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services partnered with a contractor to develop and maintain community partnerships and coordinate resources to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 in populations experiencing homelessness.

The “What”

Missouri averages approximately 6,000 individuals experiencing homelessness on a given night, according to the Continuums of Care to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) used Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for the Prevention and Control of Emerging Infectious Diseases (ELC) funding to partner with a contractor to develop and maintain community partnerships and coordinate resources to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 in populations experiencing homelessness.

The contractor will begin regular screening and testing at appropriate designated testing sites and will partner with stakeholders including street medicine and direct outreach teams, ministries, homeless coalitions, and Continuums of Care to provide COVID-19 mitigation education, personal protective equipment, cleaning and sanitization supplies and indoor air quality improvements to congregate settings and homeless shelters.


The “So What”

Through this statewide effort, DHSS intends to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in homeless shelters and congregate settings across the state. Data on population served, events conducted, number of tests administered, and any other relevant data will be collected via monthly progress reports and a final summary report to be submitted by the contractor at the end of the project period (August 2024). This data will be shared at the close of the project.

The “Now What”

The long-term desired outcome of this project is to mitigate COVID-19 and other infectious disease transmission in homeless shelters and congregate settings by improving protocols and procedures and providing education on effective mitigation practices.

Funding for this effort will end on July 31, 2024; however, resources and education provided to enhance mitigation practices and improve infectious disease outbreak protocols will continue to have a long-term positive impact on COVID-19 and disease transmission in these settings.

 Funding source: This work was supported in part by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) cooperative agreement #NU38OT000297. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the CDC.



More stories are available at stories.cste.org

SUBMITTED FEBRUARY 2024