National Veterans' Technical Assistance Center (NVTAC) Team

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NVTAC

NVTAC Background

➢ Contracted by the Department of Labor - Veterans' Employment and Training Services (DOL-VETS) to provide support to Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) grantees

➢ Provide technical assistance (TA) designed to increase grantees' ability to establish and operate successful HVRP grants

➢ Support HVRP grantees throughout their period of performance to ensure that challenges are resolved quickly

➢ Provide effective training and peer-to-peer learning opportunities that result in increased knowledge and adoption of innovative practices among HVRP programs nationwide

TA Services (1 of 2)

➢ Providing one-on-one TA support to HVRP grantees

➢ Facilitating monthly Community of Practice (CoP) sessions

➢ Hosting biannual Virtual Learning Series

➢ Providing consistent training opportunities

➢ Mentoring and relationship building

➢ Providing leadership support and development

➢ Assisting with resource identification and navigation

TA Services (2 of 2)

➢ Collaboration and partnerships

➢ Outreach to veterans, employers, or partners

➢ Training for new staff

➢ Intake, assessment, and case management

➢ Embedding diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) in service delivery and operating processes

➢ Integrating services

➢ Career-driven training and career pathways

➢ Leadership skills

➢ And more!

Introduction to Underserved Populations and Associated Stigma

Who is Affected and Why?

➢ Youth (ages 18-24)

➢ Seniors (ages 55+)

➢ Individuals with mental health challenges

➢ Individuals with physical health challenges

➢ Women

➢ Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)

Youth (ages 18-24) (1 of 3)

➢ Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and other individuals who identify as belonging to the community (LGBTQ+) youth are at 120 percent higher risk of reporting homelessness

➢ Black or African American youth are at 83 percent higher risk of reporting homelessness

➢ 50 percent of youth experiencing homelessness in a 12-month period experienced it for the first time

➢ Latinx, non-white youth are at 33 percent higher risk of reporting homelessness

(Source: Chapin Hall at University of Chicago)

Youth (ages 18-24) (2 of 3)

➤ Annual household income of less than $24,000 are at 162 percent higher risk of reporting homelessness

➤ Unmarried parenting youth are at 200 percent higher risk of reporting homelessness

➤ Youth receiving less than a high school diploma are at 346 percent higher risk of reporting homelessness

(Source: Chapin Hall at University of Chicago)

➢ Youth with compounding challenges are at a higher risk of being underserved

➢ Lack of access to resources for youth-specific assistance programs

➢ Lack of employment opportunities for youth without work experience

➢ Lack of housing opportunities due to limited or no rental history

➢ Lack of rental assistance for youth

➢ Homelessness among seniors is increasing nationwide

➢ Nearly 50 percent of seniors experiencing homelessness became homeless for the first time after age 50

➢ As of summer 2020, approximately 50 percent of homeless single adults were 65 or older

➢ Fastest growing age group population of people experiencing homelessness

➢ Research on homelessness shows both lifelong struggles and more recent setbacks are the cause of homelessness in the senior population

(Source: American Society on Aging)

Seniors (ages 55+) (2 of 3)

➢ Analysis among cities nationwide project that homelessness in the senior population is expected to nearly triple by 2030

➢ Substance use, social isolation, barriers to transportation, financial insecurity, medical challenges, health-related behaviors are all risk factors for this population

➢ Traditional homelessness and housing resources are not prepared to meet the complex needs of the senior population, including health, social, and psychological needs

(Source: National Alliance to End Homelessness)

Seniors (ages 55+) (3 of 3)

➤ Ageism in the workplace is a barrier to re-entering the workforce

➤ Lack of access to needed benefits prevents seniors from basic necessities such as housing, healthcare, and income

➤ Lack of technology training and resources to promote workforce re-entry and equity

➤ Social isolation and loneliness

Individuals with Mental Health Challenges (1 of 2)

➢ In 2021, 76.2 percent of individuals experiencing homelessness had a current mental health challenge

➢ Alcohol and drug use were among the most common mental health challenges, at 36.7 percent and 21.7 percent, respectively

➢ Schizophrenia spectrum disorders and major depression followed, at 12.4 percent and 12.6 percent, respectively

➢ Based on research and analysis, the burden of psychiatric morbidity in individuals experiencing homelessness is substantial

(Source: National Library of Medicine)

Individuals with Mental Health Challenges (2 of 2)

➢ Stigma towards mental health challenges is a barrier for individuals re-entering the workplace

➢ Lack of accommodations or accessibility in the workplace prevents individuals from sustaining careers

➢ Misconception that individuals with mental health challenges cannot work

➢ Access to needed mental health resources is often a challenge

➢ Compounded factors make obtaining and maintaining a job more difficult

Individuals with Physical Health Challenges (1 of 2)

➤ Physical health challenges are a major cause of homelessness

➤ Injuries or illnesses can start out as a simple health condition, but can later lead to employment instability

➤ Exhausting sick leave and not being able to maintain a typical work schedule can lead to unemployment

➤ Physically demanding jobs, such as construction or manufacturing, are not accessible to those experiencing physical health challenges

(Source: National Healthcare for the Homeless Council)

Individuals with Physical Health Challenges (2 of 2)

➢ Experiencing homelessness can make everyone more susceptible to physical health challenges

➢ Lack of opportunities for individuals who need to transition out of physically intensive work to sedentary work

➢ Accommodations made in the workplace are often not ideal or practical, such as working different hours or displacement into roles that do not align with their needs or goals

➢ Oftentimes, individuals with physical health challenges settle for work they do not want or "take what they can get"

➢ Stigma of physical health challenges creates an uncomfortable or unsafe work environment

Women (1 of 2)

- ➤ Between 2016 and 2020, the number of women experiencing homelessness increased by approximately 17 percent

- ➤ Between 2016 and 2020, the total number of unsheltered women has increased in 36 states and territories

- ➤ Between 2017 and 2020, there was a 33 percent increase in unsheltered homelessness among women

- ➤ Women experiencing homelessness are more likely to die prematurely and have worse health outcomes than men

- ➤ Women experiencing homelessness experience high levels of trauma

(Source: National Alliance to End Homelessness)

Women (2 of 2)

- Experiencing domestic violence or other severe trauma can make it more difficult to re-enter the workforce

- Women experience misogyny in the job search process and in the workplace

- Women, on average, have lower salaries than men

- Women are more likely to experience microaggressions and belittling than men (McKinsey and Company)

- Societal norm of assuming women do not have knowledge or expertise and need the expertise of men

Transgender Women

➢ Few shelters have appropriate accommodations for transgender women

➢ Transgender women face issues that are not being addressed within the homeless system

➢ Less likely to access mainstream homeless services due to safety and stigma concerns

➢ Transgender women experience mistreatment due to untrained staff

(Source: Center for American Progress and Equal Rights Center)

BIPOC (1 of 2)

➢ As of 2018, black individuals made up approximately 64.7 percent of people experiencing homelessness in Supporting Partnerships for Anti-Racist Communities (SPARC) communities* versus 12.4 percent of the general population

➢ In the SPARC communities, 78.3 percent of people experiencing homelessness were people of color

➢ People of color only make up 34.2 percent of senior management roles, and 47.7 percent of all roles in the workplace

➢ In the workplace, racial demographics do not reflect the diversity of people served, especially at the senior management level

➢ This inequity cannot be explained by poverty alone

*SPARC communities are 6 identified communities that participated in this research study

(Source: SPARC C4 Innovations)

BIPOC (2 of 2)

➢ Institutional and systemic racism affects people of color in the workplace

➢ Microaggressions often go unnoticed and unaddressed, leading to an unsafe and toxic work environment

➢ Due to stigma, people of color in the workplace do not often bring up experiences of racism and discrimination

➢ Economic mobility is often restricted for people of color due to historical inequities

➢ Inequitable systems and lack of cultural competence lead to continued workforce oppression

Are you serving underserved populations?

Please answer using the poll on your screen

Historical Impact for Youth

- Implied hierarchies prevent youth from advancing

- Youth are often exploited through unpaid internships though they are doing valuable work

- Youth have to work harder to prove themselves in the workplace due to the assumption that they are less qualified

- Often given side tasks below their role due to their age

- Work expectations are often left unclear

- Youth enter the workforce making less than older individuals in the same or similar positions

- Youth are less likely to report being the victim of misconduct

Historical Impact for Seniors

➢ Misconception that seniors are unable to work during or leading up to retirement age

➢ Societal focus on youth culture and ignoring the needs of seniors prevents them from thriving in the workforce

➢ Microaggressions towards seniors in the workplace and assumptions that seniors do not have current knowledge and expertise

➢ Being unwilling to provide proper accommodations and training for seniors in the workplace

Historical Impact for Individuals with Mental Health Challenges

➢ Mental health is not seen as a real disability, and employers are often unwilling to make needed accommodations

➢ Feeling unsafe disclosing mental health challenges

➢ Misconception that individuals with mental health challenges cannot handle high-pressure work

➢ Misconception that individuals with mental health challenges are difficult to work with

➢ Employees who utilize Employment Assistance Programs (EAP) are often stigmatized

➢ Employer-provided health benefits do not always cover mental health

Historical Impact for Individuals with Physical Health Challenges

➢ Necessary accommodations not provided

➢ Physical disabilities are falsely associated with also having a mental disability

➢ Physical abnormalities or differences ostracize individuals in the workplace

➢ Employees with physical disabilities are often replaced

➢ Physical disabilities often keep people in a cycle of poverty

Historical Impact for Women

➢ Historically, women lacked basic human rights and did not have access to obtain careers

➢ Society promoted women caring for a family and being supported by men rather than entering the workforce

➢ Women had less access to higher education than men and were not encouraged to obtain college degrees

➢ There has been a historical stigma around the women's rights movements, such as feminism, which silences women and prevents progress to this day

Historical Impact for BIPOC

➢ Slavery to segregation

➢ People of color have been systemically denied rights and socioeconomic opportunities

➢ Poverty is a strong predictor of homelessness

➢ Segregation and housing discrimination; redlining discourages economic investment in non-white neighborhoods

➢ Overrepresentation of incarcerated people of color

(Source: National Alliance to End Homelessness)

Do you currently have a plan in place to reach underserved populations?

Please answer using the poll on your screen

What are your strategies to reach underserved populations?

What are some lessons learned around dismantling assumptions and stigmas?

Resources

- [True Colors United](#)

- [Homelessness Among Older Adults: An Emerging Crisis](#)

- [National Alliance to End Homelessness: Older Adults](#)

- [The Prevalence of Mental Disorders Among Homeless People in High-Income Countries: An Updated Systematic Review and Meta-Regression Analysis](#)

- [Homelessness and Health: What's the Connection?](#)

- [Women in the Workplace](#)

- [Supporting Partnerships for Anti-Racist Communities (SPARC)](#)

- [Homelessness and Racial Disparities](#)

Questions?

Thank You!