A Case Study on Homelessness & Dying: The Relationship between Palliative Care and Medical Respite

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Goals for today

● Gain a basic understanding of medical respite programs
● Learn about the unique concerns and challenges affecting individuals experiencing homelessness with advanced illness
● Take what we learn and integrate it into palliative care practice, ensuring consumer voice is leading our delivery of services
● Promote relationships between palliative care and homeless services providers
● Honor the lives of our clients
Medical Respite

- No two Medical Respite programs function alike
- Recuperative Care Program
Case Study

- Jamie came to RCP with an acute medical condition of COPD exacerbation (Late stage COPD)
- Chronic homelessness
- History of substance use
- Very distrustful of the medical system and uncomfortable with living inside
- Fears related to what would be done with body after death, wished to be buried alongside his wife
- Discharged to streets, ended up in the hospital soon after
Program Adaptation and Growth

- Accepting referrals for individuals who have advanced illness, such as Daniel
- Form strong partnerships with palliative care and hospice providers in order to provide symptom management
- Train and support staff to work with individuals who are dying
- Transition to providing palliative care focused medical respite
Discussion

- What has been your experience working with individuals experiencing homelessness? What are the challenges? What are the joys?
- How can the system of care better adapt to meet the needs of this population?
- How do we integrate the consumer voice into our delivery of services even further?