



SANTA CLARA COUNTY MEDICAL RESPITE PROGRAM

The Medical Respite Program (MRP) is designed to address the needs of homeless patients being discharged from hospital inpatient units in Santa Clara County. According to estimates by local hospitals, 720 homeless patients are discharged from hospitals in the county each year who have a need for a safe, clean place to recuperate or continue self-care. The MRP prevents the homeless patient from having to recuperate and continue follow up care on the streets where complete recovery is difficult if not impossible. Recovery on the street often means relapse or incomplete recovery and a return to the emergency room or a repeat inpatient admission. Most of these homeless patients also have chronic medical and mental health conditions that need interventions to allay their progression. These individuals are usually single and lack the support of the traditional family unit.

The MRP is a collaborative effort between 9 participating hospitals (coordinated through the Hospital Council), the Valley Healthcare for the Homeless Program (VHHP), and EHC Lifebuilders (local shelter provider). The program staff are funded by a 5-year renewable Federal grant to VHHP. The beds for the program are located at EHC's Bacardo Reception Center (Little Orchard Shelter) adjacent to an existing clinic run by VHHP. Fifteen (15) beds in semi-private rooms are dedicated to the MRP, and these beds are available for the patients 24 hrs/day. Hospital partners have contributed funds for the cost of dedicating the beds at EHC to the program. More than 750 patients have been served since the program was initiated in 2008.

Staff in the MRP conduct comprehensive health and psychosocial assessments of referred patients. These assessments are the basis for individualized plans and case management services that link the homeless patients to ongoing comprehensive primary care or "medical homes", specialty care, supportive housing, entitled benefits, substance abuse and mental health treatment, and other needed services and supports. These interventions are needed for the homeless patient to achieve improved health outcomes, an increase in quality of life, and ultimately maximum functional status.

In conjunction with the onsite VHHP clinic and New Directions case management, the patients receive:

- Regular Physician and/or Nurse visits
- Medications and medication management
- Self-care planning and education
- Health education and patient support groups
- Ongoing primary and preventive care
- Chronic disease monitoring and management
- Psychiatric consultation and mental health service
- Substance Abuse counseling
- Transportation to specialty care appointments
- Intensive case management

In addition to improved health outcomes, a major goal is to find permanent housing for each homeless patient when he/she leaves the Respite Program. For those patients that stay in the MRP until ready for discharge, 99% are placed in appropriate settings and are not discharged to the streets.

Participating Hospitals:

El Camino Hospital
Stanford University Hospital
O'Connor Hospital

Good Samaritan Hospital
Regional Medical Center
Palo Alto Veterans Hospital

Kaiser Santa Clara Medical Center
Kaiser San Jose Medical Center
Santa Clara Valley Medical Center