

A Ray of Hope

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The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reported that in 2015 around 11 percent of homeless people were veterans and 39 percent of homeless veterans lived in unsheltered areas (2015). Most homeless veterans were alone but three percent were members of families with children (United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2015)

Since 2009, the rate of homelessness among veterans has dropped significantly (United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2015). Between 2009 and 2015 the rate of homelessness among veterans has fallen by 35 percent (United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2015). Although this is promising news, between 2014 and 2015 the homeless rate among veterans decreased by 4 percent which was the smallest drop since 2010 (United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2015).

Like the general population, the most common risk factors for homelessness among veterans include family problems, financial stresses, substance abuse, and problems with mental health (Ainslie, 2016). Veterans may have problems with their families due to lack of support from family members or because of issues they may have relating to physical and mental health (Ainslie, 2016). Their financial stresses grow from a shortage in affordable housing and some job skills developed in the military do not transfer well into the civilian workforce which leads to unemployment, low pay, and a lack of health insurance (Ainslie, 2016).

Intervention and treatment are key for the well being of a veteran that is homeless or at risk of becoming homeless (Ainslie, 2016). Social workers can provide referrals for temporary housing, mental health evaluations, treatment for addiction, food assistance, financial assistance, and family counseling (Ainslie, 2016). Some veterans may also need help enrolling in TRICARE, which is a health insurance program that serves retired and active members along with their families (Ainslie, 2016).

Veterans are two times more likely to experience chronic homelessness than the general population (Ainslie, 2016). Considering the amount of services that are offered to veterans, this does not have to be the case. Here at T's 4 Hope we would like to raise awareness of homelessness among veterans and the services offered to them. If you would like to get involved, please contact us at please contact us at Ts4Hope@yahoo.com or 954-867-6765.

References:

Ainslie, N. (2016). Homeless Veterans: United States. Cinahl Information Systems. Retrieved from https://www.ebscohost.com/assets-sample-content/Homeless_Veterans_US.pdf

United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2015)