



Social Service Outreach Report February 2016

Our Social Service Outreach Worker, Suzanne, experienced a very different atmosphere in the month of January regarding the homeless population of Union Square. The continued presence of the police, combined with Super Bowl preparations resulted in many of the regulars relocating to different parts of the city. It was reported to her, by a few clients, that they were told to leave the area, and even the presence of the homeless in the early hours of the morning was significantly less. This was a change as many homeless normally choose to sleep in the district until the ambassadors wake them up because our district area feels safer to them. Then, they generally move out of the district by 9:00 am.

What continues to be a constant, is the presence of homeless with significant mental health issues. Suzanne's engagement with individuals who display signs of being in active psychosis - hearing voices, manic behavior, and paranoia – is challenging as their thought processes are not linear or reality based. Additionally, San Francisco does not have the resources to provide the services needed for a positive outcome. Other areas of difficulty are maintaining personal hygiene, understanding boundaries, and aggressive behavior are also a result of untreated mental health.

In the month of January, Suzanne also had a meeting with the senior case manager at Larkin Street Services to develop a way of networking in order to provide homeless youth with case management services. Larkin Street provides a continuum of services to homeless youth up to, and including, housing. During her outreach, she has connected six homeless youth to Larkin Street, who are all now receiving case management services. Additionally, two young women were both placed in temporary housing which includes on site case management and support groups to fully enhance the continuum of care.

Our outreach worker has been able to assist those who are wanting detox services to get support services directly from the street. With the combined support of SFHOT, the outreach "team" has been able to transport people directly to the Sobering Center to get blood work completed allowing access to the medical detox facility, as well as having a safe place to get sober.

SUCCESS STORY

One of our top ten clients, an 86 year old Caucasian male, who has an extensive history of homelessness, has been particularly resistant to accessing services. He is repeatedly targeted by the aggressive street population, as he is seen as easy prey due to his age and small physical frame. Suzanne has engaged him approximately two to three times weekly, over the last nine months, and the process of building rapport and trust has been very slow. At times he appears to be open to receiving services, and at other times he presents as aggressive and resistant to any support. Over the last several months, he has deteriorated both mentally and physically, and she has been concerned that he may die on the streets.

One morning the Services Manager saw him sitting on a bench along Powell Street and quickly phoned our in-house SFHOT outreach worker. Upon arrival, Suzanne saw he was shivering and having great difficulty keeping his eyes open. He had been on the radar of SFHOT, as members of the outreach team had been engaging him to try and get him into services. He continually declined any request for services, despite his deterioration. The SFHOT support staff, including a nurse practitioner, was contacted to do an assessment. Due to his presentation, the client was provided with a stabilization room through SFHOT. The client was still resistant to services, but as a result of the recent ongoing rain, and his frail physical state, he did agree to access the room. With a full team effort, the SFHOT staff was able to provide him with food, hygiene products, and get him settled comfortably in his new room. He had a nurse practitioner visiting him daily to assess him medically, while a treatment plan was being developed to address his needs. He was placed in the room on a Thursday and remained throughout the weekend. Unfortunately, on Monday evening he chose to leave the room with all of his belongings and not return. Suzanne saw him on the street a few days later and spoke with him. He was asked why he left the room, looked up and said that he wanted to be on the street, and did not want services. Even with her desire to see him safe in a room getting the support he needs, Suzanne had to respect his wishes as to how he wants to live the remainder of his life.

<u>Union Square Outreach Metrics</u>		
<u>February 2016</u>		
Total Homeless Encounters	167	
New Persons	8	
Race (new)		
African American	2	25%
Caucasian	6	75%
Asian	0	0%
Latino	0	0%
Age (new)		
20-29	1	13%
30-39	2	25%
40-49	2	25%
50-59	3	38%
60+	0	0%
Services Offered (encounters)		
311 List/shelter	1	1%
Panhandlers engaged*	124	74%
Homeward Bound	0	0%
Case Management	1	1%
<i>Denied Services**</i>	51	31%
Detox	20	12%
Information	11	7%
Medical Referral	0	0%
Unable to Respond	0	0%
Housing referral	0	0%
Moved into shelters		0%

** outcomes of services offered to encountered

*Panhandlers include some of the services offered count