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The Dudley Inn:
Qualitative Interviews
with Chronically
Homeless, Dually
Diagnosed Residents of
a Safe Haven Shelter



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Dudley Inn Collaborative Team

- The Boston Medical Center ACCESS Project (PI: Lincoln) is a SAMHSA funded project to open and evaluate a medically enhanced Safe Haven Shelter (the Dudley Inn) for men and women who are chronically homeless and struggling with severe mental illness and addiction.
- A multilevel collaboration of:
 - an academic medical center
 - state mental health department
 - city health department
 - consumer groups
 - a services vendor
 - a school of public health

Dudley Inn Basics:

The Safe Haven Model

- Designed to maintain the “no barriers to entry approach”.
- 8-private rooms with several common areas.
- DMH Homeless Outreach Team serves as the gatekeepers to the Dudley Inn.
- Offers a service integration model which merges mental health, substance abuse and primary care efforts into a single housing setting.
- House is staffed 24/7 by master’s level front line staff.
- Services are consistently offered but not required of residents.
- Clinical team includes: psychiatrist, primary care physician, substance abuse counselor and a housing specialist.

Evaluation of the BMC ACCESS Project

Evaluation Team:

- Alisa Lincoln, BU School of Public Health/ BU School of Medicine Dept. of Psychiatry
- Dennis Espejo, BU School of Public Health/ BU School of Medicine, Dept. of Psychiatry
- Amber Jamanka, BU School of Public Health, Data Coordinating Center
- Suzette Levenson, BU School of Public Health, Data Coordinating Center
- Howard Cabral, BU School of Public Health, Biostatistics Dept.
- Maurice Mollan, Vinfen
- Chris Shanahan, MD, BU School of Medicine, General Internal Medicine
- Sara Plachta-Elliott, Consumer Quality Initiatives

Interview Protocol

- Qualitative, in-depth interviews are conducted with Dudley Inn residents at 3-months and 9-months.
- Semi-structured, open-ended interview guides were developed by the evaluation committee of the BMC ACCESS Project

Focus

- 3-month interviews explore experiences before Dudley and while transitioning in
- 9-month interviews explore living at Dudley and transitioning out

Analysis

- Interviews were audiotaped, transcribed verbatim, and quality checked
- The transcripts were analyzed for emerging themes and coded using NVivo

Consumer Involvement in the Evaluation

- Interviews are conducted by staff of Consumer Quality Initiatives (CQI), all of whom are mental health consumers or family members
- Consumer Quality Initiatives is a consumer-led research and evaluation organization in Massachusetts; Brings consumer perspective and extensive experience interviewing consumers regarding their mental health care
- Coding, analysis, and writing done collaboratively

Who Lives in the Dudley Inn

- Adults with serious and persistent mental illness and active substance use
- Chronically homeless adults with an average of 8 years (2 – 18 years?) on the streets
- Isolated, marginalized, and socially disenfranchised
- Unwilling or unable to access other services in the city

Characteristics of Dudley Inn Residents (N=16)

Variable	No.	%
Gender		
Female	6	37.5
Male	9	56.3
Other	1	6.3
Age		
30-40	3	18.8
41-50	8	50
51-60	3	18.8
≥ 61	2	12.5
Race		
Black or African American	8	50
White	5	31.3
Native American	1	6.3
Other	2	12.5
Highest Education Completed		
8 th grade or less	2	12.5
Some High School	7	43.8
12 th grade/High School	6	37.5
College/University	1	6.3
Years of Homelessness Prior to living in the Dudley Inn		
2-5	6	37.5
6-10	3	18.8
11-20	6	37.5
21+	1	6.3

Preliminary Results of Qualitative Interviews

- Protocol
 - Consent obtained
 - \$20 incentive provided
- 28 interviews total
 - 16 residents interviewed
 - Fourteen 3-month interviews conducted
 - Fourteen 9-month interviews conducted

Resident Experiences of Living in Dudley Inn

- “Not too many rules”
 - Inconvenient but livable
- “Like a home”
 - Dudley Inn feels “homey”
 - The meaning of living in a home versus a shelter
- Security, Peace of Mind, Safety
- “I’m treated like a human being here”
 - Being treated like a man / a woman

Rules at Dudley Inn

- *Facilitative Rules*
 - *Substance use rule*
 - *Stay overnight two nights a week rule*
- *Inconvenient but Livable Rules*
 - *Front door locked*
 - *Visitors in public spaces, not in bedrooms*
 - *Smoking outside*
 - *Cooking supervision rule*

Livable Rules

- When first 'coming in', residents said there were not "too many" rules which helped them decide to move in.
- The rules were less restrictive than other shelters.
- Many said they did not completely understand some rules, mainly those they saw as inconvenient (locked front door, no visitors in bedroom, cooking supervision, smoking outside), but these rules did not prevent them from wanting to stay.
- Some residents want more rules to regulate other residents.

“Not too many rules”

“There are not too many rules. You can come and go when you want. You have to check in... you have to get buzzed in. You don't have a key to come and go, as you want. You have a key to your room but that is it.”

“There are no rules, that's exactly what I needed. I don't need the stress of being questioned and hassled and treated and talked to like you're a child. So that kinda of helped out.”

Two Nights A Week Rule: Staying In vs. Staying Out

“It was interesting because I’m like mandatory to stay in like twice a week but I hang out the other five days without coming in. See that doesn’t really make no sense ‘cause I have like a bed here and a TV, and I mean if you’ve seen the refrigerator, we eat when we want to eat and they cook the meals. It’s basically home, you know what I mean, eggs and sausages. Plus you can buy your own food, they have a stove upstairs, you can pretty much see it’s pretty cozy and comfortable.”

“There are different parks you can go to sleep in. But it makes me feel better because now I have a place, if I get in trouble, if it gets really cold out, I come truckin’ in here.”

Shelters Difficult

“Sometimes in the shelter...but you don't want to be there. You're pushed in all together, on top of each other or all over each other, you know what I mean. It's tough. You don't know who you're next too. It's not a place for a human being [laughs]. But we're all there. It's tough.”

“Oh, it's over crowded and a lot of fights goin' there. I didn't like it. It's better [here]-- people at the shelter, they talk all night long. They leave the lights on. There's nothing peaceful about it there.”

“Dudley Inn is just like a home”

Shelters vs. Home

“The fact that it’s not really set up like a regular shelter. That’s what makes living here... until I could get a normal residence... this is as close as it gets to a normal residence.”

“The Dudley Inn is like a home! Just a rooming house to me. That’s what’s it’s like, you know. It’s much different than a shelter. You have your own room. In shelters you have to stay in dorms and sleep with other people and all that and you don’t have to do that at the Dudley Inn.”

Security, Peace of Mind, Safety

- Feels safer than congregate shelters
- Some residents still sleep on streets, but come in for the night when feeling unsafe
- Private room allows for possessions to be locked, and a space where they don't have to worry about dealing with other residents
- Private room allows a safe place for them to think and assess their situation

Safety and Security Before and After Dudley

“I was in my car and it’s really tough. Sleeping with one eye opened, the other eye closed. Looking around. [...] Because when your out there homeless on the streets, it’s a different frame of mind. You have to be on your guard all the time, you feel violated, it’s like an abusive situation, and when I came here I was scared to death. I was afraid of everybody and everything so the shelter... just being able to collect myself and put things in perspective that’s been very helpful.”

“It’s indoors, which is nice. I don’t have to deal with the cautions of living on the street. Where you should sleep with one eye open because you never know if someone is going to rob you or hurt you. I’m glad I don’t have that pressure anymore.”

Safety and Security Before and After Dudley (2)

You see, the staff is very much worried about security. It's hard for me to worry about security for over 3 years living under the stars, with no door to block off bad and evil. I had to fight it off myself were it to approach me. I had to deal with everything that was going on out there without the benefit of the door, so I get kind of confused sometimes and I think the Director thinks I'm being a wise guy, but I'm really not. I'm just not used to having security. I got used to being my own bulldog.

“I just don't feel insecure. My property is protected by one little lock on the door, and we all have the same benefit here. All eight of us have our own private area where we can keep our little treasures and no one can violate that.”

Being Treated like a Man/a Woman

“At first I was in awe. Very nice...well decorated. And the difference of this house compared to what I was in was big. I’m treated like a human being here. You’re always breaking bread with other residents. The counselors are great. The system is good...as long as you try to do something for yourself. And that’s it man. I got control of the situation, you know....I feel like I’m treated like a man. And it’s kind of homey..it’s nice.”

“They don’t look over you all the time. You know what I mean. In the shelter you were put in there with a lot of other people, it wasn’t good. You couldn’t get yourself together. Here I have privacy. I can live my own life.”

“You know they don’t push you to do nothing. It’s just really...And I don’t like a place where you have to go to meetings and you have to get up this time. You don’t have to do nothing. You got your freedom completely there. I love it.”

Lessons learned from Inter-Agency Evaluation

Conclusions of Preliminary Results

Tune in Later...

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