

United Health Foundation and National Health Care for the Homeless Council: *Integrating Behavioral Health in Medical Respite Care Programs*

The National Health Care for the Homeless Council (NHCHC) is a member organization for programs providing health and support services to people experiencing homelessness. In 2022, the United Health Foundation provided NHCHC with a three-year, \$2.9 million grant to incorporate new behavioral health services into medical respite programs across Florida, Minnesota and North Carolina.

Medical respite programs provide short-term residential care in a safe environment for people experiencing homelessness who no longer have a clinical reason to remain in a hospital but are too ill or frail to recover on the street or shelter. Although medical respite care primarily addresses acute care, behavioral health conditions are extremely prevalent in the respite care patient population.

The partnership with NHCHC is:

- Expanding operational capacity in medical respite programs that serve rural and urban homeless programs
- Providing technical assistance and training for each of the selected programs and creating a peer learning community
- Assessing and evaluating how greater integration of medical and behavioral health services leads to improved access, better patient outcomes and greater care continuity for patients experiencing homelessness
- Sharing best practices on integrated medical respite care for reducing health disparities and improving outcomes



COMMUNITY IMPACT*

511

medical respite clients served by programs in FL, MN and NC

74%

of medical respite clients have been admitted with a behavioral health diagnosis

37%

of medical respite clients have been connected with mental health services

*as of 3/31/24

WHY IS THIS WORK CRITICAL?



As a result of this partnership with the United Health Foundation, NIMRC will help increase behavioral health capacity within medical respite programs. This translates into better access to high-quality, comprehensive and integrated care for patients experiencing homelessness.”

BOBBY WATTS

Director of the National Institute for Medical Respite Care and Chief Executive Officer, National Health Care for the Homeless Council

