Executive Summary

The following is a program evaluation of the funding sources of federal, state, and local homeless assistance programs and social service agencies providing services to homeless Veterans and the general homeless population. The funding of these programs play a major role in determining which services an agency provides to homeless individuals, such as housing, employment, and medical treatment. The research was performed using surveys, interviews, and focus group strategies to get a better understanding of which services clients prefer and other services that programs lack that would be beneficial to them. It also reviewed several studies that recommended different strategies to expand homeless assistance and social service programs. One recommendation included collaborating with several community partners to successfully allocate the necessary resources to the correct programs and eliminate underperforming services. Ending homelessness is a critical issue on the federal, state, and local agenda.
The Financial Analysis of Homeless Assistance Programs for Veterans in the City and County of Honolulu, Hawaii

MSA 698 Directed Administrative Portfolio
Central Michigan University

Submitted by: April L. Whitaker
Concentration: Leadership

Project Instructor: Dr. Robert Stephens

June 15, 2018
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Chapter I: Research Problem

Background

Hawaii, the 50th state to join the United States, consists of eight main islands: Hawaii, Maui, Oahu, Kauai, Molokai, Lanai, Niihau, and Kahoolawe. As the only state located outside of North America, Hawaii joined the United States on August 21, 1959 (Hawaii, n.d.). In 2016, the United States Census Bureau estimated the population count for Hawaii at 1.4 million. Honolulu, the capital of Hawaii (located on the island of Oahu) has a population of approximately 988,650 (United States Census Bureau, 2016). The Hawaii Tourism Commission and tourists sometime refers to Hawaii as the “Land of Paradise.”

Homelessness is a major concern all across the United States. With astronomical cost of living expenses, Hawaii is listed as having the worst homeless rate of them all. This is an ongoing concern for local government officials, homeless assistance programs, and any other stakeholder. Homeless encampments constructed along sidewalks, in public parks, and on beaches is an eyesore for the County and City of Honolulu and surrounding areas. Women, children, teenagers, individuals, families, and veterans are those most affected by homelessness. The 2017 Oahu Homeless Point in Time Count conducted by Bridging the Gap reports a statewide decrease of 8 percent in the total number of sheltered and unsheltered veterans as compared to the 2016 statewide total of 670.

Research Problem

Ending homelessness within the general population, including veterans, is a top priority for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Title 38 3.1(d) of the Code of Federal Regulations defines a veteran as follows, “a person who served in the active military, naval or air service, and was discharged
or released under conditions other than dishonorable” (Government Publishing Office, 2017). HUD offers homeless assistance programs to assist the general population; while on the other hand, VA can only assist veterans. Programs provided by the VA are based on the eligibility of the former service members discharge status from military service. Much like the general population, risk factors of homelessness among veterans include unemployment, mental health issues, substance abuse, lack of affordable housing, domestic violence or having a physical disability. A Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and the inability to transfer skills from military service to civilian life has significantly increased homelessness among the veteran population.

This study will answer the following questions:

1. How does the VA distribute available funds to homeless assistance programs?
2. In Hawaii, how are state funds distributed among homeless assistance programs?
3. How are local and non-profit homeless assistance funded in the City and County of Honolulu, Hawaii?
4. How does the allocation of funds in the federal budget affect homeless assistance programs?

Research Audience and Rationale

The Governor of Hawaii, Mayor of the County and City of Honolulu, Hawaii, Director of Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness, city leaders of surrounding areas, program coordinators of the VA, and any representative from local homeless assistance programs are the intended audience for this project. Hopefully, the recommendations from this study will significantly impact the lives of homeless veterans in Honolulu and the surrounding service area in a positive manner. It will attempt to identify budget or funding shortages that prevent local
homeless veterans from obtaining assistance through the various programs that are currently in place. Combining duplicate programs and accessing available resources to develop new, well-designed programs will also benefit the homeless population. Veterans have fought and are still fighting external and internal battles every day. It is the mission of the local VA to aid veterans in a timely manner. If the mission and values of any agency or program is compromised, the integrity will also diminish.

Instantaneously ending homelessness is impossible; but the benefits of this study should gradually decrease homelessness, identify programs that should be restructured, and streamline the access to available services. The goal is to provide a platform for federal, state, and local agencies to collaborate in order to provide efficient services to Oahu’s homeless population. The collaborative efforts of these entities, if services are executed efficiently, will motivate the homeless population to have a new outlook on life.

**Research Study Scope/Delimitations**

The data collected and analyzed for this study is limited to the service area surrounding the County and City of Honolulu, Hawaii; therefore, it may not be applicable to other state, local, or VA programs. This research will concentrate on the general and veteran homeless population in this service area. Beyond the targeted population in the stated service area, the results of this study cannot is not guaranteed and conclusions can only be drawn about those included within the scope of this research. This research is intended to focus on homelessness among Veterans, other than the VA, most federal, state, or local programs in this service area provide social services to any homeless individual who meet any necessary eligibility requirements.
Chapter II: Synthesis of Related Literature

Although there is a massive amount of literature relating to homelessness among veterans, information pertaining to funding homeless assistance programs is limited. This chapter will highlight literature that focuses on the funding and budgets of various federal, state, and local organizations that provide services to this population. The first issue to be analyzed is how the VA distributes their funding to their programs for homeless veterans. Next, it will examine how Hawaii distributes funds to state homeless assistance programs. Then, it will assess the federal budget and how the allocation of funds affects the availability of services. Lastly, we will analyze the funding dynamics of local and non-profit organizations that also provide services to homeless veterans. This chapter will only summarize some of the research others have performed.

Federal Programs

The federal government is the primary funding source for most homeless assistance programs. With the election of each Presidential Administration, the funding of various programs is subject to reduction or elimination. Is this fair to the recipients of these services? Of course not, but each program rests with the President’s mission or goals for his term. The VA 2019 Budget Request: Fast Facts (n.d.) reports that $1.8 billion dollars is allocated to prevent and reduce homelessness. Among other funded resources listed in the budget, $8.6 billion dollars will be utilized to expand inpatient, outpatient, and residential mental health services for Veterans. Homeless assistance programs have various forms depending on the funding source. A survey conducted by Aron, Burt, Douglas, Iwen, Lee, and Valente (1999) illustrates that food programs rely heavily on private funding and 51 percent of them use no government funds. On the contrary, 55 percent of health programs receive the majority of their funding from the
government. This analysis shows how various funding resources impact the layout of the program.

President Donald Trump understands the importance of protecting Veterans and increased this year’s VA budget to reflect his commitment to them. The VA reports (2018) that their top clinical priority is suicide prevention. Being proactive instead of reactive should have a positive impact on Veteran’s mental stability. Compared to 2018, FY 2019 budget received a 5.8 percent increase in funding to expand the services available to former service members without honorable administrative discharges and transitioning (discharge or retiring) service members (VA, 2018). It is imperative that the VA offer necessary services to Veterans in a timely manner. This increase in budget should allow the expansion of vital programs and seek to revamp programs with low performance. Based on a report from the United States Government Accountability Office in 2006, the Veterans Health Administration obligated $1.2 billion for outreach to homeless Veterans. Outreach programs consist of providing services outside of facilities, such as, in homeless shelters or homeless encampments. Some homeless individuals are more comfortable receiving services in their environment (homeless camp) instead being uncomfortable in a facility (office building).

The National Alliance to End Homelessness (February 2017) explains that gaps in funding and the expiration of funding awards causes the delivery of services to become inconsistent. Eliminating challenging eligibility requirements would ease some of the stress when homeless individuals attempt to access services. Leaders of homeless assistance programs should study their budget and identify which services should be eliminated and which services are underutilized due to funding restraints. Another article by the National Alliance to End Homelessness (2017) discovers that analyzing current spending practices proves to be beneficial
with regards to identifying resources to expand current programs. The federal budget lays the framework for state and local social service programs. If the funds are not allocated appropriately at the federal level, the state and local programs will lack necessities to assist the homeless population.

There have been several articles written on the benefits of supportive housing. These studies suggest the need to expand funding for housing and supportive services to decrease homelessness. An article by Moulton (2013) concluded that expanding funds for long-term housing and supportive programs that provide services to homeless individuals with disabilities decreased chronic homelessness. HUD reveals that as the number of housing units increases, the number of homeless individuals and families with or without disabilities decreases.

**State Programs**

After studying various documents on homelessness, the lack of affordable housing is one of the most critical risk factors. Hawaii, New York, and Nevada are the top three states with high homelessness rates. Of the three, Hawaii has the highest rate of homelessness with 505 homeless per 100,000 people (USICH 2017). The Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH) was created in 2011 through executive order by former Hawaii Governor Neil Abercrombie. Comprised of state department directors, federal agency representatives, and community leaders; the mission of HICH is to end homelessness and strengthen the continuity of efforts to end homelessness across future State of Hawaii administrations (HICH, n.d.).

One way to alleviate the housing crisis is to thoroughly analyze funding sources to ensure they are being used efficiently. For example, private and public funding is needed to alleviate the need for affordable housing. Discussed in a 2016 report from the State of Hawaii, housing agencies will network with financial resources in order to qualify for the Low-Income Housing
Tax Credits, Rental Housing Revolving Fund, and Dwelling Unit Revolving Fund. Also noted in this report is the need to change policies and procedures to allow service providers the use of mainstream sources, such as Medicaid and SNAP, to assist with supportive services.

Catholic Charities Hawaii (n.d.), founded in 1947, is a Community Action Program funded primarily by the State of Hawaii and individual donations. They provide social services to everyone regardless of religious preference and culture. Their Homeless Veterans’ Reintegration Program assists reintegrating homeless and at-risk Veterans with locating gainful employment and refers clients to other supportive services if needed.

Local Programs

Local homeless assistance programs rely heavily on donations from sponsors and the general public to keep programs in operation. Homeless individuals use a wide variety of public assistance, such as the Emergency Room for non-threatening conditions. Over time, the costs of these services can become quite expensive. A document by Partners in Care: Oahu’s Continuum of Care (PIC) (2014) declares that 1,751 homeless adults were responsible for 564 hospital admissions and racked up $4 million in admission costs. This is an astounding number of hospitalizations among a population without health insurance. PIC is a network of representatives from non-profit organizations who develop recommendations for programs or services that provide assistance to homeless individuals.

The Institute for Human Service, Inc. (IHS) is another non-profit organization that focuses on nurturing and empowering the homeless in order to rekindle hope, confidence, and dignity. This organization also relies on sponsors and individual donors to fulfill its mission. IHS provides outreach services in encampments, parks, and shelters around Oahu. Another popular social service program in Hawaii is the Community Health Outreach Work to prevent AIDS
Project (CHOW Project). Originally a research project for the University of Hawaii in started 1989, the CHOW Project is a non-profit organization committed to assisting individuals, families, and communities adversely affected by drug use (CHOW Project, n.d.). This organization is unique because it is a non-profit, but offers services with funding provided by the State of Hawaii. In 1993 after the passing of legislature, the State of Hawaii Department of Health funded the CHOW Project to implement a syringe exchange program to reduce the transmission of HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis B and C (Grabowski, 2016).

The Waikiki Health Center, Honolulu’s largest homeless service provider and the city’s biggest emergency shelter, opted out of the city’s housing program called Pathways (Schaefers, 2013). The city only offered an 18-month subsidy which covered the costs of the facility but operational funding. This program would only provide a temporary solution and the homeless individuals would be back on the street.

**Summary of the Literature**

In conclusion, this literature review has identified federal, state, and local programs funded programs that are available to any homeless individual. It is important to note that most of the local non-profit organizations receive some funding from the federal or state government, as well as community partners and individual donors. Although a variety of homeless assistance programs are available to homeless individuals through federal, state, and local partnerships, accessibility may become difficult to navigate. Critics have called into question the effectiveness of some of these programs.

It is imperative that leaders of homeless assistance programs and social service agencies re-evaluate their funding sources on an annual basis. This evaluation will allow the service provider to discover any additional funding resources to expand their current program or develop
new programs. Federal and state programs usually have guidelines they must follow as a requirement for receiving funds. If a homeless individual does not meet all the requirements for a particular program, they do not qualify for assistance. This is a barrier in the effort to preventing homelessness. Homelessness will not be eliminated overnight, but any progress is a step in the right direction.
Chapter III: Research Methodology

Homelessness has been an ongoing issue throughout all 50 states. Ending and preventing homelessness in Hawaii is the focus of several social service program initiatives. Veterans experiencing homelessness, for any reason, after they have sacrificed their life for their country is even worse. As outlined in Chapter 1, the purpose of this project is to assist with evaluating the following:

1. How does the VA distribute available funds to homeless assistance programs?
2. In Hawaii, how are state funds distributed among homeless assistance programs?
3. How are local and non-profit homeless assistance funded in the City and County of Honolulu, Hawaii?
4. How does the allocation of funds in the federal budget affect homeless assistance programs?

Data Collection Approach and Procedures

Data to be collected.

This research project will use both primary and secondary collection methods. The primary data collection techniques being used to answer the research questions will be interviews and surveys. Secondary data collection will be found in the Hawaii Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), a centralized database that is used to record services provided to homeless individuals throughout the state of Hawaii. If possible, the researcher will examine the records of the NEPEC to determine which services are being utilized, frequency of utilization, how the programs are funded, and any other vital information related to the research. All the data for this research project will be answered using the primary and secondary methods listed above. It will be imperative that all study participants sign an informed consent prior to participation.
Data collection procedures.

The paper-based survey will be distributed to homeless veterans, the target population, who do not want to participate in the interview process to collect basic data such as; age, gender, marital status, ethnicity/race, income (if applicable), length of homelessness, military service background, reason(s) or contributing factors for homeless situation. Allowing this population to complete the survey will provide direct feedback based on their perspective of the services available to them. Following protocol to maintain strict confidentiality, the names of the survey participants will not be collected. Also, a drop-box located on a table near the entrance/exit of the social service program will be used to ensure anonymity.

A semi-structured interview will be given to homeless veterans who want to voluntarily provide detailed information about their homeless situation. The scaled questions will be similar to those provided in the survey. The open-ended follow-up questions for the target population will collect data about their opinions of the services that are available to them. It will also allow the Veterans to voice their opinions about what services they feel should be available to them but are currently unavailable. If time allows, a focus group with homeless Veterans will also be held to obtain information similar to that of the interview and survey. The other interview will include the staff members at social service agencies, program coordinators, and community stakeholders. This interview will be different from that of the target population and consist of questions pertaining to the services they provide to homeless veterans, intake policies and procedures, which services are used the most and least, strengths and weaknesses of their program. If consent is obtained, the interviews of both the staff members and the target population will be recorded for accuracy. The data obtained from the HMIS database will verify if the records maintained by facilities is accurate and updated. It will also provide any additional information the target
population or staff neglected or forgot to disclose. All the collection methods listed above are critical in streamlining the homeless veteran epidemic.

**Proposed Approach for Data Analysis and Synthesis**

The data collected from this research project will be analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The survey responses will be represented using tables and percentages to indicate the number of veterans who gave each answer as a proportion of the number of veterans who answered the questions. The interview responses and record reviews will be coded to determine which data is relevant or irrelevant. Once the relevant data is identified, the factor analysis will be performed to determine the effectiveness of the programs available to homeless veterans and non-Veterans. An odds ratio will also be used to identify the correlation between federal, state, local, and non-profit funded homeless assistance programs. The survey responses of homeless veterans who seek assistance from social services and homeless veterans who do not seek assistance will be analyzed using measures of central tendency.

**Methodological Limitations**

Possible limitations for this study include sample size, collection methods, and potential bias. Due to the research for this project consisting of data collected from Honolulu, Hawaii and its surrounding areas, it may not be applicable to other cities or areas. The survey is a modified version of several existing surveys and was not tested for reliability or validity prior to conducting this research. If participants do not consent to a recorded interview, documentation of their responses is based solely on the accuracy of the notes of the researcher. Those notes may be inaccurate or incorporate potential biases.

The researcher may have difficulty obtaining permission to review records from HMIS or other social service agencies because of protected health information (PHI) restrictions.
Although study participants were asked to be candid during this study; surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions will be done on a voluntary basis. Staff members of the social service programs may decline the interview for fear of retaliation if their responses discredit the facility in any way. The sample size may be limited based on the number of homeless Veteran volunteers and staff participants. Based on the number of homeless Veterans taking advantage of provided services during the allotted timeframe for this research, the convenience sampling could also have some limitations.
Chapter IV: Data Analysis

Clients have stated that a lack of employment, lack of affordable housing, and resources needed to stabilize housing (i.e. rent and utility vouchers) are key reasons they are tied to homelessness based on the National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients (Aron et al., p. 20). Clients have stated that a lack of employment, lack of affordable housing, and resources needed to stabilize housing (i.e. rent and utility vouchers) are key reasons they are tied to homelessness based on the National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients (Aron et al. 20). This chapter of the research will analyze data that has been collected to determine the funding sources of homeless assistance programs for homeless veterans. As outlined in Chapter 1, the purpose of this project is to assist with evaluating the following:

1. How does the VA distribute available funds to homeless assistance programs?
2. In Hawaii, how are state funds distributed among homeless assistance programs?
3. How are local and non-profit homeless assistance funded in the City and County of Honolulu, Hawaii?
4. How does the allocation of funds in the federal budget affect homeless assistance programs?

Federal Programs

The price of homelessness on tax payers is reduced when chronically homeless individuals are placed in supportive housing. Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) is noted to lessen the use of publicly funded services, such as jails and hospitalizations. Instead of tax payers paying $36,000 for chronic homeless individuals per year, supportive housing only costs them $13,000 (National Alliance to End Homelessness, n.d.).
State Programs

On the state level, Hawaii can look at the innovative measures other states have taken to alleviate homelessness. Ball, Haslam, Jowers, Robinson, and Tennert (2017) point out that Utah legislation passed 2 bills to assist with their homeless crisis. 1) House Bill 441, Housing and Homeless Reform Initiative, allocates $10 million dollars to new homeless shelters outside of Utah’s urban areas. 2) House Bill 36, Affordable Housing Amendments, allocates $2.5 million for low-income housing and the expanded the 10-year tax credit for those who provide low-income housing. Another strategy to research would be the donation-based Maryland Veterans Trust Fund set up by the Maryland Department of Veteran Affairs (MDVA). Through legislation passed in 2009, the trust fund makes loans and grants to Veterans based on financial need and private organizations helping Veterans (HUD, 2012).

Local Programs

If local homeless assistance programs face difficulty in fulfilling their mission due to financial restraints, they should research programs in other areas for ideas. In 2009, Ruth Brousseau studied the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation (CNHF) to get an idea of their long-term philanthropic efforts concerning mental illness. Brousseau (2009) concluded that CNHF’s funding commitment to one organization’s mental illness program proved to be beneficial in the continual development of solutions to a long-term issue with a significant social impact.

The collaboration of federal, state, and local social service providers is a critical component in the quest to end homelessness among Veterans and the general homeless population. Evaluating social service programs will determine if they are fulfilling their mission. Beech explains that several entities in Kent County, Michigan (2017) with different beliefs voluntarily came together and developed a mission to eliminate the experience of homelessness
among Veterans entirely. They were innovative in reallocating resources that allowed them to better serve those in need in a timely manner.

Pushing aside personal agendas to aid in the prevention of homelessness shows that social service agencies are strongly advocating making this a priority. As stated earlier in this research, some social service programs target homeless Veterans, but others provide services to the general homeless population. Programs that cater to individuals with a particular characteristic, such as Veterans, are only reaching a select number of individuals.
Chapter V: Summary, Conclusion, Recommendations

The operation of homeless assistance programs and social service agencies relies heavily on funding from federal, state, or local sources. Sponsorships and individual donors are utilized to fund programs on the local service area. It would benefit service providers and program participants if some entities would partner to provide better services. Homelessness among Veterans all over the United States is a growing problem. It will take the commitment of the federal government, state government, and the local community to ensure that homeless Veterans, as well as the general homeless population, have access to services that will end and hopefully prevent homelessness. It is crucial that social service providers evaluate their budgets and funding resources in order to expand current services. These types of strategies will establish long-lasting relationships that will assist in getting some of these people off the streets. After fighting in a war on foreign soil, Veterans should not have to endure battle at home in order to receive care. Evaluating the effectiveness of social programs is an excellent strategy to determine which programs should be discontinued or which programs are producing results.
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Appendix A

Permission Letter

May 30, 2018

April Whitaker
1381 Kalauiku Way
Wahiawa, HI 96786

Dear Ms. Whitaker:

I have reviewed your request to conduct a research project involving the Hawaii HMIS homeless records database at _______________ and the survey, interview, and research methods that will be used. I feel that this project will be beneficial to _______________. You have my permission to examine Hawaii HMIS records at _______________ for this project.

The following stipulations should be observed: the individual data collected from these surveys will remain strictly confidential. No one from this organization will see any answers associated with personal demographic data. Once all of the surveys are collected, I will compile the results, and make them available to all participants. Participation is strictly voluntary and a decision not to participate in this survey will in no way affect this organization.

If you have any questions regarding this letter of approval, please give me a call at <insert phone number>.

Sincerely,

<Signature: an original signature is preferred/a digital signature will be accepted/a typed signature will not be accepted>

<Insert the name and title of the person granting permission>
May 30, 2018

Dear Participant:

My name is April L. Whitaker and I am a graduate student at Central Michigan University. For my final project, I am examining homelessness among veterans and the effectiveness of social service programs for this population. Because you provide services to the target population, I am inviting you to participate in this research study by completing the attached survey.

The following questionnaire will require approximately 10 minutes to complete. There is no compensation for responding nor is there any known risk. In order to ensure that all information will remain confidential, please do not include your name. Copies of the project will be provided to my Central Michigan University. If you choose to participate in this project, please answer all questions as honestly as possible and return the completed questionnaires promptly in the drop box located at the entrance/exit of the facility. Participation is strictly voluntary, and you may refuse to participate at any time.

Thank you for taking the time to assist me in my educational endeavors. The data collected will provide useful information regarding what services are needed to assist with decreasing the number of homeless veterans. If you would like a summary copy of this study, please complete and detach the Request for Information Form and return it to me in a separate envelope. Completion and return of the questionnaire will indicate your willingness to participate in this study. If you require additional information or have questions, please contact me at the number listed below.

Please note that if you are not satisfied with the way this study is being conducted, you may report (anonymously if you so choose) any complaints to the MSA Program by calling 989-774-6525 or addressing a letter to the MSA Program, Rowe 222, Central Michigan University, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859.

Sincerely,

April L. Whitaker
whita1a@cmich.edu
Appendix C
Homeless Survey/Interview Questions

Please check the box next to your answer selection. Return the completed survey in the drop box located on the table near the entrance/exit of facility. Thank you for your participation.

**Gender:** □ Male □ Female

**Are You Hispanic or Latino:** □ No □ Yes

**Race (choose all that apply):**
□ American Indian or Alaska Native □ Asian □ Black or African American
□ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander □ White

**Current Marital Status (choose one):**
□ Married □ Domestic Partner □ Divorced □ Separated □ Widowed □ Single

**Household Type: (Check only one)**
□ Single adult □ Couple without children □ Single parent with children
□ Two parents with children □ Unaccompanied youth (17 or under)

**Military Background:**
Served/Serving U.S. Military (veteran?): □ Yes □ No □ Don’t Know □ Refused

**What Branch Did You Serve, or Are Currently Serving?**
□ Navy □ Army □ Marines □ Coast Guard □ Air Force

**Served in a War Zone?** □ Yes □ No □ Don’t Know □ Refused

**Do you have a disabling condition?** □ Yes □ No □ Don’t Know □ Refused
(Examples: Alcohol/substance abuse problems, serious mental health problems, serious medical conditions, physical disabilities, developmental disabilities)

**Type of Disability**
Diagnosed HIV/AIDS: □ Yes □ No □ Don’t Know □ Refused
Problems with Alcohol: □ Yes □ No □ Don't Know □ Refused
Problems with Drugs: □ Yes □ No □ Don't Know □ Refused
Mental Problems: □ Yes □ No □ Don't Know □ Refused
Physical Disability: □ Yes □ No □ Don’t Know □ Refused
Developmental Disability: □ Yes □ No □ Don’t Know □ Refused

**When was the last time you saw a doctor?**
□ Under 1 year □ More than 1 year ago □ 2-3 years ago
□ 4-5 years ago □ Over 5 years ago □ Do not Recall
Are You Homeless? □ Yes □ No

Reasons or Contributing Factors to Homeless Situation (choose all that apply):
□ Abuse or violence in my home □ Alcohol/substance abuse problems
□ Mental illness □ Unemployment
□ Relationship problems or family break-up □ Family member or personal illness
□ Don’t Know □ Other ___________________

How Long Have You Been Homeless This Time (choose one)?
□ Less than 1 month □ 1 to 3 months □ 4 to 6 months
□ 7 to 11 months □ 12 months to 2 years □ 3 to 5 years
□ 6 to 10 years □ More than 10 years □ Not Applicable

Number of Times Homeless Within the Past Three Years (INCLUDING THIS TIME - choose one):
□ 0-3 □ 4-6 □ 7-9 □ 10 or more

What is the hardest part about being homeless?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

What can be done to improve your current situation?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Have you received assistance from any social service agency (ie. VA or CHOW Project)?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Were Those Services Helpful? Why or Why not?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Appendix D

Adult Consent Form for Face-to-Face Interview

Evaluation of Homeless Among Veterans with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

April L. Whitaker, Master of Science in Administration
Dr. Robert Stephens, Master of Science in Administration

My name is April L. Whitaker and I am a graduate student in the Master of Science in Administration degree program at Central Michigan University. Currently, I am conducting research to fulfill degree requirements at CMU. You are invited to participate in this research study. The following information is provided to help you make an informed decision whether to participate. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

This study will identify the strengths and weakness of current resources available to homeless veterans. You are eligible to participate in this study because you, patron of these services. If you decide to participate in this research project, I will go over this consent form and then go through a series of interview questions about the resource programs.

The interview will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. There are no known risks while participating in the study. This study will be used to determine which programs are beneficial to homeless veterans and which resources should be discontinued. This is an opportunity to express your opinions about the different resources and options available to you. Recommendations will be made to management regarding the most beneficial resource programs.

Subjects will be referred to as patron or staff member. The researcher is the only one who will know who participated in the study. Any information obtained during this study which could identify you will be kept strictly confidential. Results of this study will be available to my CMU research monitor. There will be no compensation for participation in this study other than knowing you are contributing to the future services provided to homeless veterans.

For more information about this study, you may contact Dr. Robert Stephens at steph2rm@cmich.edu.

You are free to refuse to participate in this research project or to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation in the project at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your participation will not affect your relationship with the institution(s) involved in this research project.

Please note that if you are not satisfied with the way this study is being conducted, you may report (anonymously if you so choose) any complaints to the MSA Program by calling 989-774-6525 or addressing a letter to the MSA Program, Rowe 222, Central Michigan University, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859.
My signature below indicates that all my questions have been answered. I agree to participate in the project as described above.

______________________________  __________________
Signature of Subject            Date Signed

A copy of this form has been given to me. _______ Subject’s Initials

______________________________  __________________
Signature of Responsible Investigator    Date Signed
### Appendix E

**Face-to-Face Interview Questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Are the mission and/or values of the organization being fulfilled?</td>
<td>Not at All True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Are there specific requirements to enroll in any of the services provided by this facility? If so, please explain.</td>
<td>Not at All True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Do you feel the services provided by this organization are beneficial to the patrons? Explain why or why not?</td>
<td>Not at All True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Do you see your responsibilities changing in the future? If so, how?</td>
<td>Not at All True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Will an increase in funding or resources make the organization more efficient? Explain what you think might change.</td>
<td>Not at All True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>What services does your facility provide to the homeless population?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>What are the agency's service delivery strengths and weaknesses?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>How has your city’s treatment of homeless people changed over the years?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>What are the facility’s funding sources?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>How would you describe the organizational culture?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Would you like to provide any additional information at this time?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Welcome and thank you for coming.

First, let me thank you for your service to our country. You all here today to participate in this focus group to discuss your experiences with ____________________________. I am collecting this information as a part of my final project for a Master of Science in Administration degree from Central Michigan University (CMU). This focus group will last approximately one hour and there is no compensation for your participation.

During the session, I will be asking questions about your military experience and services that might be helpful to you in the future. During this focus group, you are open to interact with one another and reply to what others are saying. Most importantly, please be respectful of other people’s views and privacy. Please note that you do not have to answer all of the questions.

Although I cannot control what people say after they leave, what is said in the room should stay in the room. To maintain confidentiality, I ask that you do not use your real name. At the end of the session, I will type up the notes and make transcripts of the discussion. Should anyone outside of CMU request to see any of the notes or transcripts, I will remove all personally identifying information to prevent those outside the research team from knowing who provided the information. The information you provide will be kept confidential and only used for this study. Use this discussion as an opportunity to get your voice heard because this information may be used to help improve __________________ and other homeless prevention programs.

Any questions about the study, or why we are here for this focus group? Before we go on, I need everyone to read the consent form in front of you and, if you agree with the terms, go ahead and sign it.

**Introduction**

- Please give us an alias you’d prefer to use for this discussion, where you served, and how long you’ve been home since your last tour of duty.

**Reasons for Homelessness**

- Please describe some of the challenges you faced when returning from serving your tour of duty. Some examples would be obtaining employment, reintegrating with family life, financial hardship, housing instability.
- Veterans with families only: Were there challenges that were related to you specifically because you have children to take care of?
- Women Only: Were there challenges that were related to you specifically because you are women?
• When did your housing struggles start? Immediately after you returned or sometime thereafter?
• What led you to seek help? Was it a loss of housing, financial crisis, loss of employment?
• How did you hear about _________________________?
• When programs are trying to inform veterans about services, what are good ways for them to reach out to veterans?

Social Service Program Experience and Effectiveness

• What are some of your overall impressions of the ______________________?
• Has ______________________ helped you access additional services through the VA? If so, how and what types of services?
• What services did you get from the ______________________? How helpful were they?
• How has your condition changed since starting _________________________?
  Improved job seeking skills, housing voucher, educational assistance?
• Which qualities of ________________________ do you think have been most helpful in getting you to this point? For example, case management or referrals?
• For OEF/OIF/OND only: How do you think the needs of OIF/OEF/OND veterans differ from veterans from previous wars?
• Did you face any challenges working with the program? If so could you describe them?

Prospects for the Future

• What types of services would be helpful to you in the future?
• How do you think the _________________________ will affect your housing stability long-term?

This focus group outline was developed from the HUD Office of Policy Development and Research (2015).