

Rebuilding Lives Updated Strategy Columbus and Franklin County, Ohio

Outreach Utilization Report

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Prepared for:
Rebuilding Lives Updated Strategy Steering Committee

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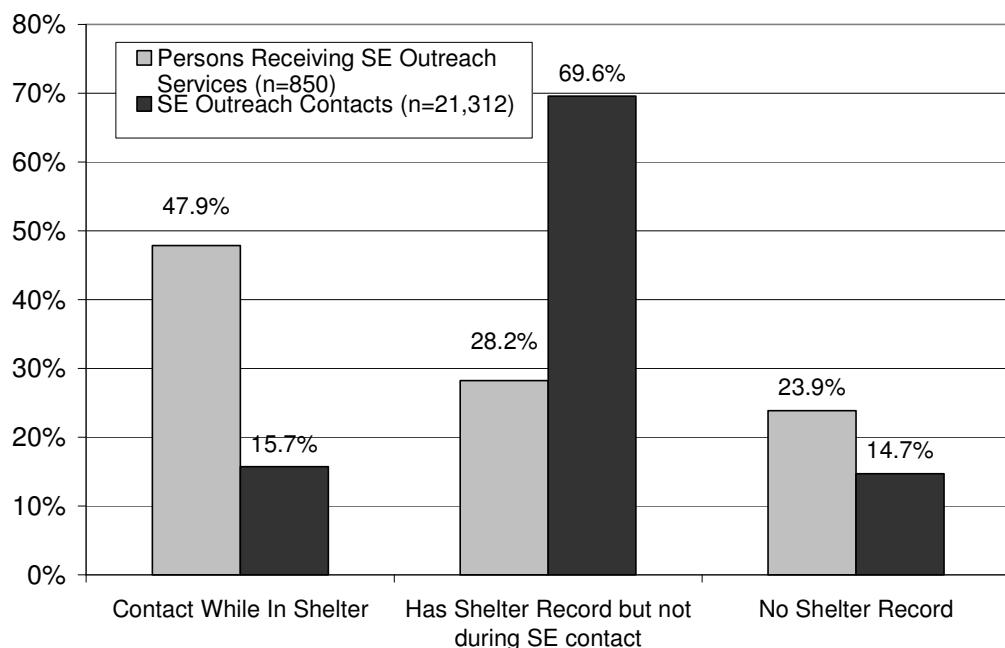
Introduction

This chapter reviews findings taken from matching data from Columbus shelters, as collected in the Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) database, and two agencies which perform outreach services – Southeast Inc. and Maryhaven Outreach. Data on shelter use was matched with data from each outreach provider based on common identifiers (social security number, name, date of birth, and sex) to create an integrated record of shelter use and outreach contacts for each individual. This combined dataset focuses primarily on the contacts made by the outreach agencies to persons who are homeless and do not use shelters, and whether or not there are differences in the characteristics of this subgroup when compared to the subgroup receiving outreach services and shelter.

Southeast Inc.

Data from Southeast included 21,312 contacts made with 850 different persons during the same time period covered by the HMIS data – January 2003 through June 2006. These records were collected in conjunction with discrete services provided, primarily mental health services related to case management, medication management, and psychiatric assessments. Most services were “billable,” meaning they could be reimbursed by third party payors. Records show that 30% of the services provided in this dataset were actually billed for Medicaid reimbursement.

Figure 1 - Persons Receiving Southeast Outreach Services and SE Outreach Contacts: Relationship to Shelter Use



Overlap of SE Contacts with Shelter Records

Figure 1 shows the relationship between shelter and outreach contact for the 850 unduplicated persons and the 21,312 contacts these persons received that were recorded in the SE database. The ratio of contacts to persons, 25:1, indicates that, on average, each person in this database received numerous contacts. Noteworthy findings in Figure 1 about the relationships between shelter and outreach includes:

- Almost half of the persons in the SE database at some point received services while in a shelter.
- Another 28.2% of the persons had a shelter record but only received outreach services when they were out of a shelter. Many of these persons were presumably homeless when they were contacted by SE,¹ but only occasionally stayed in shelters.
- A slightly smaller proportion, 23.9%, have no history of a shelter record. These persons were among those who are homeless but whose presence is not picked up in the HMIS database on persons receiving shelter services.
- Of the SE contacts, 84.3% occurred outside of the context of a shelter. This includes the majority of their contacts (69.6%) which were made outside of a shelter setting, but to persons who made use of shelters during other times. It also includes a much smaller proportion of contacts (14.7%) made to persons with no shelter record.

Outreach Contacts During Shelter Stays

A relatively small number of the contacts, 3,349 (15.7% of all contacts), occurred while the consumer was staying in a shelter. Among these contacts:

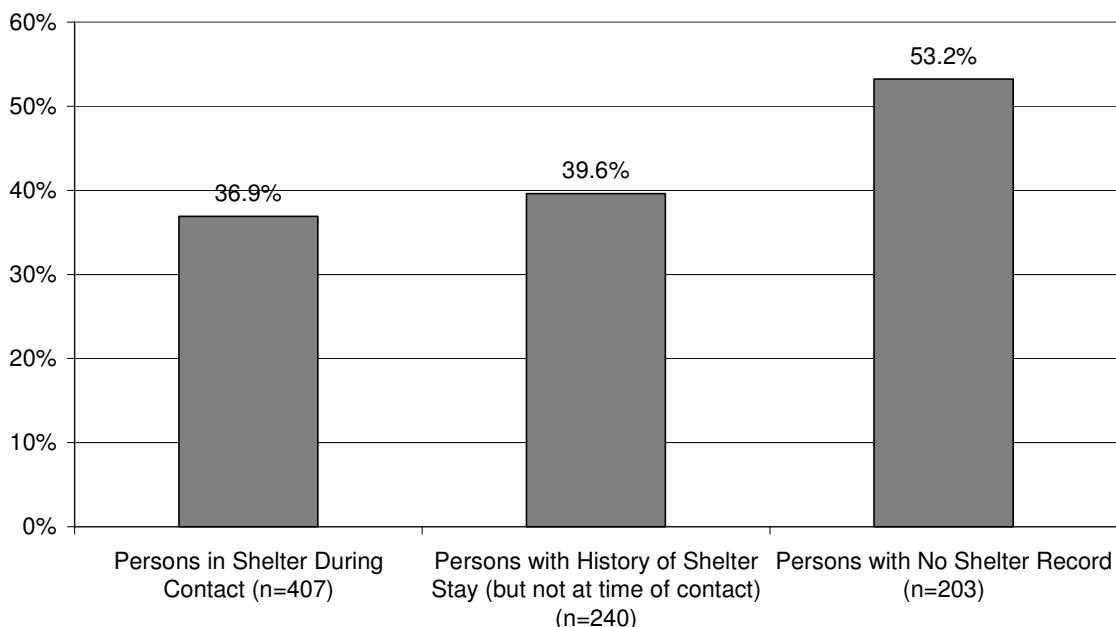
- The majority, 58.9%, went to females even though the shelter population on a given day is roughly 75% male.
- The majority of the shelter-based contacts were made in conjunction with stays in one of two shelters for women – Rebecca’s Place (43.2%) and Nancy’s Place (14.0%). Virtually no contacts were made in the context of family shelters. This suggests a particular focus by SE – both in clientele and in shelter – beyond the mental health focus they already have.

¹ The persons that SE considers as “homeless” overlaps, but is broader than the commonly accepted criteria put forth by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. No further information on living arrangements can be gotten from these data for persons not staying in shelters.

- The shelter stays that co-occurred with the SE contacts had a median stay length of 51 days, which is more than three times the median length of all shelter stays.
- Among those receiving SE outreach contacts in shelter, 17.4% reported receiving wages and 12.3% reported receiving either Veterans Administration or Social Security benefits.
- Among those receiving wages, the average monthly income was relatively high at \$914, and among those reporting benefits, the average monthly income, at \$520, was roughly at the level of the monthly SSI benefit amount.

Outreach Contacts That Do Not Involve Shelter Stays

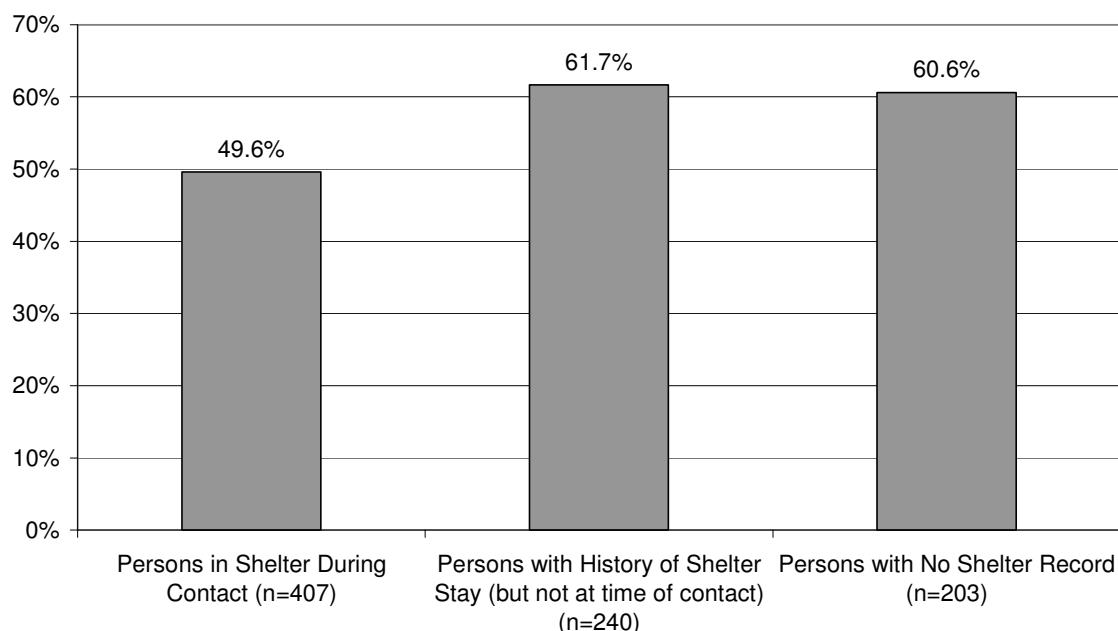
Figure 2 - Proportions of Persons of White Race Among Three SE Outreach Subpopulations



Clearly a large majority of SE outreach contacts in this database were made "on the streets" and in other settings that did not involve shelters. There is not much data available on the persons and contacts engaged outside of shelters, and it must be kept in mind that those who SE targets are unlikely to be representative of the larger populations of persons who use shelters only occasionally or not at all. Nonetheless, the findings indicate that, at least demographically, the unsheltered homeless subgroup is markedly different from the sheltered subgroups. In demonstrating this, the overall population who had contact with SE was broken down into the same three categories as were shown on Figure 1.

- On figure 2, the proportions of persons of White race was substantially higher among those served with no shelter history.
- Figure 3 shows that the population served by SE in all contexts was disproportionately female when compared to the overall single adult homeless population. However, those who were contacted in the context of non-shelter locations only had a much higher proportion of males.

Figure 3 - Proportions of Males Among Three SE Outreach Subpopulations



Summary

Most of SE's client contacts were made outside of shelters, although most of the population they worked with had spent time in shelters at some point during their time of homelessness. According to these findings, 23.9% of the persons that SE engages did not use shelters. This represents a group that is not captured in the HMIS database. Furthermore, demographic measures, which were all that were available for all three subgroups, indicates that there are distinct differences between subgroups of shelter users and non-shelter users.

Maryhaven

Maryhaven conducts an outreach program in addition to the shelter services that it provides. Maryhaven records the contacts made under this program in a database that is kept in the framework of the same HMIS in which the Columbus area shelters keep their utilization records. In order to examine the intersection of Maryhaven outreach with general shelter use (i.e., Maryhaven and other shelters), their outreach database was matched with the HMIS shelter database, with the records being linked by the client identification number that is common to both databases.

The data from Maryhaven was considerably less extensive than that from SE, as it contained data on 552 contacts with 428 unique individuals that were recorded between August 2003 and June 2006. It is unclear what services were provided in the context of these records. Also, as these outreach contacts have "start" and "end" dates that span days or, in some cases, months, the contact record in the database may encompass multiple individual meetings between each client and Maryhaven outreach workers. There is no way to ascertain from the data the precise frequencies of the meetings that occurred in the context of each contact. This is a major limitation of the available data.

Throughout this section, an individual record of interaction with Maryhaven will be referred to as a "contact." Each contact contains at least one and an otherwise unknown number of times that the homeless person receiving Maryhaven services interacted with an outreach worker. These latter instances will be referred to in this section as "meetings" and no further information is available on them.

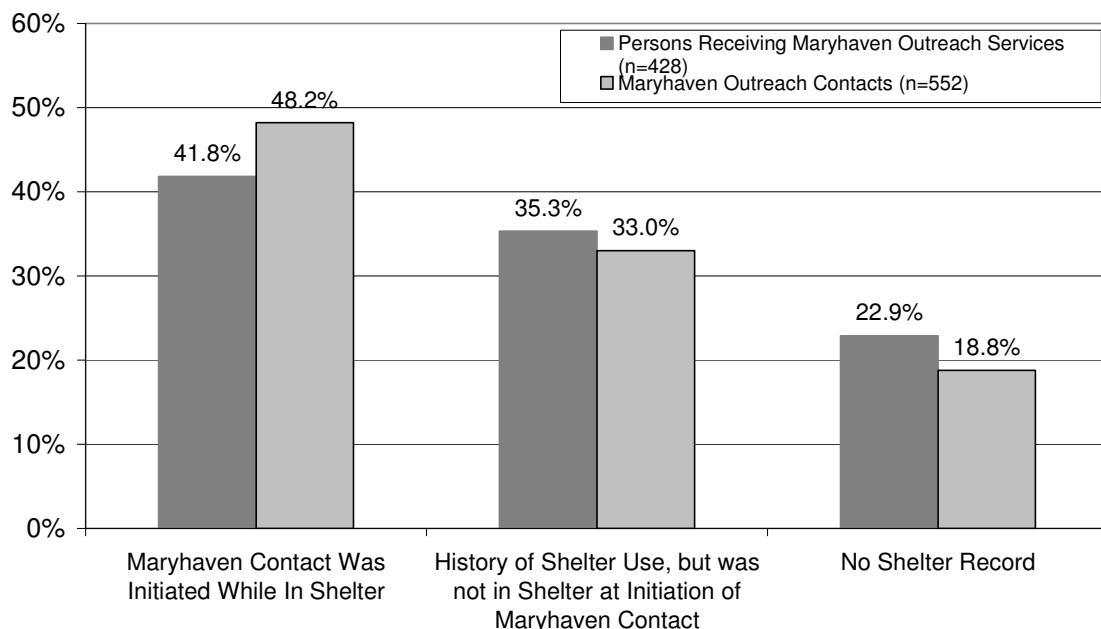
Overlap of Maryhaven Contacts with Shelter Records

Figure 4 (which corresponds to figure 1 in the section on SE outreach) shows the relationships of persons contacted and outreach contacts through Maryhaven with shelter stays. Specific findings in figure 4 include:

- The proportions of persons and contacts in each of the three categories is congruent, which should not be surprising as most persons had a single Maryhaven outreach contact record (which presumably consisted of multiple meetings).
- Among the 428 persons with Maryhaven contacts, 41.8% recorded an outreach contact which commenced while they were staying in a shelter.
- Almost half, 48.2%, of the Maryhaven contacts commenced during a shelter stay. This is much higher, proportionally, than the 15.8% of contacts that SE made with people while they were in shelter (figure 1).

- Of the persons contacted by Maryhaven outreach, 22.9% (18.8% of contacts) had no record of shelter use, and would not appear in the HMIS database on shelter use.
- No further information on living situation for persons in the Maryhaven outreach database was available from the data.

Figure 4 - Persons Receiving Maryhaven Outreach Services and Maryhaven Outreach Contacts: Relationship to Shelter Use



Outreach Contacts During Shelter Stays

About half of the Maryhaven outreach contacts (266 of 552) commenced while the service recipient was staying in a shelter. Among these contacts:

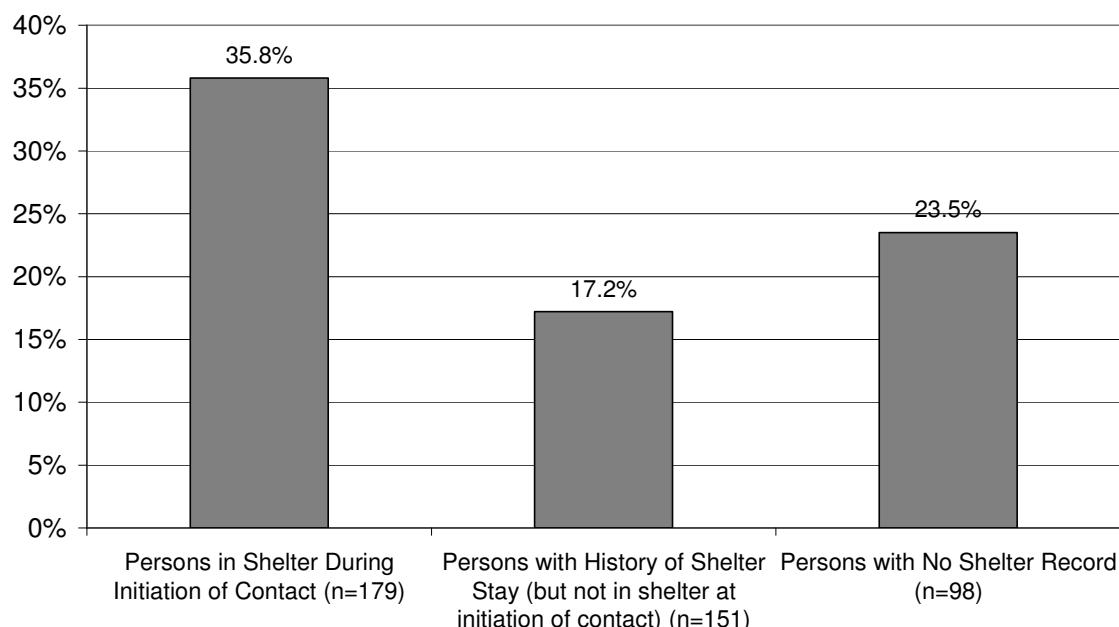
- These 266 contacts occurred over the course of 255 shelter stays experienced by 179 people. This means that most people with an outreach record while in shelter had one contact per stay.
- The majority of the contacts, 75.4%, went to males, a proportion that is consistent with the shelter population on a given day.
- The majority of the shelter-based contacts were made in conjunction with stays in one of two shelters – the Winter Overflow Center (64.7%) and the Maryhaven Engagement Center (21.8%). No contacts were made in

the context of family shelters. Like SE, this suggests that outreach activities related to shelters center around particular shelters.

- The median length of these shelter stays is long, at 92 days, especially given the transient nature of the two most frequently used shelters. Three-quarters of the shelter stays lasted longer than one month.
- Based on the shelter data, at the end of the shelter stay 12.0% reported receiving wages and 21.4% reported receiving disability benefits from either the Social Security Administration or the Veterans Administration.
- For those reporting wages, the average monthly income was \$823.35. For those reporting disability benefits, the average monthly income was \$507.46.

Outreach Contacts That Do Not Involve Shelter Stays

Figure 5 - Proportions of Persons of White Race Among Three Maryhaven Outreach Subpopulations

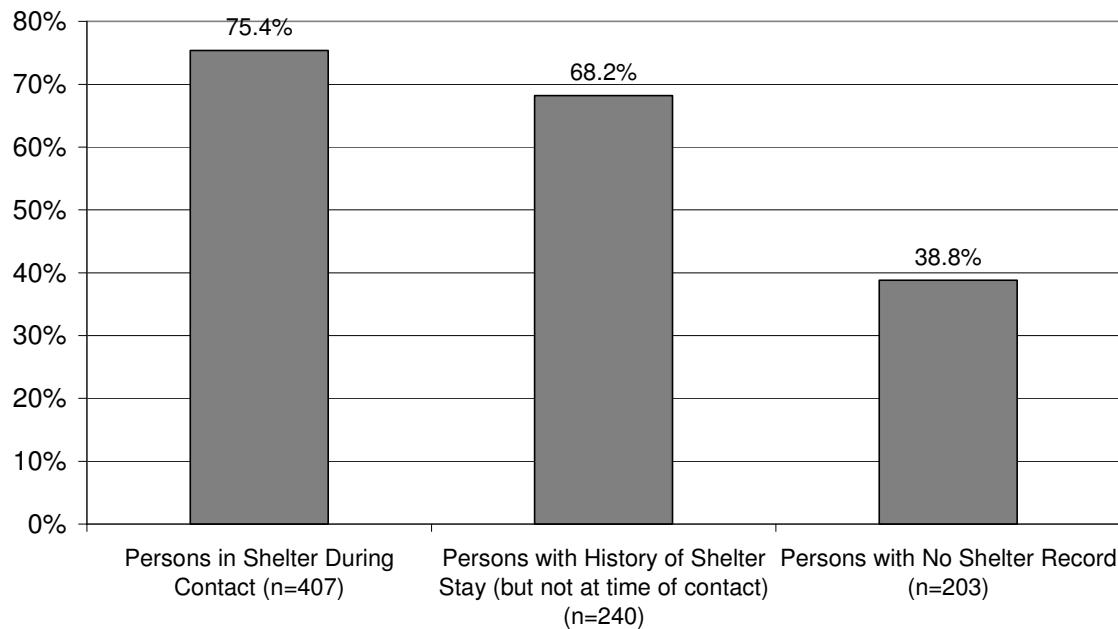


A scant majority of the outreach contacts, 51.8%, were initiated at a time when the recipient was not staying at any shelter. Most of these contacts ($n=182$) were made to persons who had a history of shelter use in Columbus, as compared with contacts to those who had no HMIS record of shelter use ($n=104$). Nonetheless, the findings indicate that, at least demographically, the unsheltered homeless subgroup is markedly different from the sheltered subgroups. The two figures that follow break down, by race and age, the same

three subcategories of the Maryhaven Outreach population as were presented on Figure 4. Findings on demographics in general include:

- on figure 5, the proportions of persons of White race was substantially higher among those who had records of outreach contact while they stayed in a shelter. This is inconsistent with the SE findings from Figure 2.
- the population receiving Maryhaven outreach services was, at 71.3%, predominantly of Black race.
- on figure 6, in contrast to majority male subgroups for those who had shelter records in addition to their outreach contacts, the subgroup with no shelter record is only 38.8% male. This is also in contrast to SE outreach findings (figure 3).
- the median age of those receiving Maryhaven outreach services without any shelter record is 41 years, compared to 43 years for the overall recipients.
- Demographically, the persons receiving Maryhaven outreach services who are not in shelter are clearly different than their counterparts who have shelter records. The former group is slightly younger, and is proportionately less of White race and more female.

Figure 6 - Proportions of Males Among Three Maryhaven Outreach Subpopulations



Differences in Circumstances among Subgroups Receiving Maryhaven Outreach Services

In addition to the demographic differences described in the previous section, the information available from the HMIS data on Maryhaven Outreach contacts, broken down by the shelter status used in the previous section, further shows how the subgroup without any shelter history is different from the rest of the Maryhaven Outreach population. The following findings are derived from responses from persons who received Maryhaven services about the circumstances which precipitated their homeless episodes. Given the nature of the question, the results shown below are likely to reflect underreporting. These finding show that, among those receiving Maryhaven outreach contacts, those with no shelter history had, compared to the overall population:

- lower rates of self-disclosed substance abuse (47.1% to 59.9%);
- higher rates of self-disclosed family relationship problems (26.8% to 16.1%);
- higher rates of self-disclosed recent incarceration (20.2% to 8.3%);
- roughly similar rates of self-disclosed mental illness (15.4% to 13.6%).

In addition, data on outreach contacts reported that those with no shelter history had, compared to the overall population:

- much higher rates for obtaining successful housing (84.3% to 48.5%);
- higher rates of reported employment (35.6% to 19.7%) and average income for those who reported working (\$1,030 to \$972);
- lower rates of persons reporting receipt of disability related benefits from the Social Security Administration or the Veterans Administration (10.6% to 17.9%).

Summary

This section looked at outreach data from Maryhaven and how it related to use of the shelter system. There is substantial overlap between the two, with about one half of the contacts made by Maryhaven Outreach occurring while the recipient of the contact was staying in a shelter, and about three quarters of those served having some history of shelter use in Columbus. The group of most interest, those who do not have a record of shelter use and who are hidden to the HMIS shelter database, are in fact very different, but in unexpected ways.

Among the more salient differences, they are disproportionately female and non-white, and they have higher rates of incarceration, receipt of successful housing, and employment. This requires further explanation, as these are not typically characteristics associated with unsheltered homeless persons. Judging only from this data, however, it is likely that this subgroup is not representative of the overall non-shelter using homeless population, and should not be a basis for more general inferences about this group.

Conclusion

The client populations of two outreach providers in Columbus, Southeast Inc. and Maryhaven, are matched with HMIS shelter data to look at overlap between the two types of homeless services and for information on homeless persons who don't appear in the shelter database. For both Southeast and Maryhaven, most of the persons served had at least some interactions with the shelter system. However the minority group without shelter history, for both providers, had a much different population profile from the others. Furthermore, the minority (i.e., non-sheltered) groups for the two outreach providers were different, leading to the conclusion that each agency targets persons with very different characteristics.

Given this, the data presented here is useful for pointing out these differences but is unable to make more general inferences about the unsheltered population as it is likely that two very different facets of this group is captured by each agency. Thus this analysis provides a potential starting point for a more in-depth analysis of persons who are homeless but who do not use shelter services.

Appendix 1 – Aggregate Data Tables

Persons receiving SE Inc outreach services with HMIS shelter records	
Number of Persons	647
Number of Persons with SE Inc contact during shelter stay	63.5%
Age (at first shelter entry after 2003)	
18-29	14.7%
30-39	25.6%
40-49	40.2%
50-64	18.6%
65+	0.9%
Race/Ethnicity	
Black	60.4%
White	37.7%
Hispanic (not exclusive of race)	0.8%
Other/Unknown	1.9%
Sex	
Female	45.4%
Male	54.6%

SE Inc outreach contacts do not necessarily occur during shelter stay

SE Inc Outreach Contacts were recorded between January 2003 and June 2006

HMIS shelter stays during which there is a record of Southeast Inc contacts

Programs in which contacts occur	
Single Adult Shelters	
Faith Mission Men's Shelter	10.4%
Faith Mission - Nancy's Place	14.0%
Faith Mission - On 8th	11.5%
Friends of the Homeless - Men's Emergency Shelter	15.7%
Friends of the Homeless - Men's Program Beds	0.3%
Maryhaven - Engagement Center	3.0%
Maryhaven - Overflow	0.2%
Rebecca's Place	43.2%
VOA - Men's Shelter	0.7%
YMCA Overflow	0.7%
Family Shelters	
YIHN (YWCA Family Center)	0.2%
Homeless Families Foundation	0.1%
Total Unduplicated Shelter Stays w/ Outreach Contacts	511
Length of Shelter stay	
Median length of HH stay	51 days
1 week or less	12.1%
8 days to 1 month	20.2%
Precipitating Crisis (for shelter)	
Physical Health Problems (2)	7.1%
Mental Illness (6)	6.7%
Incarceration (7)	5.9%
Fleeing Abuse (8)	3.5%
Relocation (9)	11.0%
Family relationship problems (3)	21.9%
Substance Abuse (4)	23.3%
Destination	
Housing (1,2,6,12,13,14,15)	29.6%
Transitional Housing or Shelter (9,17)	17.8%
Reported Wages	
Percent Receiving Wages	17.4%
Average Amount (w/ wages)	\$914.00
Reported Benefits	
Percent Receiving Benefits	12.3%
Average Amount (w/ benefits)	\$520.00

SE Inc Outreach Contacts were recorded between January 2003 and June 2006

Southeast Inc contacts associated with persons who have shelter stays (covered by HMIS)

	All Records	Contact While In Shelter	In Shelter but not during contact	No Shelter Record
Persons				
Number of Persons	850	407	240	203
Percent of Total	100.0%	47.9%	28.2%	23.9%
Age (at first SE Inc contact)				
under 18	0.5%	0.0%	0.4%	1.5%
18-29	14.4%	13.5%	13.8%	17.2%
30-39	23.8%	22.6%	28.8%	20.2%
40-49	38.8%	39.0%	40.4%	36.5%
50-64	21.3%	23.6%	15.8%	23.1%
65+	1.2%	1.2%	0.8%	1.5%
median age	42 years	43 years	41 years	42 years
Race/Ethnicity				
Black	56.5%	61.2%	59.2%	43.8%
White	41.5%	36.9%	39.6%	53.2%
Hispanic (not exclusive of race)	0.5%	0.5%	0.4%	0.5%
Other/Unknown	2.0%	1.9%	1.2%	3.0%
Sex				
Female	44.0%	50.4%	38.3%	39.4%
Male	56.0%	49.6%	61.7%	60.6%
Veteran	6.6%	6.6%	8.8%	7.9%
Contacts				
Total Stays	21,312	3,349	14,829	3,134
Percent of Total	100.0%	15.7%	69.6%	14.7%
Sex				
Female	46.0%	58.9%	44.2%	40.5%
Male	54.0%	41.1%	55.8%	59.5%
Outreach Grouping				
Adult	33.6%	39.7%	33.5%	27.4%
Severe Mentally Disabled	59.4%	54.3%	60.1%	61.4%
Other/Unknown	7.0%	6.0%	6.4%	11.2%
Service Type				
P/MV Case Management	47.5%	42.6%	47.5%	52.6%
P/MV Case finding	7.2%	4.7%	8.1%	6.0%
P/MV Medications -Psychiatric	21.9%	23.3%	21.8%	20.9%
P/MV Psychiatric Assessment	11.3%	13.6%	11.0%	10.5%
P/MV R/L to Housing	2.2%	5.5%	1.8%	0.8%
P/MV R/L to Mental Health	3.0%	2.2%	3.2%	2.9%
P/MV Other	4.5%	5.3%	4.5%	3.3%
Non-P/MV	2.3%	2.8%	2.1%	3.0%
Billing				
Medicaid	30.2%	27.4%	30.7%	30.8%
Unreimbursed	67.2%	70.3%	66.9%	65.1%
Other	2.6%	2.4%	2.4%	4.2%

SE Inc Outreach Contacts were recorded between January 2003 and June 2006

Persons receiving Maryhaven outreach services with HMIS shelter records

Number of Persons	330
Number of Persons with MH contact during shelter stay	54.2% (179)
Age (at first shelter entry after 2003)	
18-29	11.5%
30-39	19.0%
40-49	49.2%
50-64	20.3%
65+	0.0%
Race/Ethnicity	
Black	70.0%
White	27.3%
Hispanic (not exclusive of race)	1.8%
Other/Unknown	2.7%
Sex	
Female	27.9%
Male	72.1%

Maryhaven outreach contacts do not necessarily occur during shelter stay

Maryhaven Outreach Contacts were recorded between August 2003 and June 2006

HMIS shelter stays during which there is a record of Maryhaven Outreach contacts

Number of Total Maryhaven contacts	266
Programs in which contacts occur	
Single Adult Shelters	
FM-Men's Shelter (7)	2.3%
Faith Mission / Nancy's Place (9)	1.1%
Faith Mission on 8th (16)	1.5%
VOA Men's Shelter (28)	1.9%
FOH Men's Shelter (48)	4.5%
Maryhaven-Engagement Center (72)	21.8%
Winter Overflow Center (98)	64.7%
MH System Overflow (106)	2.3%
Total Unduplicated Shelter Stays w/ Outreach Contacts	255
Length of Shelter stay	
Median length of shelter stay	92 days
1 week or less	6.4%
8 days to 1 month	16.7%
Precipitating Crisis (for shelter)	
Physical Health Problems (2)	1.9%
Family relationship problems (3)	3.0%
Substance Abuse (4)	48.1%
Mental Illness (6)	1.9%
Incarceration (7)	1.9%
Fleeing Abuse (8)	1.1%
Relocation (9)	2.3%
Destination	
Housing (1,2,6,12,13,14,15)	24.5%
Transitional Housing or Shelter (9,17)	55.4%
Institution (4,5,8)	16.7%
Reported Wages	
Percent Receiving Wages	12.0%
Average Amount (w/ wages)	\$823.35
Reported Benefits	
Percent Receiving Benefits	21.4%
Average Amount (w/ benefits)	\$507.46

Maryhaven Outreach Contacts were recorded between August 2003 and June 2006

Maryhaven contacts associated with persons who have shelter stays (covered by HMIS)

	All Records	Contact While In Shelter	Shelter use but not during contact	No Shelter Record
Persons				
Number of Persons	428	179	151	98
Percent of Total	100.0%	41.8%	35.3%	22.9%
Age (at first SE Inc contact)				
under 18	3.2%	0.0%	6.7%	3.6%
18-29	10.0%	10.6%	6.0%	15.5%
30-39	20.6%	19.9%	17.9%	26.2%
40-49	44.6%	47.2%	51.5%	28.6%
50-64	21.4%	22.4%	17.9%	25.0%
65+	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%
median age	43	43	44	41
Race/Ethnicity				
Black	71.3%	60.3%	81.5%	75.5%
White	26.4%	35.8%	17.2%	23.5%
Hispanic (not exclusive of race)	1.6%	2.8%	0.7%	1.0%
Other/Unknown	2.3%	3.9%	1.3%	1.0%
Sex				
Female	35.5%	24.6%	31.8%	61.2%
Male	64.5%	75.4%	68.2%	38.8%
Veteran	12.2%	15.6%	11.9%	6.1%
Contacts				
Total Outreach Contacts	552	266	182	104
Percent of Total	100.0%	48.2%	33.0%	18.8%
Precipitating Crisis (for shelter)				
Physical Health Problems (2)	12.9%	13.3%	10.9%	15.4%
Family relationship problems (3)	16.1%	9.0%	20.9%	26.8%
Substance Abuse (4)	59.9%	58.3%	69.8%	47.1%
Mental Illness (6)	13.6%	12.5%	14.2%	15.4%
Incarceration (7)	8.3%	4.1%	7.6%	20.2%
Fleeing Abuse (8)	2.6%	0.0%	7.1%	1.0%
Relocation (9)	3.7%	4.1%	2.6%	3.9%
Destination				
Housing (1,2,6,12,13,14,15)	48.5%	18.8%	72.0%	84.3%
TH or Shelter (9,17)	43.3%	57.5%	14.8%	8.8%
Others (0,4,5,8,16)	8.20%	23.70%	13.20%	6.90%
Reported Wages				
Percent Receiving Wages	19.7%	12.0%	22.0%	35.6%
Average Amount (w/ wages)	972.14	840.79	1023.6	1030.11
Reported Benefits				
Percent Receiving Benefits	17.9%	21.4%	17.0%	10.6%
Average Amount (w/ benefits)	512.48	512.65	530.35	461.24

Maryhaven Outreach Contacts were recorded between August 2003 and June 2006