

Impact of Chronically Street Homeless Tenants in Congregate Supportive Housing

Original study (in press, *Am J of Orthopsych*): Aaron Levitt, Jean Smith Gilmour, Joe DeGenova, John Jost, Kara Mergl, So Young Chung, & Tony Hannigan

The study

Overview of original study

Sample: All chronically homeless tenants entering three CUCS/CG supportive housing sites between 9/1/2007 and 12/31/2008.

Chronic Street Homeless (CSH): 52

- 58% from transitional facilities with extensive services
- 25% from shelters/drop-in centers/etc. with limited services
- 17% directly from the street

Long Term Shelter Stayers (LTSS): 46

Design

Qualitative analysis of 16 focus groups with supportive services staff and supervisors/managers, building management staff and administrators, and CSH tenants

Quantitative analysis of supportive service contact data

Quantitative analysis of lease compliance data

Tenant characteristics

Substance abuse disorder

- Long-Term Shelter Stayers = 28%
- Chronic Street Homeless = 48%

Cognitive disorder

- Long-Term Shelter Stayers = 4%
- Chronic Street Homeless = 23%

PTSD

- Long-Term Shelter Stayers = 7%
- Chronic Street Homeless = 31%

Qualitative Findings

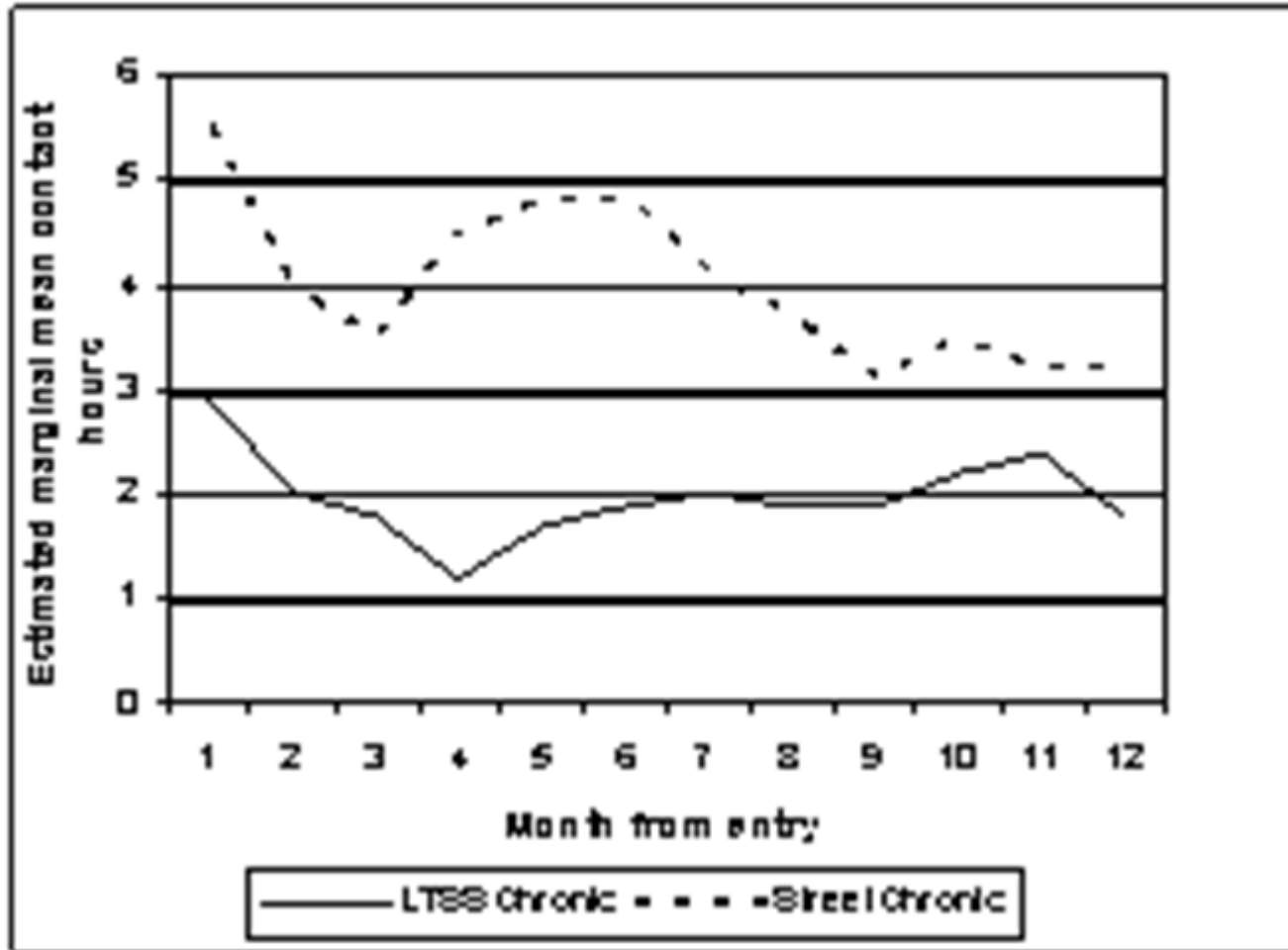
Tenants expressed overall satisfaction with programs, services, and staff.

CG staff: CSH do not require more time & effort.

CUCS & CG staff: Believe these sites are appropriate settings for CSH.

CUCS staff: With the exception of a few clients, CSH do not require more time & effort.

Service utilization



Core/individual contact hours 2 x higher for CSH ($p < .001$)

Service utilization, cont.

Even after controlling for differences in the rates of substance abuse and cognitive disorders, CSH tenants used about 35% more core contact time than did LTSS tenants.

Neither sex, site, PTSD, nor previous living situation were significant predictors of core contact time.

Differences between CSH and LTSS tenants appeared to increase and then decrease over time

Lease compliance

There were no significant differences between CSH and LTSS tenants on scores for rent payment, submission of work orders, apartment condition, or involvement in incidents.

There was a near-significant increase in CSH tenants' holdover proceedings (8% vs. 0% for LTSS; $p = .056$).

- The first holdover case occurred in the eighth month of the twelve-month study.

After the study

What happened next

Many more CSH tenants moved in

Anecdotal reports that CUCS staff views of CSH tenants had shifted dramatically were confirmed by a follow-up staff survey

Incident rates increased and were significantly higher for CSH than other special needs tenants

CSH tenants were significantly more likely than other special needs tenants to be identified as threatening or violent by CUCS staff

A significant proportion of CSH tenants were found to have serious misdemeanor convictions not revealed by free online searches

The proportion of male tenants in the buildings increased significantly due to nearly all-male CSH entrants

Why the difference?

It's likely that the initial cohort of CSH tenants were an "easier" group that self-selected into early placement

Later, the growing numbers of CSH tenants meant staff had more such tenants on their caseloads and more interaction with them, permitting more accurate differentiation

In most cases, it took at least six months after move-in (and often much longer) for a problematic minority of CSH tenants to manifest serious behavioral issues

Once serious behavioral issues did manifest, they took time to resolve, whether by behavioral change or by eviction