

The current state of how our society deals with the homeless has proven to be costly with little to no results in getting such persons off the streets and becoming self-sufficient.

As people step off the curb onto the streets, their worlds are turned upside-down without resources to not only survive but to rebound. A homeless person would have to spend about \$70 a day to stay in motels and eat at restaurants, that's about \$2100 a month to stay off the streets. Without immediate assistance these people seek out the safest, warmest spot to call home.

Currently the homeless can receive government assistance in the means of EBT (government funded debit cards) for food and cash purchases from county social service agencies. Individuals usually receive about \$180 a month for food and about \$270 a month for cash purchases, totaling about \$450 a month, or \$14 a day, which is well under the \$70 a day needed to stay off the streets. Many counties do not allow for the purchase of cooked meals which causes the homeless to waste much of their food benefits on uncooked foods that cannot be cooked on the street or canned and fast food options that have very little to no nutritional value. These social service programs have obviously not been designed to help the homeless.

Although all homeless persons in the State of California have access to Medi-Cal, they don't have the means to easily reach medical facilities and maintain physician health plans. The homeless who can receive Medi-Cal, EBT, federal SSI or veteran benefits are usually unable to maintain such benefits due to the lack of physical addresses for routine questionnaire follow up from such agencies.

Free homeless shelters are hard to come by, usually at maximum capacity, lack the ability to offer showers, food and other necessities to rebound, and often provide drug dealers with easy access to groups of people who have enough cash to buy drugs to ease their physical and mental pain. With nowhere to go, many homeless force themselves into voluntary 5150 holds which is overloading our psychiatric facilities.

In a nutshell, we are giving the homeless little bits of cash to help them sustain live support on the streets, costing the taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars every year (not including medical treatment costs), which is basically doing nothing, as more and more people join the ranks of the homeless.

The only feasible solution to the homeless problem is to provide pay-to-stay full-service shelters that rehabilitate. Well designed, well managed facilities could provide such services for as little as \$12 a day, or \$366 a month, per resident. This means that the homeless could afford to live

in these facilities using their existing government benefits (i.e. EBT, SSI, etc.), part-time work or even panhandling, with no additional cost to taxpayers, even a savings as the homeless are rehabilitated.

Society also needs to change the mentality of how our government agencies deal with the homeless. The country of Finland's homeless program has been successful because government social workers are placed in the buildings housing the homeless. This ensures that people in need have access to services which help them rehabilitate.

Social workers need to be relocated to these pay-to-stay rehabilitation facilities, along with easy access to other agencies, such as the US Social Security Office and Veteran Affairs. The attitude of "you must come here", "you must have an appointment", and "all your paperwork must be in order" to receive benefits must be changed. Every person we do not help, will stay on the streets and probably become physically and/or mentally ill, costing the taxpayers in long-term medical treatments, or even death.

A pay-to-stay homeless rehabilitation facility in which the residents have proper, real-time access to social services could provide the following services, even at a 70% paid occupancy rate:

1. Dorm-style housing with restrooms and showers
2. Breakfast, lunch and dinner
3. Laundry services
4. Medical and dental services
5. Mental health and group therapy
6. Access to Social Services
7. Drug rehabilitation
8. Computer/Internet access
9. Transportation services
10. Pet vet and care services
11. Family services
12. Access to a mailing address
13. Barber services
14. Police and security protection
15. Storage for belongings

To recap: We can provide the homeless with full-service shelter and rehabilitation services at no additional cost to the taxpayer, utilizing existing social service benefits. **ZERO ADDITIONAL FUNDS ARE NEEDED!**

Now for the hard part! To provide all these services, we'll need well designed facilities. The Governor of California has recently said he wants to spend over 1 billion dollars to fix the homeless problem in California. Many other politicians are suggesting the use of old government buildings to house the homeless, buildings not designed to house large groups of people that could cause safety and logistical concerns.

Yes, the current state of the homeless problem will require society to provide housing, which is going to cost us all a lot of money. The best solution would be to build well-designed facilities from the ground up. Such facilities would handle dorm-style living and food service amenities to efficiently feed large groups of people logistically at low costs. Retrofitting old buildings to meet the requirements to provide all the services listed above would probably cost more than building a well-designed facility from the ground up, obviously in areas where property is available. Areas such as San Francisco, would have the requirement to retrofit and such work would have to be well-designed.

The 1BED4ALL project has developed a 464-bed facility with an estimated build cost of 3 million dollars and a 928-bed facility with an estimated build cost of 4 million dollars. The Facility Build & Operational Overview details our research, estimated costs and feasibility of the monthly self-sustainable operations.

The 1BED4ALL project is also developing a facility management software application that will allow shelters to provide important rehabilitation services with ease and automate the EBT and other government billing interfaces.

Converting free shelters to pay-to-stay facilities could be the fastest way to get help to the homeless. We could provide training to these shelters, manage the program, and provide the software needed to make such facilities successful.

The 1BED4ALL Solution to the Problem in California

We suggest that California adopt a "pay-to-stay" homeless rehabilitation facility program in which shelters that agree to provide all the services discussed in this plan, would be granted access to bill resident EBT cards \$12 a night.

Converting Free Shelters

1Bed4All proposes that the state allow us to manage the “pay-to-stay” program in which we would provide training, program compliance auditing and facility management software to participating shelters. Conversions would be the quickest way to start rehabilitating the homeless. It would also allow such shelters to grow, helping to get people off the streets as quickly as possible.

Building New Facilities

1Bed4All also proposes that the state fund the project to build pay-to-stay facilities throughout the state. The cost to build a 928-bed facility is approximately 4 million dollars. If there are 90,000 homeless people living on the streets, we would need to build 97 facilities at the cost of 388 million dollars.

For every 4 million dollars, we can rehabilitate 928 people at a time, forever.

County Participation

1Bed4all would require the corporation of county governments to make this solution possible. Social services would have to ensure facility residents receive \$6 a day (\$183 a month) for EBT food and \$6 a day (\$183 a month) for EBT cash. It would also be important that resident Medi-Cal applications were processed in a timely manner. We would strongly suggest that participating counties relocate appropriate staffing to the facilities.

Also, to be able to build facilities for 4 million dollars, land would need to be donated for use. Utilizing unused asphalt parking lots owned by counties or the state would be perfect for these facility builds.

Stop Wasting, Start Fixing!

Charles Bowen

1bed4All Project Founder

chuck@1bed4all.org

1bed4all.org