

# Shelter Health:

Essentials of Care for People  
Living in Shelter

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## **The National Health Care for the Homeless Council**

The National Health Care for the Homeless Council began as an element of the 19-project HCH demonstration program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Pew Memorial Trust. We are now over 75 Organizational Members and over 700 individuals who provide care for homeless people throughout the country. Our Organizational members include grantees and subcontractors in the federal Health Care for the Homeless funding stream, members of the Respite Care Providers' Network, and others. Homeless and formerly homeless people who formally advise local HCH projects comprise the National Consumer Advisory Board and participate in the governance of the National Council.

### **Statement of Principles**

We recognize and believe that:

- homelessness is unacceptable
- every person has the right to adequate food, housing, clothing and health care
- all people have the right to participate in the decisions affecting their lives
- contemporary homelessness is the product of conscious social and economic policy decisions that have retreated from a commitment to insuring basic life necessities for all people
- the struggle to end homelessness and alleviate its consequences takes many forms including efforts to insure adequate housing, health care, and access to meaningful work.

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the National Council is to help bring about reform of the health care system to best serve the needs of people who are homeless, to work in alliance with others whose broader purpose is to eliminate homelessness, and to provide support to Council members.

Consistent with our Mission Statement, we:

- Advocate for universal health care and for the improvement of current systems intended to serve people who are poor and homeless
- Research critical issues
- Train and organize health care providers, service agencies, and homeless people themselves to improve care
- Publish newsletters, monographs, action alerts, policy statements, training videos and books
- Collaborate with a broad range of public and private entities interested in the problems of health care and homelessness.

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Ken Kraybill and Jeff Olivet  
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