

What was the mission of your community partner?

The mission of Shelterhouse is to provide shelter and basic human services for men and women experiencing homelessness in the Greater Cincinnati area & provide support to find sustainable housing in the future. Specifically, Shelterhouse provides access to safe housing and food sources. It also provides opportunities for clients to access medical care, job opportunities, and a sense of community. Shelterhouse strives to accomplish this mission with the establishment of 2 major shelters for people experiencing homelessness in Cincinnati. The first is the Barron Center for Men and the Esther Marie Hatton Center for Women. These centers strive to provide safety and nourishment to hundreds of men and women in Cincinnati who otherwise would go without. Both shelters have a very low barrier to entry and focus on providing housing before all else to people experiencing homelessness – with the ultimate goal of transitioning residents to permanent housing. Shelterhouse also provides opportunities for their clients with finding economically viable career paths while they are staying in the shelter trying to find housing. In the goal to provide housing and structure, Shelterhouse also provides structure for clients with chores and specific times that residents can be in common areas, attempting to build a sense of personal responsibility. Shelterhouse provides a lot of help to the community, however there are often challenges with resident, employee, and volunteer turnover. In 2022, COVID complicated our service learning by intermittently preventing in-person sessions with our community partner liaison and our ability to provide in-person arts, exercise, and meditative sessions. Given the high rates of COVID transmission in close quarters, we needed to establish safety measures for all parties involved. We hope to explore rent control, high turnover rate of clients and volunteers, the impact of Shelterhouse's programs on providing sustainable housing, housing-first models, and providing job opportunities for clients.

Which SDOH did they address?

Did COVID impact execution of that work?

How did COVID impact your service-learning experience as a student?

B How does that SDOH impact the Cincinnati community in general and specifically the clients served by your community partners? Are there any new or increased needs as a result of COVID or as a result of current socio-economic pressures?

The social determinants of health address the inequity of access to health resources experienced by underprivileged and marginalized populations. The Cincinnati community has a large burden of homelessness, and this burden influences many other social determinants of health. A lack of affordable housing available to the greater Cincinnati population, and organizations like Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation (3CDC) are actively pushing Cincinnati natives out of their homes through gentrification. Because of this many residents who spent their whole life in a neighborhood and had generations spent in a property end up being pushed outside of the city they grew up in. This results in a shift of the culture and the traditions

in neighborhoods and a change of people moving into neighborhoods previously enriched with tradition and culture. 3CDC is owned by Proctor and Gamble and does not have the desire to help combat the housing crisis, but because of their ties in the government with lobbyists, they continue to control the neighborhoods in Cincinnati, particularly Over the Rhine. There is also an inaccessibility to healthy food and nourishing resources due to the prominence of food deserts in underprivileged communities in Cincinnati. Lack of transportation and the great distance that individuals struggling economically must travel to access nutritious and affordable food, often coupled with a general lack of understanding of the dire consequences of poor nutrition, lead to many economically disadvantaged individuals eating nutritious diets, and this poor diet leads to more health problems, which causes a larger burden of health bills. Leading to potential homelessness. Shelterhouse works mainly to address the problems homelessness and access to food and work. Cincinnati has up to 10,345 homeless individuals on a given night. Shelterhouse served 2034 individuals between both shelters in 2021. COVID restrictions have made it more difficult to serve homeless individuals. Shelterhouse has lost staff as a result of the pandemic and has also had to reduce volunteering due to COVID restrictions. COVID safety measures also complicate the operations of the shelter.

C. How might students and physicians advocate to Cincinnati city government on behalf of the needs of your partners and their community? (educating city officials is part of advocacy) What need particularly require support at this time?

1. Create a longitudinal program for wellness at Shelterhouse similar to but not limited by arts and crafts, meditation, and exercise.
2. Invest in healthier food options including cooking classes for the residents at Shelterhouse, so they can feel healthy and happy.
3. Educate legislators on the demographics of the residents at Shelterhouse and share their stories with councilmen and other officials in government.
4. Pop up health clinics around the city of Cincinnati especially in vulnerable areas to serve the needs of the homeless population.
5. Focus on creating a specific program for computer skills for residents at Shelterhouse which would directly help them find jobs among other things.

The students and physicians need to advocate for the homeless population of Cincinnati and the greater metro area of the city of Cincinnati in order to bring up one of the most vulnerable populations in the community of Cincinnati and the greater metro area of the city of Cincinnati. First, creating a longitudinal program for wellness at Shelterhouse similar to but not limited by arts and crafts, meditation, and exercise like we (Learning Community 12 of the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine Class of 2025) did over the spring semester of 2022 would allow for the clients of Shelterhouse to not only develop healthy coping strategies -- the original goal of our project -- but also explore the types of coping strategies that are the most efficacious for individuals.

We also need to encourage Shelterhouse to strive to provide food options of the healthiest variety to meet the nutritional needs and Food and Drug Administration recommended guidelines for the United States of America. The legislators of the great city of Cincinnati and the

surrounding metro area should be better educated on the demographics including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status in order to keep the government officials aware of the particular needs and challenges of the homeless community. The men's and women's shelters of Shelterhouse have unique challenges, and the legislators of Cincinnati being aware of their needs would encourage the law-makers to provide funding and create specific legislation to address their unique circumstances. Focusing on developing programs for computer literacy for residents at Shelterhouse, such that the residents are able to acquire skills (including basic programming knowledge, data analysis software, and/or Microsoft Suite) would provide a significant impetus in terms of helping provide valuable life skills. Although Shelterhouse currently has its own health clinics "in-house" (i.e., it includes "a fully operational on-site medical clinic," along with "full day treatment services tailored to each woman's specific needs," according to its website), there are many individuals who currently experience unsheltered homelessness for a number of reasons.