

Homeless COVID-19 Response

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OVERVIEW

In partnership with the national nonprofit Community Solutions, Jacksonville was chosen by Quest diagnostics as one of two cities in the nation where homeless persons would be tested for COVID-19. Sulzbacher partnered with UF Health to administer tests at five of the largest, local homeless service providers and at both Urban Rest Stop locations. The group tested a total of 679 people and Quest Diagnostics confirmed that all tested individuals tested negative for COVID-19. Jacksonville is uniquely situated to address a public health crisis as Sulzbacher, the largest homeless service provider, is also a Federally Qualified Health Center.

The COVID-19 Shelter Taskforce, a subset of the Mayor's Downtown Homelessness Taskforce, collaborated to create the shelter protocols that ensured coordination with area hospitals and the provision of non-congregate shelter, meals, testing and vaccinations. Sulzbacher has played a leading role in many of the successful outcomes of the COVID-19 Shelter Taskforce including, the launch of a pop-up Urban Rest Stop, the activation of the Health and Hope on Wheels medical bus to provide testing and other critical health care services and the implementation of the Pathway to Home Program.

CHALLENGE

To implement a multi-pronged, strategic COVID-19 response for homeless providers and people experiencing homelessness.

INNOVATION

The COVID-19 response model, designed and implemented by the COVID-19 Shelter Taskforce, is structured to be used in response to future viral crises and can be replicated in any community. The quick and decisive action by the Taskforce, signed onto by all Northeast Continuum of Care members, stemmed the spread of the virus among the very vulnerable homeless population. The protocol has been shared nationally on COVID-19 crisis response calls, webinars as well as on the #1 Health Podcast on Apple, Epidemic. In June 2020, Changing Homelessness and Mayor's Downtown Homelessness Taskforce won the Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida's 2020 Local Focus. Lasting Impact.™ Collective Power award.



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PARTNERS

- Changing Homelessness
- City Rescue Mission
- Clara White Mission
- Downtown Vision
- Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)
- Hubbard House
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- Jacksonville Sheriff's Office
- Mayor's Downtown Homelessness Taskforce
- Mental Health Resource Center
- Quest Diagnostics
- Trinity Rescue Mission
- UF Health