

# W Improving Access to Quality Healthcare to People Experiencing Homelessness in Billings, Montana

Natasha Radosevich • RUOP III • 2020 • University of Washington School of Medicine



## Hypothesis

Increasing the Healthcare for the Homeless clinic in Billings, MT, will lead to improved health and resources access for the homeless.

## Background

Total People Experiencing Homelessness

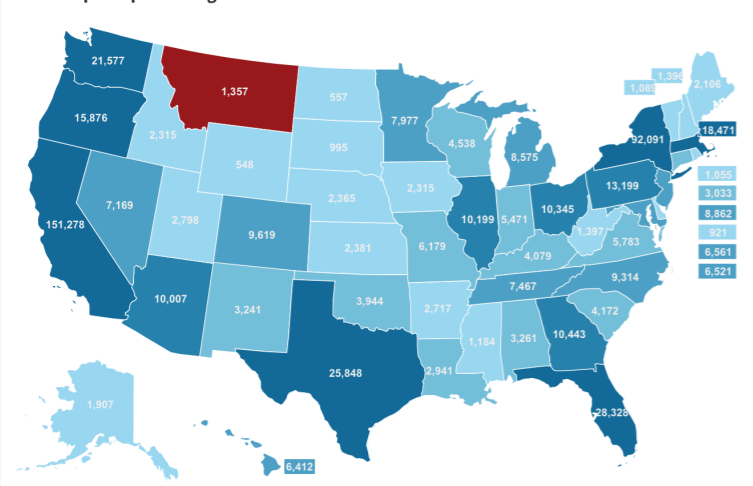


Image 1: Estimated homeless population across the US

- Billings is the largest city in MT (pop: 109,550)
- Homeless population in MT 1,357, in Billings the estimated population size is 100-500 individuals
- Primarily this population is white although, Native Americans are largely effected as well as Hispanic/Latinx individuals
- Majority of this population is long-time residents of Billings
- Research shows homeless populations are at increased health risks, premature death, decreased utilization of primary care services, over utilization of emergency rooms with advanced conditions

## Community Profile: Assets

- Community Assets:
  - Riverstone Health - Provides primary care, behavioral health, pharmacy, dental services
  - Healthcare for the Homeless Clinic - accepts walk-in appointments
- Other Assets:
  - Community Crisis Center
  - Mental Health Services
  - Montana Rescue Mission Men's, Women and Children's Shelter



## Literature Review

- A national survey of homeless adults showed 75% had an unmet healthcare need in the last year, 50% with 2 or more
  - 6-10x higher than the general population
  - Barriers: being uninsured, competing priorities (ie. Food insecurity), employment, poor vision as a result of poor healthcare, etc.
  - Interventions: included flexible schedules, more comprehensive models of healthcare

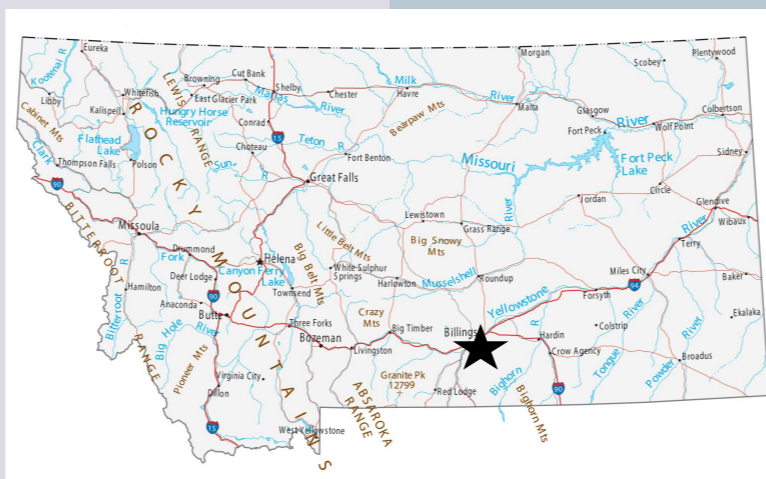


Image 2: Map showing the state of Montana with black star highlighting Billings, MT

## Conclusions

- Increasing Healthcare for the Homeless clinic hours to 24/day and continuing to allow walk-in appointments could promote increased utilization of this clinic by homeless individuals
  - Better management of chronic health conditions
  - Decreased ED visits
- Having the clinic linked with the community health center provides access to other resources including vision, dental, mental health services, immunizations, financial assistance for pharmaceuticals, etc.

- **Community Assets:**
  - Riverstone Health – Provides primary care, behavioral health, dental and pharmacy services.
  - Healthcare for the Homeless Clinic – Accepts walk-in appointments
- **Other Assets**
  - Community Crisis Center
  - Mental Health Center
  - MT Rescue Mission Men's, Women and Children's Shelter