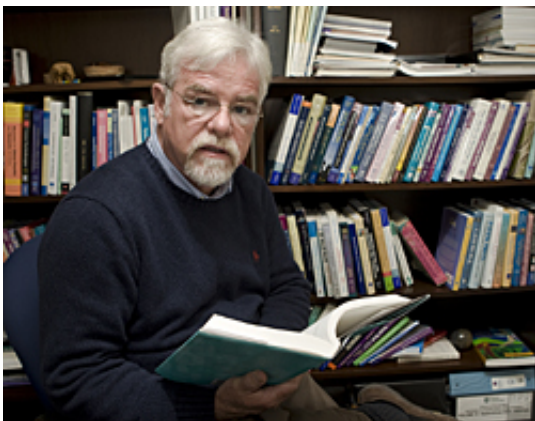


Researchers Find Group Therapy Benefits Homeless Veterans Prone to Violence

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Gary Dick

(PhysOrg.com) -- A new study examines the rates of violence among homeless veterans and their partners and the significant results of group therapy.

A new study finds that group therapy can benefit homeless veterans who have admitted taking physical or emotional abuse against their partners. The research - a collaboration between Gary Dick, associate professor of Social Work at the University of Cincinnati, and Brad Schaffer, corrections counselor for the Veterans Administration Cincinnati Medical Center - was presented this month at the 14th International Conference on Violence, Abuse and Trauma in San Diego.

The researchers examined the cases of 130 homeless veterans who had admitted to committing either emotional or physical abuse against their partners. All of the veterans studied were male, living in homeless shelters, with 88 percent unemployed, with the median age 45. Ninety percent of the group reported suffering from some form of substance abuse; 16 percent reported a diagnosis of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD); 41 percent of the men had expressed interest in joining group treatment.

That group treatment involved a 13-week psycho-educational program, with sessions led by a master level social worker. Sessions focused on anger management, the link between substance abuse and violence, respect and partnership, stress and challenges as well as values and violence. Individual therapy was also held for men who expressed the need for additional therapy.

The researchers say the support led to dramatic results in curbing [domestic violence](#) among homeless veterans. The average 9.5 score in reporting abuse before treatment dropped to an average score of 4 after group treatment, with the most drastic drops reported in [physical abuse](#).

Statistics from the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs suggest 33 percent of the U.S. adult homeless population is made up of veterans. Among them are veterans suffering from (PTSD), other mental health issues and drug or substance abuse.

Provided by University of Cincinnati ([news](#) : [web](#))

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