A Looming Public Health Crisis: A New Wave of Homelessness
works for a lasting end to homelessness that leaves no one behind.
Mass unemployment over coronavirus could lead to a 45% jump in homelessness, study finds
Expected Increase in National Homelessness - Methodology

- The model used unemployment projections and data on current homelessness using a standard regression developed by Dr. Kevin Corinth in “The impact of permanent supportive housing on homeless populations,” published in the Journal of Housing Economics in 2017. Using data on homelessness and unemployment from 2007 to 2009, it found that for every 1% increase in the unemployment rate, homelessness per 10,000 people increased by 0.65.

- The baseline number of people experiencing homelessness was drawn from the Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress (AHAR) data from January 2019 — also known as the point-in-time count — which provides an annual estimate of people experiencing homelessness in the United States, nationally and by state.

- More info and data at this link
Expected Increase in National Homelessness - Findings

- Analysis conducted by Dr. Brendan O’Flaherty, economist at Columbia University
- Additional 250,000 people nationwide
- Likely to hit Black & Native Americans harder than other groups
Unique challenges increase COVID-19 risk

- Inability to safely shelter themselves
- Inability to self-distance in crowded shelters
- Inability to follow hand-washing protocols in absence of hand-washing stations or access to public bathrooms
- Pre-existing health risks including high rates of chronic illness, disability, an aging population and mental illness and addiction
- Extreme disparities in infection and fatality rates among minority populations
COVID-19’s projected impact on people experiencing homelessness

Panel A: Hospitalization

Infected homeless individuals may be twice as likely to be hospitalized.

Source: Dennis Culhane, UPenn
COVID-19's projected impact on people experiencing homelessness

Infected homeless individuals will be two to four times as likely to require critical care compared to the general population

Source: Dennis Culhane, UPenn
COVID-19’s projected impact on people experiencing homelessness

Infected homeless individuals are predicted to be two to three times as likely to die from COVID-19 as the general population.

Source: Dennis Culhane, UPenn
Looking Upstream: Diverting People from Homelessness

- BfZ Large Cities Cohort capturing immediate diversion strategies during COVID
  - Diversion is the most effective inflow reduction strategy we have (disciplined problem solving with people when they show up asking for help)
  - Major increases in diversion + prevention dollars
    - VA’s SSVF program (53% per community grant)
    - HUD’s Emergency Solutions Grant
Looking Upstream: Inflow Mitigation

- Developing **long-range inflow mitigation strategy**, including key policy ideas:
  - Back rent elimination fund
  - Straight-to-landlord assistance options
  - Expansion of Housing Choice voucher program for low and extremely low income renters
  - Equity-focused implementation lens
Preventing new homelessness
North Hartford, CT
North Hartford Promise Zone

- 24,000 Residents, 73% African American, 24% Latinx
- Pre-COVID-19:
  - Unemployment: 33%
  - Family Poverty Rate: 36%
  - Average Income: $12,099
- Rates of COVID-19 deaths highest among African American in CT
Stabilizing Housing

- Outreach to neighborhood landlords to mitigate evictions
- Informing residents of rights and sources of assistance
- Laying groundwork for community land trust with initial target of 100 affordable units
- Contributing to “zero inflow” into homelessness initiative
Preventing new homelessness
Brownsville, Brooklyn NY
Brownsville

- 90,000 Residents
  - 76% African American
  - 20% Latinx

- Pre-COVID-19
  - Unemployment: 7%
  - Family Poverty: 28%
  - Median Income: $27,282

- 1,767 cases, 213 deaths

“For years we’ve known about mold, crowded apartments, poor air quality in public housing. Now those problems are making tenants more vulnerable to the virus.”

--Brownsville City Councilmember
Alicka Ampry-Samuels
Supporting Resident-Led Solutions

- United for Brownsville
- Collaborating to meet basic needs
- Brownsville Mutual Aid Network
  - Resource Guide
- Brownsville Neighborhood Empowerment Network and Community Land Trust