Greetings from the SHADOW Study!

The SHADOW study started five years ago. In the beginning, we were talking to about 100 women. Over the years we have grown and now we talk to more than 300 women.

We collect this information to help improve services for women.

The purpose of this newsletter is to share some of the results from the first years of the study.

Please let us know if you have any questions or if you have ideas for what you would like to see in future newsletters.

On behalf of The SHADOW Team, Thank you!

We couldn’t do it without you!

Who are the SHADOW Study Participants?

Did you know that the average age of the women in this study is 47? The youngest woman is 20 and the oldest is 69.

Also, 57% of study participants are single and 8% are married.

What about health?
- 30% have asthma
- 14% have diabetes
- 75% experience long-term pain

Where do participants live?
Almost half (47%) of the SHADOW participants live in the Tenderloin. About 17% live South of Market and 7% live in the Mission.

The most common reasons people said they didn’t have a permanent place to live was because they ran out of money or didn’t like the living environment.

This is where people said they stayed last year:

- 38% SRO
- 28% Own apt.
- 14% Shelter
- 8% Street
Women stay in different places than men

Many research studies show that when people have to move around a lot, they are more likely to get sick. In other words, having a permanent place to stay can be good for your health. We wanted to know if permanent living situations were different between men and women.

We learned that 50% of women and 70% of men slept on the street or in a shelter in the past year because they didn’t have a place to stay.

- Many women tried to stay with friends or “couch surf” instead of staying on the street.
- Also, more women who were recently in jail did not have a permanent place to stay.

What does this mean? Men and women have different types of problems with housing, so we need to come up with different solutions to make sure that all people have safe housing. Women leaving correctional settings need extra help finding safe housing options.


Long-term vs. Short-term Housing

After learning that men and women stay in different places, we wanted to see how other types of housing situations influenced women’s lives.

We found that women who were able to stay in the same SRO for a long time were less likely to be incarcerated.

We also found that the less time women slept on the street, the less likely they were to be incarcerated.

What does this mean for women?

Getting off the street and into stable housing is not only better for health and safety, but it may get women out of situations where they end up in jail.

The UCSF SHADOW Project is part of the UCSF Positive Health Program (PHP) at San Francisco General Hospital. PHP is recognized globally as a leader in HIV clinical care, research and education.

Meet Our Research Team…

**Elise Riley**, PhD, is an Associate Professor at UCSF and the Principal Investigator of SHADOW. After growing up in a small town in the Sierra Mountains, Elise has spent the past 13 years doing public health research.

Her research focuses on health risks and the problems that people have getting services they need. She hopes that this research will inform and improve services for people, especially women.

**Jennifer Cohen**, MPA, is the SHADOW Project Director. She started working on the SHADOW study in 2005 after moving to San Francisco from Denver. She has spent over 12 years working in health research and services.

Jennifer’s favorite part of the job is getting to work with diverse groups of people who are willing to share their life experiences in order to improve the health and well-being of others.

**Kathleen Fitzpatrick** is an interviewer with the SHADOW project and is also a state certified HIV Test Counselor. She started working with the project more than a year ago and moved to San Francisco three years ago from Colorado.

Her favorite part of the job is interviewing women and getting to know them better with time. Helping participants understand their test results and how this impacts their health means a lot to her.

**Alyson Weber** began working as an interviewer with SHADOW in July. Her favorite part of the job is getting to meet and talk with so many interesting individuals with such diverse backgrounds.

Alyson moved to San Francisco about four years ago from Georgia along with her 10-year old cat, Agnes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shadow Project Newsletter</th>
<th>Issue #1 Fall 2010</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We want to hear from you!</td>
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<td>Please call us to schedule an interview time at: <strong>415-632-5070</strong>.</td>
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<td>Don’t forget, you can call us toll free at: <strong>1-866-975-6262</strong> from any telephone.</td>
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<td>If you have any ideas, feedback or personal stories that you’d like to share for future newsletters, please let us know.</td>
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<td>You can also send an email to: <a href="mailto:jcohen@epi-center.ucsf.edu">jcohen@epi-center.ucsf.edu</a></td>
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