



### [En Español](#)

*Welcome to **The Way Home**, your guide to how LA County is helping people and communities affected by homelessness.*

### **A message from Department of Health Services Director Dr. Christina Ghaly**

Every day, on the streets of Los Angeles County, hundreds of outreach workers are on the frontline providing critical services to our most vulnerable neighbors — those who are experiencing homelessness.

Among them are medical professionals providing care on the spot — on the street, in an encampment, in the back of a car.

I'm proud to introduce you to Carrie Kowalski, an incredibly dedicated physician's assistant from [Venice Family Clinic](#) providing street medicine to those in need. Watch the video below to learn more about the work she's doing every day, which is supported by the Department of Health Services' [Housing for Health](#) division.

While the immediate care providers like Carrie deliver is critical for the patient, it's also important for the collective public health of our communities. We're all healthier when everyone has their basic medical needs met. Our street-based outreach teams, like the one Carrie is a part of, make sure folks are vaccinated and treated for any communicable diseases.

We also know from [groundbreaking research](#) by the LA County Department of Public Health that those experiencing homelessness on our streets are dying from preventable conditions, mainly heart disease. It's key to monitor these conditions before they become catastrophic.

It's better for our collective pocketbook to treat conditions before they become life-threatening. We know that our work in Housing for Health is [helping people and reducing costs](#) for medical care.

We all benefit when our neighbors and communities are healthy.

I'm grateful to our street-based outreach workers changing lives every day.



*Christina*

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**Thanks to you...**

**15,166**



...individuals experiencing homeless in fiscal year 2018-19 received assistance and connections to housing and services after interacting with one of the

Department of Health Services' 61 street-based outreach teams, meeting our short-term goals of offering immediate access to health, mental health, substance use services and interim housing to those most in need while working in tandem to achieve the ultimate goal of permanent housing.

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## People helping people



**VIDEO:** An unprecedented mobilization to combat and prevent homelessness has led to a major expansion of outreach workers out on the street. Meet one of them—a physician's assistant who is bringing healing to the homeless while protecting the health of the public at large.

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## In case you missed it

- There's still time to volunteer to help with the 2020 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count, taking place from January 21 through January 23. Visit [TheyCountWillYou.org](https://TheyCountWillYou.org) to sign up.
- An annual independent evaluation of the Homeless Initiative shows LA County is [making an impact](#) confronting homelessness.

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