



Emily M. Pang, MS; Tianyao Lu, MS; Nicole Williams, MSW; Susan Hintz, MD, MS

THE IMPACT OF RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE: LENGTH OF STAY AND FAMILY-CENTERED SUPPORTIVE SERVICES ACROSS PATIENT, FAMILY, AND DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) Bay Area's Stanford House (RMHS) provides housing and support services for families with critically ill children at Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford. There have been no reports characterizing family needs and impact of patient and family factors on length of stay (LOS) in the RMHC network. This mixed-methods study evaluated range of stays at RMHS; patient and family factors associated with LOS; and impact of services on families' medical, financial, and psychosocial needs.

We studied RMHS family stays between 1/1/18-12/31/19. Stay data was extracted from the RMHS database, deidentified, and linked across patient and family identifiers. LOS was computed as total number of nights between check-in and check-out and analyzed for stay, patient, and family characteristics. We calculated LOS distributions across quartiles and performed univariate mixed effect logistic regressions to quantify association. Semi-structured interviews with seven families with varying LOS were conducted, transcribed, and thematically analyzed.

During the study period, there were 4,145 distinct stays by 2,092 families of 2,128 patients, encompassing 54,575 cumulative nights. We found that patient age and distance from home were significantly associated with LOS, revealing longer stays for families of the youngest patients and families farthest from home. LOS also varied by primary referring medical departments. Family interviews identified major themes: stressors of medical care and relief of housing security, value of community among families, and RMHS's role in improving outcomes and access to care.

Our study highlights the substantive need for housing and services filled by Ronald McDonald House during pediatric hospital stays and demonstrates the profound impact on families. This research will aid RMHC Bay Area in anticipating LOS and enhancing services.

COMMUNITY PARTNER

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