WHY DO WE NEED TO FOCUS ON THEM?

Today, 88% of healthcare dollars are spent on clinical/medical care, which only drives 20% of the health outcomes. 

88% of health care dollars are spent on medical/clinical care.

80% of health outcomes are driven by factors other than clinical care/treatment.

WHAT ARE THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH?

Social Determinants of Health are the circumstances in which people are born, grow up, live, work, and age and the conditions or factors that impact the quality of healthcare that they receive and outcomes they experience. Their circumstances are shaped by economics, social norms and policies, and political systems.

WHAT IS HEALTH EQUITY?

Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible.

WHAT CREATES HEALTHCARE INEQUITY?

Health equity must be a priority for healthcare providers, systems and all stakeholders because inequities in social determinants of health lead to poorer outcomes, premature deaths and drain healthcare resources.

Limited benefits of healthcare

Lack of healthcare access and/or insurance

Racial & other discriminations in healthcare settings

Structural racism

Inequities in economic and educational opportunity

EXAMPLES OF HEALTH INEQUITIES

Black women have a pregnancy-related mortality ratio approximately three times higher than white women.

Native American and Alaskan Natives reflect lowest life expectancy and disproportionate rates of diabetes and high blood pressure.

The 1% richest live ~ 14.8 years longer than the 1% poorest.

Hispanics are disproportionally affected by diabetes, metabolic syndrome and end-stage renal disease.

Physicians are more likely to prescribe pain medication to white vs Black patients.

LGBTQ experience high rates of unemployment or underemployment, limited access to appropriate health care, and social discrimination.

Black women represent 20% of triple negative breast cancer with a mortality rate 3X higher vs. NHW.

People with disabilities are estimated to represent ~18.7% of the US population and are at increased risk for poor well-being, report higher rates of obesity, smoking, and 3X-4X higher risk of cardiovascular disease.

Poorest neighborhoods reflect high risk of stroke.
How to Reduce Health Inequities?

Opportunities exist to focus on societal drivers that contribute to health and healthcare outcomes, ranging from policy and external partnerships to internal incorporation of a health equity mindset.

**Emerging Public Health Practice**

- **New Areas of Focus**
  - Social Inequities
  - Institutional Inequities
  - Living Conditions
  - Risk Behaviors
  - Disease & Injury
  - Mortality

**Key Terms and Definitions**

- **Health care** (also called medical care) is distinguished from health status or outcomes, as these are the services provided by a trained personnel to treat or prevent illness.

- **Health disparities** are preventable differences in the burden of disease, injury, violence, or opportunities to achieve optimal health that are experienced by socially disadvantaged populations.

- **Health disparities** are used to measure progress toward health equity. Health disparities are plausibly avoidable, systematic health differences adversely affecting socially disadvantaged groups.

- **The healthcare system**. The multiple organizations and institutions involved in the delivery and financing of health care, including providers of medical care and ancillary services, payers, as well as training, administrative, and monitoring agencies.

- **Social care**. Attention to social determinants of health provided by a healthcare provider or healthcare system.

- **Social risks**. Health risk factors due to adverse social conditions/determinants.

- **Structural racism / Systemic racism** is “...the totality of ways in which societies foster racial discrimination, through mutually reinforcing inequitable systems (in housing, education, employment, earnings, benefits, credit, media, health care, criminal justice, and so on) that in turn reinforce discriminatory beliefs, values, and distribution of resources, which together affect the risk of adverse health outcomes.”

**What Can You Do to Reduce Health Inequities:**

1. Integrate **Social Determinants of Health** into design of solutions/ interventions upstream
2. Make health equity enablers an embedded KPI throughout your organization
3. Ensure data captures social determinants, diverse segments, genders and ethnicity
4. Reimagine and support collaborative initiatives with organizations that go beyond "health"

**SOURCES:**

- Community in action - National Congress Library, 2017

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