



DISABILITY PREVENTION IN METROPOLITAN AREAS

**Metropolitan areas should provide effective public health services for vulnerable populations to prevent disability.*

A forum was held at the Brookings Institution on “Blueprint for American Prosperity: Unleashing the Potential for a Metropolitan Nation”. Participants in the forum were the Chief Executive Officer of H &R Block, a mayor of a large metropolitan city, a university president, a representative from a non-government organization, and a former secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Summary

The blueprint for prosperity of metropolitan areas includes meeting social and environmental challenges. It was suggested that Metropolitan areas exploit their strengths and adapt to changing realities, lead on national priorities, demand results and promote informed, innovative, decision making on transportation, housing and school issues. It was suggested that the federal government has failed to keep pace with the realities of social and environmental challenges.

Disability Prevention Issues

The forum failed to address issues concerning public health that prevents diminished health of vulnerable populations in metropolitan areas as part of the blueprint for prosperity. Vulnerable populations, which include the impoverished and disabled residents, are disproportionately represented in metropolitan areas. Associated with causes of poor and diminishing health of urban populations are race, poverty and disability. Thus, there is a need for consideration of the health of vulnerable populations in the blueprint for prosperity in metropolitan areas.

Metropolitan areas can lead a national priority for effective public health that will extend life quality, protect and promote health for all, with special attention to vulnerable populations. Policy decisions in metropolitan areas should be made based on reliable and valid information that address toxic free environments, schools that produce healthy students, neighborhoods that are safe, housing with toxic free materials and unhealthful conditions, work places that are safe for workers, transportation environments that are not prone to risk of unintentional injuries, adequate provisions for access to needed health care, and recreation environments that provide opportunities for healthful leisure.

Intervention

A letter was sent to the Director of the Brooking Project on Metropolitan Development concerning consideration for improved public health functions in metropolitan areas.

Recommendation

Initiatives for improving prosperity of metropolitan areas should provide effective public health that protects and promotes health for vulnerable populations.