



CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES

ECONOMIC INSECURITY CAN CONTRIBUTE TO DIMINISHED HEALTH AND DISABILITY

A forum was held at the New America Foundation on “Income Insecurity” that introduced a detailed analysis of how Americans experience economic insecurity. Persons who presented at the forum were representatives from nonprofit foundations, the press and researchers from colleges and universities. There was a report that focused on four economic domains which were employment, health care, family and wealth.

Summary

Adverse economic conditions from the depression of first decade of the 21st century have placed significant hardships on many people in America. One in five persons have experienced greater decline in available household income. Ninety three percent of households experienced decline in their wealth or earnings or substantial decrease in nondiscretionary spending. Seventy percent saw their earning substantially fall and 23% reported a drop of at least a quarter of their household income. In addition, half of incomes between \$60,000 and \$ 100,000 experienced employment or medical disruption and failed to meet at least one basic economic need. Half appeared vulnerable to additional shocks because buffers against economic instability were limited

Many families experience a series of economic shocks. Of those who experience unemployment, three quarters experienced persisting shocks in a least one of the other domains of economic life which were, major out of pocket medical expenses, wealth retirement benefit at work, value of retirement investment down, and decline in house value. Prevalence of a series of economic shock include 28% lost job, 21% were too sick to work and Increased medical expenses. Nearly half of households could go no longer o more than 2 months without hardship setting in. One in five could go no longer than 2 weeks.

Disability Prevention Issues

A large share of Americans experience substantial economic hardship such as disruption of jobs and health insurance that leave a deep adverse health imprint on their lives. Economic insecurity is greater than at any time on record. Some of the worries about economic insecurity that adversely affect health are debt, retirement, savings, medical costs, health insurance, and housing stability that result in stress that diminish health and contribute to disability. Adverse results from economic insecurity may be regressed well being from inadequate nutrition, loss of home or inadequate medical care all of which may contribute to

diminished health and disability. Households with children appear to be less adequately buffered against risk of diminished health. Dislocated persons were 4 times more likely to have diminished health because of inability to meet multiple basic needs such as food, shelter and basic health care.

Buffers against economic instability are eroding by clustered economic shocks. The less advantaged, particularly people with disabilities and racial and ethnic minorities are more vulnerable to economic shocks than the well off. Seventy eight percent of people in the U.S. are worried about at least one risk to their overall income security. The damage is often severe which imposes psychological stress associated with economic insecurity with a relationship to diminished health and disability.

Activity

There is ongoing study of the adverse effects that economic insecurity has on diminished health and disability.

Principle

There should be a floor under which no people in America should be required to live that includes and job and necessary human resources which may prevent disability