



CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES

EFFECTIVE CARE GIVING CAN PREVENT DIMINISHED HEALTH THAT CAN LEAD TO DISABILITY AND SECONDARY DISABLING CONDITIONS

There should be effective care giving that improves, maintains or reduces rates of diminished health to prevent disability.

A congressional briefing was held on “Hispanic Family Care Giving in the U.S.”. The briefing addressed public health interventions that reduce morbidity, disability and need for family care giving.

Summary

The main focus of the briefing was on prevalence, and descriptions of human interactions of care giving. There are 44.4 million caregivers over the age 18 providing services with the prototype a 46 yr old that cares for 77 yr. old mother for 37 hrs. a week. Eighty-two percent of people who need care receive help from relatives or friends, and one third is caring for 2 or more care recipients. Diabetes is the top reason for care giving. There are disproportionate numbers of Hispanic caregivers when compared Caucasian caregivers (i.e. 42% of Hispanics live with loved ones vs. 32 percent of Caucasians)

Disability Prevention Issues

There was little attention given, at the forum, to prevention or maintaining function for self-sufficient living with the purpose of reducing morbidity and lesser need for family care giving. Health and loss of human function for self-sufficiency diminishes with age. There are approximately 50 million people with disability in America, many who need care from others. Two thirds of disability occurs after the age of twenty. The prevalence of disability at age 65 is 30% and 52% at age 75. Thus, initiatives to reduce morbidity for persons who are vulnerable through effective care giving skills that maintains self-sufficient behavior would produce both human and economic benefits to society. In addition, there are also environmental modifications that may enable self-sufficiency of people who are vulnerable that can reduce care giving over ones life span. There are protocols based on social and behavioral principles associated with maintaining and restoration of human functioning related to self-sufficiency that ameliorate or prevent disability

Intervention

A letter was written to the Congresswoman who sponsored the event concerning public health interventions that reduce morbidity, disability and need for family care giving.

Recommendation

There should be effective care giving that improves, maintains or reduces rates of diminished health to prevent disability.