



CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS  
WITH DISABILITIES

## **EFFECTIVE PUBLIC HEALTH THAT ADDRESSES HEALTH DISPARITIES MAY REDUCE DISABILITY AND HEALTH CARE COSTS**

Health disparities is a critical public health function, There is strong evidence that the quality of health care varies by race, ethnicity and among other vulnerable groups. People in vulnerable groups have less access to jobs with health insurance, are disproportionately affected with human losses in economic downs and discriminatory health immigration policies,

### **Health Disparities May Result in Chronic Health Disorders and Increase Disability**

Over 70% of health care expenditures result from diminished health that can result in chronic health disorders and disability. Many of these chronic health conditions are associated with diminished health that can be prevented. A particularly vulnerable group that receives disparate health care is impoverished people with disabilities without health insurance. Lack of timely health care may result in diminished health that results in significant functional limitations that prevents adaptation to social environments. There are over 50 million people in America with disability who are in jeopardy of diminished health that can lead to secondary disabling conditions. Disability increases as a function of age. Six percent of the population is disabled at 5 years of age and 53% of the people over the age of 75 are disabled.

### **Impoverished People with Poor Health and Disability Increase Health Costs**

Recent census data indicates that there are nearly 40 million people in the U.S. who are in poverty and nearly half are under 50% of poverty. Childless adults in poverty have little opportunity for public health insurance in most states. Estimates are there are over 5 million uninsured people in the U.S., under 50% of poverty, with no health insurance. Many of these vulnerable people are of poor health, who without timely health care may encounter chronic health conditions that lead to disability. Diminished health of vulnerable populations results in increased health costs in the long run because of eventual treatment in public health programs.

### **Human Costs of Failure to Address Health Disparities Are Severe**

Population based health measures that compare the U.S. with other countries reports low status of our country. For instance, a recent report ranks the U.S. at 37<sup>th</sup> among other countries of the world in general health. Other data on morbidity and mortality measures places the U.S. in low standing. Poor U.S. performance on population based health measures may be, in part, the result of extreme health disparities in the U.S.