



CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES

LOSS OF VALUE IN PROGRAMS OF SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH CAN DIMINISH HEALTH RELATED TO DISABILITY

Federal programs associated with public health programs of social determinants should be adequately funded.

Social determinants of public health are factors that contribute to or diminish individual or community health. An analysis of value loss in federal programs was presented at a meeting of anti-poverty advocates. Two-thirds of the programs studied were associated with social determinants of public health.

Summary

There were approximately 100 programs associated with anti-poverty that were studied for value loss over five years. Two-thirds of the programs analyzed were related to social determinants of health. However, the list of programs related to social determinants of health was focused only on the Departments of Health and Human Services, Education, Justice, and Housing. Other federal departments and agencies responsible for social and environmental public health determinants but not included in the report were: 1) Energy (inadequate control of nuclear waste and toxic chemicals from fuel storage contaminate drinking water supplies); 2) Transportation (unsafe and poorly designed roads which cause unintentional injuries and deaths); 3) Veterans Affairs (insufficient diagnosis and treatment of veterans' health conditions); 4) Consumer Product Safety Commission (failure to regulate products with toxic chemicals and that are unsafe for children); 5) Environmental Protection Agency (failure to regulate toxic air, water, and land); and 6) Labor (400,000 workers become disabled each year).

Disability Prevention Issue

The analysis of Federal programs associated with social determinants of health is significant because it enlightens advocates for human needs to the aggregate federal decline in commitments to making public health social determinants the priorities of congresses and administrations. Decline in these services as a result of financial constraints can diminish health and contribute to disability. It is a federal responsibility of government to protect the health and well-being of people who live in America by funding programs of social and environmental determinants. The U.S. is 37th in overall measures of health compared to other countries, much of which relates to insufficient attention to social and environment factors of public health. There is a need to address social and environmental determinants in health care reform because it is 75% of the cause for needed medical services.

Intervention

A letter was written to the author of the document in regard to loss of program value and the consequences of diminished health and disability on vulnerable populations.

Recommendation

Federal programs associated with public health programs of social determinants should be adequately funded.