CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS WITH DISABILITIES

RANK OF COUNTY HEALTH OUTCOMES MAY INITIATE PROGRAMS TO PREVENT DIMINISHED HEALTH AND DISABILITY

A congressional briefing was held by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation on "County Health Rankings" .Presenters at the briefing was a Dean of a School of Medicine and Public health, a Mayor of a city and a representative from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Summary

The county health rankings measure the overall health of people in nearly every county in all 51 states of the U.S.. The rankings provide a standard way for counties to see where they are doing well and where changes need to be made and how they compare against one another. County health rankings show us that where we live, learn and work and play matters to our health. Much of what influences our health happens outside of the doctor's office such as access to healthy foods or opportunities for physical activity. There is a county health calculator that is interactive that shows U. S. states or counties of the impact that education and income have on health and well being. In addition, there are methods that show how many deaths can be avoided by effective public health policies. The rankings issue a call to action for communities to mobilize to overcome barriers and to work together to develop programs and policies that address multiple influences on health. Ranking of health outcomes of counties can stimulate discussion and action within communities regardless of where the county ranks. The rankings also remind public health communities, health leaders, business and government that they have a role to play in improving the health of their community through their programs and policies,

Disability Prevention

There are many social determinants of health that if unattended can contribute disability. The County health rankings identified 16 factors that were weighted and are associated with prevention of diminished health. Some of the factors measured are tobacco use, obesity, access to health care, healthy foods, education, community safety, air quality and access to recreational facilities. An example was provided for Philadelphia where the statewide score was 48%; the best county was 67% and the poorest 25%. These data indicate differences in counties. There are also differences in health outcomes with respect to rural, urban and suburban communities. There were no measures of diminished health associated with functional limitations (i.e. disability).

Activity

Discussions were held with the director of the "Health County Rankings" project on the consequences of diminished health that relate to disability as a ranking measure.
and use with the School Nutrition Act wellness programs.

1660 L Street, NW, Suite 701 • Washington, DC 20036 • PH 202/783-2229 • FAX 783-8250 • Info@c-c-d.org • www.c-c-d.org

Principle
Instruments such as the Health County Rankings" should be applied to implementation of school and community based wellness programs.