



CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES

SOCIAL SECURITY REFORM AND DISABILITY PREVENTION

Effective public health can compress morbidity and ameliorate disability by keeping seniors healthy.

A forum was held by the National Academy of Social Insurance entitled “Can We Afford Our Parent’s Grandparents’ Retirement”. Policy makers interested in Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid and interns associated with income security issues attended the forum.

Background

Some of the issues covered at the forum were why social security matters to young people, how the baby boom impacts the U.S. society and whether the U.S. can afford aging through Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid.

In 2007, Social Security collected taxes from 163 million workers and their employers to pay benefits to nearly 50 million people. About 6% of workers earn more than the maximum taxable wage base of \$97,500. Information disseminated at the forum dealt with a description of the Social Security program and options for financing the program.

Disability Issues.

Among 20 year olds today, 3 in 10 will become disabled before reaching the full retirement age of 67 and over half of persons over 75 years old are disabled. There was 7.2 million adults with disabilities in the Social Security System in 2007, who received an average monthly payment of \$835, which is approximately at the poverty level. A public health/disability prevention issues associated with reform of the Social Security system. is access to individual revenues to sustain basic human needs of life to prevent diminished health that can lead to disability and secondary disabling conditions.

Intervention

A letter was sent to Executive Director of the National Academy of Social Insurance concerning public health initiatives to prevent disability in an attempt to keep seniors healthy and capable of work. Issues related to disability prevention were also raised from the forum floor and in post forum discussions with the editor of the “Health Affairs” journal.

Recommendation

The retirement income for vulnerable populations should be sufficient to meet basic human needs, which include adequate nutrition, shelter, health care and disposable income to prevent poverty.