



CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES

TRANSITION FROM A “SICK CARE” TO A “WELLNESS SOCIETY” THAT PREVENTS DIMINISHED HEALTH AND DISABILITY

A forum was held at the Center for American Progress that suggested a blue print for the Department of Health and Human Services for healthcare reform that adopts a new health care design. Presenters, at the form, were health care policy experts.

Summary

Effective implementation of non- medical reimbursable community based public health programs should be a high priority for federal administrations and legislatures. For instance, sedentary lifestyles and inadequate nutrition contribute to an obesity epidemic that threatens to make children’s life expectancy shorter than their parents. Seventy percent of deaths and 78% of costs are attributable to chronic diseases, many preventable through control of obesity. Estimates are that over 25 years, Medicare could save a trillion dollar by returning to 1980 levels of obesity and \$890 billion from control of hypertension, to prevent chronic health conditions. In addition, there are 50 million unintentional injuries that require treatment that cost \$400 billion in indirect and direct costs.

The public health system cuts across traditional policy silos and federal departments. For instance, the Child Nutrition Act has authorized wellness policies in every school district. However, antidotal information is that schools value for healthy students is less than desirable. School wellness programs could implement evidence-based practices to prevent obesity through collaboration of Departments of Education and Agriculture. However, widely disseminated reproducible evidence based protocols to prevent obesity are rare in school wellness programs.

Disability Prevention Issue

There is need to change the health care system from one that pays for sick care to a wellness society that prevents diminished health and disability. At present, there are 47 million people in America who are uninsured, which may contribute to diminished health. As a result, the U.S. ranks near the bottom on overall health of industrialized nations. One of the reasons for poor U.S. performance on population based health is a fragmented public health system, There are dangerous gaps in the public health infrastructure that need to be repaired that requires adequate sustained funding for community based programs of social determinants of health .A new paradigm is required that develops a cross department budget with a blue print for legislative and administrative action.

Intervention

A letter was written to a health policy expert associated with the forum concerning the role of public health reform as it relates to diminished health and disability.

Recommendation

A new and effective public health system needs to be developed to prevent diminished health and disability