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228190 Using neighborhood data for advocating policy changes in the current political and economic climate

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Patricia Nolan, MD, MPH, Department of Community Health, Alpert Medical School, Brown University, Providence, RI

Robert J. Marshall, PhD, RI Department of Health, Providence, RI

Karine Monteiro, MPH, Program in Public Health, Brown University, Providence, RI

Carol Hall Walker, MPA, Division of Community, Family Health and Equity, RI Department of Health, Providence, RI

Neighborhoods have been shown to influence healthiness and health behaviors, yet data about the health of people and the neighborhoods in which they live is often based on key informants and interpolating from larger jurisdictions. Conducting observational neighborhood assessments and in-home interviews of a random sample of adults provides a unique means of assessing their health and their environment. Results of more than two hundred interviews in an urban neighborhood in Providence, RI have been completed. These findings are being shared with community leaders, collaborating health and social service agencies, and policy-makers through a series of community information sessions in order to foster new policies and actions. The 212 interviewees live on 18 blocks randomly selected from a larger sample of 103 blocks, representing 20% of all blocks in the neighborhood. Interviewees are female (67.5%), older (58% > 45 or older, 41% <45), and minorities (48% Hispanic, 31% black), and not employed outside the home (36% employed, 63% retired, unable to work, student/homemaker or unemployed). The neighborhood has few recreational facilities, parks or playgrounds (95% of street segments had none) and little support for walking. Forty-five percent (95) of interviewees reported fair or poor health status, particularly among adults 45 and older (58%). Younger adults 18-44 were more likely to report good or excellent health status (72%). Nearly half of all interviewees (47%) reported having been told they have high blood pressure, 14% reported diabetes, and 10% reported cancer. Interviewees' responses about physical activity, nutrition, access to wholesome foods and places to be active, and access to health services are being analyzed now. Community feedback and strategy sessions are being scheduled for spring and summer 2010. An analysis of these sessions and the policy choices made will be presented.

Learning Areas:

Advocacy for health and health education
Chronic disease management and prevention
Public health or related public policy

Learning Objectives:

Compare neighborhood data with national and state data as a tool for policy change Evaluate concurrent collection of environmental and health data in a neighborhood

Keywords: Community Health Assessment, Policy/Policy Development

Presenting author's disclosure statement:

Qualified on the content I am responsible for because: I oversee and participate in the data collection, analysis and dissemination of the work presented.

Any relevant financial relationships? No

I agree to comply with the American Public Health Association Conflict of Interest and Commercial Support Guidelines, and to disclose to the participants any off-label or experimental uses of a commercial product or service discussed in my presentation.

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