Screening for Social Determinants of Health

Gem P. Daus
Office of Health Equity
HRSA’s Office of Health Equity (OHE)

• HRSA’s Office of Health Equity (OHE) works to reduce health inequities so that communities and individuals can achieve their highest level of health for all people.

• This is accomplished through the development of strategic partnerships, internally and externally, with an emphasis on the integration of equity concepts into policy and programming across all HRSA bureaus and offices to positively impact the people we serve.
“Social determinants of health is an abstract term, but for millions of Americans, it is a very tangible, frightening challenge: How can someone manage diabetes if they are constantly worrying about how they’re going to afford their meals each week? How can a mother with an asthmatic son really improve his health if it’s their living environment that’s driving his condition?

“This can feel like a frustrating, almost fruitless position for a healthcare provider, who understands what is driving the health conditions they’re trying to treat, who wants to help, but can’t simply write a prescription for healthy meals, a new home, or clean air.”

Secretary Alex M. Azar, II
November 14, 2018
Washington, D.C.
Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)

• conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age

• the fundamental drivers of these conditions

Healthy People SDOH Model

- SDOH
- Neighborhood and Built Environment
- Economic Stability
- Health and Health Care
- Social and Community Context
- Education

January 14–16, 2020
Impacting Lives in our Local Communities
SOCIAL DETERMINANTS AND SOCIAL NEEDS: MOVING BEYOND MIDSTREAM

January 14-16, 2020
Impacting Lives in our Local Communities
INDIVIDUAL IMPACT

Addressing Individuals’ Social Needs

midstream

Supporting health for all people.

Include patient screening questions about social factors like housing and food access; use data to inform care and provide referrals.

Social workers, community health workers, and/or community-based organizations providing direct support/assistance to meet patients’ social needs.

upstream

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SDOH Rural Considerations

- **Wealth, income, poverty**: low perceptions of mobility means people feel they lack control over their lives, which induces toxic stress and leads people to engage in risky behaviors.

- **Education and labor markets**: students who leave to attend 4-year colleges often do not return. For those who stay, the local job market is dominated by low-wage service jobs.

- **Transportation**: rural residents don’t have as much access to public transportation as urban residents, and drive farther to get social and health services and basic goods.

Source: National Advisory Committee on Rural Health and Human Services
Patient screening for social factors

- Housing instability
- Food insecurity
- Transportation needs
- Utility needs (electric, gas, oil, water)
- Interpersonal safety

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Link to OHE and Health Equity Report:
https://www.hrsa.gov/about/organization/bureaus/ohe/

New Health Equity Report due Spring 2020