Addressing intentional violence through a public health lens

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Health defined (WHO)

- “a complete state of physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”

Violence defined (WRVH)

- “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation.”

The presence of violence makes health/wellness impossible!
Homicides in Chicago 2010-2016

Chicago’s homicide rate increased substantially in 2016 relative to 2015. The city recorded 764 homicides last year, an increase of 58 percent from 2015.²

Figure 1: Homicide Victims in Chicago, 2010-2016

Source: Crime Lab analysis of CPD records
Chicago vs Detroit, St. Louis, Milwaukee

Homicide Rates, Chicago and Midwest Cities, 1985-2016

Source: Crime Lab
Crime in the ghetto:
Everybody pays the price

Blacks suffer most, but urban terror touches us all
Changing the violence narrative

Old View

- Bad people
- Gang bangers
- Isolated incidents
- Punishment
- Intractable

New View

- Learned Behavior
- Negative Norms
- Contagious Process
- Disease Control
- Solvable

Source: Baltimore Cure Violence
Violence & social determinants of health

Symptoms of Community Trauma
- Intergenerational poverty
- Long-term unemployment
- Relocation of businesses & jobs
- Limited employment
- Disinvestment

- Deteriorated environments and unhealthy, often dangerous public spaces with a crumbling built environment
- Unhealthy products

- Disconnected/damaged social relations and social networks
- The elevation of destructive, dislocating social norms
- A low sense of collective political and social efficacy

Source: The Prevention Institute
Standing up the Trauma Center & hospital-based recovery program
Community engagement
Trauma Center = system-wide impact

- Rapid improvement events
- Security
- Capacity
- Cultural change
What role can health system play in breaking the cycle of violence in community?

Source: HRET, 2015.
Implementing a violence recovery program for victims, their families and the community

• Provide treatment for trauma suffered by victims of violence (trauma center, violence recovery)

• Partner with community to identify resources and assets (outreach workers, community engagement)

• Assessment for potential and prevention of potential retaliations (streetworkers and violence interrupters)

• Intensive work and follow-up with victims and families (accompaniment and wraparound services)
Beyond the four walls of the hospital: improving population health outcomes
\[ \frac{85}{69} = 8(7) \]
Economic Hardship Index shows communities most impacted

835,249 Chicagoans were living in HIGH ECONOMIC HARDSHIP in 2014

COMMUNITY AREAS most impacted

- Belmont-Cragin
- Hermosa
- Austin
- Humboldt Park
- West Garfield Park
- East Garfield Park
- North Lawndale
- South Lawndale
- Lower West Side
- Armour Square
- Archer Heights
- Brighton Park
- New City
- Fuller Park
- Oakland
- West Elsdon
- Gage Park
- Chicago Lawn
- West Englewood
- Englewood
- Washington Park
- Greater Grand Crossing
- Auburn Gresham
- Burnside
- South Chicago
- Riverdale

LICensus, American Community Survey, 2014-15 1-Year Estimate
Chicago unemployment rate is highest in communities of color

African Americans are 2.6x more likely to be unemployed than whites

Community areas most impacted by unemployment:
- North Lawndale
- New City
- Fuller Park
- Grand Boulevard
- Oaklawn
- Chicago Lawn
- Englewood
- Englewood
- Washington Park
- Greater Grand Crossing
- Woodlawn
- South Shore
- Auburn-Gresham
- Chatham
- Washington Heights
- Roseland
- Pullman
- West Pullman
- Riverdale

Unemployment Rate
- 42.9%
- 9.4 - 13.9%
- 14.0 - 12.1%
- 20.0% - 40.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019-2021 5-Year Estimates

The University of Chicago Medicine & Biological Sciences
Chicago communities where one third or more of adults have not graduated High School
Chicago zip codes based on asthma-related ED visits

African American children visit the emergency room for their asthma TWICE as often as Chicago children overall.

ZIP CODES most affected
- 60644
- 60654
- 60657
- 60624
- 60636
- 60615
- 60612
- 60621
- 60659

Asthma-related emergency department visits among Chicago youth (18 and younger)
(Age-adjusted rate per 10,000)

- 25.3 - 41.6
- 13.7 - 10.1
- 10.1 - 16.0
- 15.1 - 24.6
- 24.6 - 34.9

Areas with High Economic Hardship

Chicago rate: 147 per 10,000
“Service to society is the rent we pay for living on this planet.”

Joseph Murray, MD

Plastic surgeon, father of transplantation, and 1990 Nobel Laureate in Medicine
Thank you!

Stay in touch,

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