Why We Should Be Passionate About Health System Reform

Boston, Massachusetts
May 9, 2009

David Satcher, MD, PhD
Director, The Satcher Health Leadership Institute and The Center of Excellence on Health Disparities
Poussaint-Satcher- Cosby Professor of Mental Health
Morehouse School of Medicine
16th U.S. Surgeon General

Satcher Health Leadership Institute Mission

The mission of the Satcher Health Leadership Institute is to develop a diverse group of public health leaders, foster and support leadership strategies, and influence policies toward the reduction and ultimate elimination of disparities in health.
Best available science

Reports of the 16th Surgeon General

Healthy People 2010: Overarching Goals

- Increase Years and Quality of Healthy Life
- Eliminate Racial and ethnic Health Disparities
Determinants of Health

What If We Had Eliminated Disparities in the Last Century?

83,500 overall
• 24,000 from heart disease
• 7,000 from HIV / AIDS
• 4,700 infant deaths
• 22,000 from diabetes
• 2000 fewer Black women from breast cancer

• More Health Insurance Coverage...
  2.5 million Blacks, including 620,000 children

Source: D. Satcher et al, Health Affairs, March/April 2005
The Commission on Social Determinants of Health fosters a global movement that places fair health – fairer distribution of health and better overall population health - at the head and the heart of governance.

www.who.int/social_determinants/en

CSDH Recommendations

• Build and strengthen the health workforce, and expand capabilities to act on the social determinants of health.

• Place responsibility for action on health and health equity at the highest level of government, and ensure its coherent consideration across all policies.
McKinlay’s Population Model of Health Promotion: Healthy Diet for Children

Agriculture policy
Food subsidies
And expanded eligibility for WIC/FNS/PEP

State/Tederal Food and
Label regulations

Community-wide
Education campaigns

Parent training
Skill building
Practicing healthy diets

Restaurant grocery
store/school point of purchase prompts

BMI screening
And treatment

Nutrition training
Requirements for professional certification (childcare/healthcare)

Federal/State Lobbying/discharge regulations

Zoning/business
premises for
grocery store
Partners markets

School safe home
Competitive food restrictions

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Source: Based on McKinlay (1995), Glanz (1999)

Lifestyle Indicators and the 16th Surgeon General’s Rx

Lifestyle
• Physical Activity
• Overweight & Obesity
• Tobacco Use
• Substance Abuse
• Responsible Sexual Behavior

PRESCRIPTION
Healthy People 2010 National Health Promotion & Disease Prevention Objectives

16TH SURGEON GENERAL
OF THE UNITED STATES

• Responsible sexual behavior: abstinence plus optimal protection when sexually active
• Daily participation in relaxing and stress reducing activities

David Satcher, M.D., Ph.D.,
Director, Center of Excellence on Health Disparities and the Centers Health Leadership Institute Initiative
Poumane House, Casa Hogar in Montserrat, Whitehouse School for Advancement 702 Vine Street, NE • Atlanta, GA 30315-1485
(Offices) 404-723-4654 • Fax: 404-723-1040
What Will It Take to Eliminate Disparities in Health?

- We must care enough.
- We must know enough.
- We must be willing to do enough.
- We must persist in our efforts.

Source: Satcher Health Leadership Institute

It must be borne in mind that the tragedy of life doesn’t lie in not reaching your goal. The tragedy lies in having no goal to reach. It isn't a calamity to die with dreams unfulfilled, but it is a calamity not to dream. It is not a disaster to be unable to capture your ideal, but a disaster to have no ideal to capture. It is not a disgrace not to reach the stars, but it is a disgrace to have no stars to reach for. Not failure, but low aim, is a sin.

- Benjamin E. Mays
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