TRANSFORMING SERVICES TO ADDRESS HEALTH DISPARITIES

A LOCAL EXPERIENCE IN FULTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

Dr. Kim Turner, Deputy Director
Health & Human Services
July 30, 2009
TRANSFORMING SERVICES TO ADDRESS HEALTH DISPARITIES

- County services are being integrated to better address the causes of health disparities.
- *Common Ground* in Fulton County, Georgia: Transforming Services to Address Health Disparities
TRANSFORMING SERVICES TO ADDRESS HEALTH DISPARITIES

- Prevention Programs
- Targeting areas of greatest need
- Indigent Care Study
- Collaborations
TRANSFORMING SERVICES TO ADDRESS HEALTH DISPARITIES

- Eliminating Disparities and Closing the Gap
- Prioritizing Programmatic Initiatives
- Focusing Resources Based on Planning
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health Outcome Category</th>
<th>Whole County Rate or Measure</th>
<th>African-American or Black Rate in County</th>
<th>County Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Below Poverty</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment (adult unemployment)</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>F</td>
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<tr>
<td>YPLL-75 Rate (Life years Lost)</td>
<td>4,514</td>
<td>3,427</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Outcome Category</td>
<td>Whole County Rate or Measure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preventable Emergency Dept. Visits</td>
<td>5,901.6</td>
<td>29,390.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mental Health Emergency Dept Visits</td>
<td>960.4</td>
<td>2,212.8</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low Birth Weight</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>D+</td>
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Social determinants of health (SDH) are essential factors and resources in the social environment that contribute to or detract from the health of individuals and communities. This phenomenon has long been accepted by scientists, practitioners and policy makers. Inequitable distribution of the SDH in question which has a significant influence on persistent health disparities in our most underserved communities.

Examples of SDH:
- Condition of the Built Environment
- Housing & Physical living conditions
- Access to Transportation
- Access to Health Care
- Policies and laws in place
- Education Level
- Socioeconomic status of the community
- Crime levels
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HEALTH DISPARITIES

Percentage of Population with No High School Diploma by Census Tract, 2000

Percentage of Eligible Workers that are Unemployed by Census Tract, 2000

Percentage of Population in Poverty by Census Tract, 2000
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HEALTH DISPARITIES

Asthma Discharge Rates under 17 years age by Census Tract, 1994-2005

Infant Mortality Rates by Census Tract, 1994-2005

Discharges per 100,000 population
Health Disparities


Fulton County received an overall failing grade for health outcomes and health inequity for “extremely poor outcomes and/or extremely severe racial inequality”.

This is a result of a long history of the environmental and social conditions that have affected the health status of Fulton County.

Over the years support has been provided to people through social and health programs.

People are suffering from poor health conditions and diseases that are preventable because of inequity in the system.

Fulton County government has acted to address social determinates of health to affect health disparities.
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CHALLENGE AND RESPONSE

A LOCAL EXPERIENCE IN FULTON COUNTY, GEORGIA

Zachary Williams, County Manager
Fulton County Government
July 30, 2009
The conditions in which people live have an impact on individual and community health status.

Policy drives the conditions in which people live and work.

In order to affect the health status of the residents of Fulton County on a large scale and over the long term, government must shift the way it conducts business and provides services by creating and implementing policies that address the social determinants of health.
Public policy can influence social determinants of health and can lead to negative or positive health outcomes.

Improving the quality of public services, the community infrastructure, and the socio-economic conditions in which people live can also improve health.

Modifying service delivery through the lens of the Social Determinants of Health is a new perspective for conducting government.

The economic viability and health status of a community are intertwined.
Environmental attributes of a community such as walking trails, parks and recreation are essential elements that have a major impact on resident’s health problems such as obesity, hypertension, diabetes, cardio-vascular disease and others.

Public policy must address “social exclusion”, defined as “the economic hardship of relative economic poverty and includes the process of marginalization-how groups come to be excluded and marginalized from various aspects of social and community life”.

Public policy must support the survival of residents and their communities and should be created through empowering communities to drive the process.
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CHALLENGE AND RESPONSE

COMMON GROUND INITIATIVE
Creating Equity through Public Policy and Community Engagement

- Intended to create more collaborative approaches to service delivery among Human Services Departments.

- Concept has evolved into a much larger, long term, County-level strategic initiative to address the Social Determinants of Health.

- One of the first in the nation.
Fulton County Health and Human Services Agencies began to research actions to optimize service delivery among Departments within the Fulton County Government.

The task evolved into a much larger strategic initiative to develop a system-wide approach to address Social Determinants of Health.

August, 2008 the Health and Human Services Agencies were charged with developing a proposal to address inequities with regard to racial, ethnic and other socioeconomic disparities and their impact on health status.

The agencies identified opportunities for further partnerships and collaborated on opportunities to create new programs and policies to address local inequities.

The effort has evolved into the current initiative entitled Common Ground: Creating Equity through Public Policy and Community Engagement.
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CHALLENGE AND RESPONSE

**COMMON GROUND TARGETED OPPORTUNITIES**

- Serving At-Risk Teens (START) System of Care
- Oak Hill System of Care for Youth and Families
- North and South Fulton Community Centers
- Neighborhood Union Primary Care Partnership
- Intergenerational Communities
- Primary Care Lite Clinic
$424,400 approved in FY2009

Oak Hill Adolescent and Family Program serves is a “one-stop shop” resource to enhance access and coordination of treatment services to the target population of children and families who present for services

374 youth ages 7-21 and 20 youth ages 0-6 have received care
$3.2 Million Renovation Project
Neighborhood Union - *Common Ground* project
The project seeks to couple traditional public health, mental health and human services with primary care services, in addition to other county services that are scheduled to be integrated
Multidiscipline Service Centers to address the mounting need for adequate, accessible health care for the underserved living in surrounding communities
Fulton County is engaging a wide array of organizations to address the disparities issues. All sectors of County government and as well as other stakeholders must be involved. Partnering with multiple segments of the community in order to sustain the process.
COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

- The Atlanta Regional Commission
- United Way
- MARTA
- Community-based Organizations
- Faith-based Organizations
- Neighborhood Planning Units
- Local Businesses
- Institutions of higher education - Morehouse and Emory
- School Boards
- Municipalities and other government agencies
The movement to address the social determinants of health in Fulton County was founded upon an interdepartmental collaboration with current and future community partnerships.

By forging solid relationships with other Fulton County agencies, businesses and community representatives, Fulton County is utilizing its assets more effectively to combat poverty, housing inadequacies, environmental stressors and other social determinants of health that affect our communities.
THANK YOU

COMMON GROUND
Creating Equity through Public Policy and Community Engagement