

ADDRESSING THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH: IS THERE AN ECONOMIC CASE TO BE MADE?

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Why?

- Recognition that social determinants matter more than medical care, genetics or many other factors to health outcomes
- Push for shared decision making with patients
- Desire to work in communities, in context (CBPR)
- Patient-centeredness
- Clear documentation of disparities
- Social determinants as key drivers
- Evidence for effectiveness of multi-level, multi-component interventions to address disparities
- Huge resources available in health care
- Few resources available for other social services
- Early data show promising results



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Why Not?



- Poor access for disadvantaged communities
- Low investment in primary care
- Poor performance on measures of equity

- Unclear how to screen for social risks in health care
- Little motivation to detect social risks
- Little evidence for what works in health care systems for addressing social risks

- Low spending on social safety net
- Voluntary partnerships with social service agencies
- Often underfunded

- Waste comprises ~30% of HC spending (~\$750b)
- Low value for cost
- Ironic that HC system being asked to address more?