Housing Partnerships and Health:
Is there a potential return on investment?

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Children’s HealthWatch
Road Map

- About Children’s HealthWatch
- Housing instability and health
- Business case for investing in housing for better population health – Lessons from the ground
About Us

Non-partisan network of pediatricians, public health researchers and child health and policy experts.

Mission: To improve the health of young children by informing policies that address and alleviate economic hardships.
Our Data

5
Urban hospitals (Baltimore, Boston, Little Rock, Minneapolis, Philadelphia)

20
Years of data collection

65,000
Families of children ages 0-4 surveyed
Food Security

Stable Homes

Energy Security

Ability to afford health care without trading off basic needs
HOMELESSNESS

HOUSING INSTABILITY
- Multiple moves
- Behind on Rent

UNAFFORDABLE HOUSING
Unstable Homes and Child and Caregiver Health

Sandel et al., Pediatrics 2018
Health-Related Costs of Unstable Homes

LONG-TERM COSTS OF UNSTABLE HOMES TO THE HEALTH SYSTEM ARE $111 BILLION*

Maternal health conditions
FOR WOMEN AGES 18 - 44

$76.8 Billion
OVER TEN YEARS
Includes increased costs for hospitalizations, ambulatory visits, dental procedures, mental health care, and medications

Child health conditions
FOR CHILDREN UNDER 18

$34.3 Billion
OVER TEN YEARS
Includes increased costs for hospitalizations, ambulatory visits, dental procedures, medications, and special education services

Total cost: $111 Billion over ten years

Children's HealthWatch
Population Health Perspective

Housing Risk Assessment

- High-Risk Clients Top 5%
- Rising-Risk Clients 5-35%
- Low-Risk Clients 35-65%

Steps:
- Homelessness Addressed
- Housing Instability Addressed
- No Needs to Address

Health Care Risk Assessment

- High-Risk Patients Top 5%
- Rising-Risk Patients 5-35%
- Low-Risk Patients 35-65%

Steps:
- Trade high-cost services for low-cost management
- Avoid unnecessary, higher-acuity, higher-cost spending
- Keep patient healthy, loyal to the system
Adult Model – Pilot model to integrate housing specialist into complex case management

Average age: 57

Heart Failure: 49%

Mental health condition: 79%

Substance use disorder: 38%

Recent or current homelessness: 47%

Inpatient stays
3 months pre/post intervention, n=20

- 22
- 11
Pediatric Study

Families in unstable homes identified by Children's HealthWatch OR Referred by Navigator/SW/Case Manager

- Meets eligibility criteria (high health care utilization, high housing instability, BMC patient)
- Consent to participate in the study
- Refusals

Intervention group:
- Project Hope - Intake assessment/ housing needs characteristics/case management/conducts Problem Solving Education/ referrals to partners

Families may receive referrals to any combination of services offered by:
- Nuestra Comunidad
- Medical-Legal Partnership
- Boston Housing Authority

Control group
- Standard of care: Paper outreach resources with information on housing supports
Solutions

Housing investments for health improvement – Mission and Margin

Identification of health-related housing needs among patients

Integrated service delivery
Boston Medical Center guided $6.5 million in Determination of Need obligated funding toward housing.

Aim: Support housing and wrap around services for patients and use Community Investment Tax Credits to stretch dollars.
Upstream Implications

Policy and Programs

How do we create policies to encourage investment that address SDOH for greater ROI?

Social Inequities

Can we also work in populations or geographically to change SDOH in multi-level interventions as well?

Environment

Disease and Injury

Behavior

Majority of time spent here intervening clinically, screen/refer

How do we create policies to encourage investment that address SDOH for greater ROI?
Recommendations

Health and housing integration

• Aligned investments – blend/braid housing and health funding streams
  • Community Benefits
  • Determination of Need
  • Health system investment portfolio
  • Health insurance reserves

• Identify housing instability within health settings

• Coordinate and integrate service delivery

• ROI calculations to include individual, household-level and systems savings
Thank you!

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