Health Promotion

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C-Span Health Promotion

Dr. Regina Benjamin spoke at the American Podiatric Medical Association annual scientific meeting in the video clip. She talks about three aspects in health care which include the importance of foot care to avoid diabetes-related amputations, the national prevention initiative as well as the prevention of tobacco use by the young people in reference to the 2012 surgeon general’s report. This information is relevant in addressing the community health care given that many young people have indulged in alcohol and substance abuse. It is essential to come up with programs that advocate for healthy living and avoidance of tobacco since it has adverse effects to the body. Dependence on drugs also drains family capital and affects the nation’s economy negatively. It is also importance for the diabetic patients to take care of themselves and comply with drugs administration and treatment to avoid adverse effects like amputations. The initiative of prevention being better than cure is relevant to the society in all aspects.

**Importance of Health Promotion and its Impacts**

Health promotion refers to the ability of people to increase control over their health and its determinants which leads to general improvement of their health. It is essential in promoting equity and justice since the entire community is educated on strategies to enhance their well-being indiscriminately. It is a source of empowerment since it builds individual and group capacity. People are also able to recognize the influence of the environment on their health, for example, prevention of pollution and improper waste disposal educates the people the need to conserve the environment for health upkeep ((Keleher, Murphy, & MacDougall, 2007). Health promotion enhances people participation in community activities and development hence harmony and unity. The community will have a good reputation if it is known for individual and group health promotion strategies. It is essential to the government and authorities since they will not have hefty spending on the health sector say Medicaid and Medicare programs. This aims at stabilizing the economy and diverting those funds to development projects.

**Role of the Government in our Health**

The major role of the government lies in the dominance of financing the health care sector in various ways and also subsidizing the private market based systems that could be too expensive or exploitive to the citizens. The government extends subsidies that amount to approximately $250 billion annually towards the U.S. health care to cater for long term exclusion from taxation of employer sponsored health care. The government also rolled out programs such as Medicaid and Medicare that have been significant in the health care system and reducing the burden of the uninsured citizens. There has been the issue of Medicaid privatization which has seen more than 30% of the beneficiaries get privatized programs under Affordable Care Act.

The government is also responsible for regulation of the health sector by encouraging employer-based coverage and non-portable group insurance (Cross, 2013). Policy makers have argued that the government should leave the sector to the market and be neutral. This is because there has been reports of bias in the sector due to government intervention hence the argument for the government to be laissez faire. However, there is the question of the Medicare and Medicaid programs which could be totally ruined by the forces of the market. This would mean that the less privileged in the society and the uninsured would suffer yet the government role is to protect its citizens.

**Individual Control Over Own Health**

It is ones ultimate desire and responsibility to live a healthy and vibrant life. This calls for healthy lifestyles to avoid contracting preventable and avoidable illnesses that affect people negatively. If unhealthy situations take control of one’s body and life, they suffer physically, emotionally and even financially. The economy at large will dwindle since it is expected that the population be productive and contribute positively to development. Therefore, people should live healthy by eating healthy food and avoiding junk that could lead to weight complications and cardiovascular diseases. Safe and adequate water intake should also be priority to keep our bodies healthy. The problem with man is ignorance such that they fail to prevent diseases and end up in hospitals in critical conditions which could burden the nurses and drain their finances.In order to live longer, we ought to love our bodies and keep them fit by exercising and avoiding harmful intakes or actions that could ruin the health.

Would it be a more effective strategy to invest in preventive health care rather than treating sickness and disease?

Prevention strategies are critical to health promotion in America. The rising health care spending by the federal and state governments calls for all stakeholders to join hands and promote prevention strategies in our communities (Keleher, Murphy, & MacDougall, 2007). This will be achieved by encouraging the citizens to avoid unhealthy living and seeking medical care in advance. Waiting until the last minute could cost one a lot of funds to manage the condition when it is advanced than if it was initially prevented or treated early enough. Dr. Regina Benjamin herself advocates for prevention strategies towards health promotion.

The benefits associated with prevention rather than treating an illness include enhancing longer lives and healthier lifestyles which will manage the health care costs at a minimum. It also eliminates cost sharing such as copayments and deductible for certain preventive services. Education and creation of awareness about dangers of smoking, alcoholism and healthy eating habits leads to better prevention strategies in the society hence longer lives and reduced dependency ratio which harms the economy. However, some economists argue that some prevention measures do add net savings such as child immunizations since the vaccines are extremely cheap. They therefore conclude that disease prevention medicines are cost saving. Preventive measures are a better strategy nevertheless for anyone who wants long and happy human life in the long run.

**Arguments for and Against Health Promotion**

Media can be used to reach a wide range of population over a short time in an effort to enhance health promotion. It is usually effective as the information is easily understood, precise and reaches millions of people within a short time and conveniently. Health promotion also can be achieved by legislation whereby unhealthy living habits like alcoholism or substance abuse are eliminated (Borghi, & Jan, 2008). Other legislations are also imposed on careful road driving and bicycle helmet laws. However, health promotion strategies could be argued to be against human rights, such as movement. Hence some people will ignore safety rules or health living and argue that denial is violation of their rights and liberty. Others ignore the media message despite having all the information about the essence of health promotion.

References

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