Understanding the Value of Multi-Sector Health System Interactions

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More than

75%

of total U.S. health care costs derive from preventable conditions


Less than

3%

of total U.S. health expenditures are devoted to public health & prevention

USDHHS. National Health Expenditure Accounts 2014
U.S. communities that increased investments in public health activities by 10% experienced an 8% reduction in preventable mortality rates over 15 years. Mays GP, Smith SA. Evidence links increases in public health spending to declines in preventable deaths. Health Affairs. 2011.


Improving population health requires multi-organizational networks

- Designed to achieve large-scale health improvement: neighborhood, city/county, region
- Target fundamental and often multiple determinants of health
- Mobilize the collective actions of multiple stakeholders in government & private sector
  - Usual and unusual suspects
  - Infrastructure & support


Using data to overcome collective action problems

- Incentive compatibility → public goods
- Concentrated costs & diffuse benefits
- Time lags: costs vs. improvements
- Uncertainties about what works
- Asymmetry in information
- Difficulties measuring progress
- Weak supporting institutions & infrastructure
- Imbalance between resources vs. needs
- Stability & sustainability of funding

Ostrom E. 1994

Mapping who contributes to population health

Node size = centrality of organization in network
Line size = % activities jointly contributed (tie strength)

Mays et al. Preventing Chronic Disease 2010
Understanding variation in partnership performance

National Longitudinal Survey of Public Health Systems, 2014

Classifying partnership configurations


Estimating value: Comprehensive system partnerships do more with less

National Longitudinal Survey of Public Health Systems, 2014
Making the case for equity: larger gains in low-resource communities

Effects of Comprehensive Public Health Systems in Low-Income vs. High-Income Communities

- Mortality
- Medical costs
- 95% CI

Log IV regression estimates controlling for community-level and state-level characteristics

Mays et al. 2015

The policy implications in our data

- Making the case: public health is a good buy
- Getting beyond gridlock: government vs. private sector
- Identifying shared interests and goals
- Peer pressure: benchmarking & comparisons
- Recognizing and rewarding collaboration
- Targeting areas for improvement
- Addressing inequities & disparities

For More Information

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