

Low-Income Population Health Assessment in Miami-Dade County

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In and around most communities there is always a group of people that are disadvantaged and do not get the same opportunities as the rest. Such groups are commonly referred to as vulnerable groups. They lack the resources and necessary skills to live comfortably and often have to rely on the people around them to provide for most of their basic needs. Examples of such groups include orphans, the disabled, the elderly, and many others. The Miami-Dade area also has a number of these vulnerable groups. This paper will aim to discuss the issues and problems that low-income families in Florida face. By the end of the essay, the reader should have a clear understanding of the risks and possible measures that can be implemented to help low-income families

Vulnerable Population Overview

The Miami-Dade area receives close to 10 million visitors per year due to the beautiful beaches, and thus one would wonder why the population of the city is not wealthy. Many TV shows are shot in the region and such exposure should mean that the community would benefit more and earn higher than people in other areas. However, the reality behind all that glitz and glamour is cruel. The gap between the rich and the poor is ever-increasing. The low-income population makes up a considerable part of the area's population, with only a small portion of the middle-class present. The area has been unable to retain a high number of affluent individuals who could contribute tremendously to bridging the gap that currently exists.

A majority of Miami's residents are immigrants from Hispanics, blacks, and Haitians. The average income for a family in the Miami-Dade region currently stands at about \$36000, which is far from the average national income. Things only get worse for a family living in the city of Miami which earns an average salary of \$23000. For such families, most of their income goes into buying basic necessities. They rarely invest in things such as proper health care, and their lifestyle habits make them more vulnerable to diseases. When conducting my windshield survey, I noticed that most families used home remedies instead of going to hospitals because they could not afford insurance(County,2011). The authorities have provided enough health facilities for the use and low-cost public transportation, but still, the income that they earn cannot enable a majority of the families to live comfortably. The primary diseases that the residents face include HIV/AIDS, diabetes, and obesity. The Miami metro area also has a very high homicide rate due to increased criminal activities.

Strengths, Risk Factors, and Barriers

The Miami-Dade region has many advantages that are yet to be utilized by low-income families. The first strength is the climate of the area. It is warm throughout the year in the region, and hence, the people are not prone to different weather patterns that can affect their health. Secondly, the authorities in the area have created a lot of programs aimed at increasing access to better healthcare facilities. For example, the social services master plan seeks to integrate all services provision sectors in the region's economy, aiming to improve areas such as health and assist special needs persons (County, 2011). The program will make sure that they have sufficient knowledge of all the health care services available in the area from which they can choose depending on their level of income. Third, Miami is among the largest producers of agricultural products in the United States. Its pleasant climate means that the people have access to healthy foods although a significant portion of the farm produce gets consumed outside the county.

The primary health risk factor in low-income families is physical inactivity. The cool weather means that most of the people are lazy and do not regularly take part in healthy activities. Close to 65% of the overall population in the country is overweight (Almufleh, 2015). Lack of physical activity has contributed to diseases such as hypertension and diabetes being on the rise in the area. The main barrier to health in the county is the expensive nature of health care. According to statistics, only a small part of the county's population can afford healthcare, and the rest rely on other traditional ways.

Community Resources

The Miami-Dade area has many resources that are accessible to the low-income earners. The main problem is that most of them fail to utilize the resources. The city has an elaborate water system that provides clean water to most households at meager costs (County, 2011). The Miami County government has, over the years, built intricate bicycle networks that can be used to access most parts of the city, encouraging physical activity. Also, there is a train network system that goes all around the city and is very cheap. The county also has green space parks where the residents can go for recreational activities.

Community Health Problem Diagnosis

The main priority health care problem for the community is the reduction of the obesity rate in society. The numerous biking trails need to be utilized more. The rate of obesity has been the cause of the increase in the rate of diabetes and heart disease in Miami. For low-income people, getting such chronic diseases means an increased burden on the already meager resources.

Nurses within the community should participate in public education on lifestyle choices.

(Almufleh,2015). They should organize programs across the county to visit poverty-stricken areas and provide health information to the communities. They can also begin drives that provide free treatment to low-income families in their area at least once in a month. The initiative would be in line with the Healthy 2020 objective of preventing preventable diseases such as diabetes through public education

Summary

In conclusion, not all hope is lost for the low-income group. The county government should ensure that they come up with more policies that will attract a more substantial portion of the middle class creating increased job opportunities and hence higher standards of living. Moreover, they should use the money brought in by the millions of visitors to fund housing projects that are cheap and affordable. If they can create enough jobs that are well-paying, I am sure that most health problems in the area will be eliminated in the long run.

References

Almufleh, A., Gabriel, T., Tokayer, L., Comerford, M., Alaqeel, A., & Kurlansky, P. (2015). Role of community health outreach program “living for health”® in improving access to federally qualified health centers in Miami-Dade County, Florida: a cross-sectional study. *BMC health services research*, 15(1), 181.

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Type your references in alphabetical order here using the hanging indents set up here. Include all references cited in your paper. This must include one scholarly peer-reviewed journal article that was discussed above. Also, reference any agencies you discussed (a URL link is not sufficient) and the text if you discussed it above. We have included the correct reference for Healthy People 2020 below, but you may need to change the year. See your *APA Manual* and the resources in your APA folder in Course Resources for reference formatting.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2017). *Healthy People 2020: Topics and objectives*. Retrieved from <http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topicsobjectives2020>