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Roundtable on Obesity Solutions

A Health Equity Approach to Obesity Efforts: Workshop Overview

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Why is obesity a health equity
issue and what can we do
about it?

Definitions



Health equity means that everyone has a **fair and just opportunity** to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health such as **poverty, discrimination, and their consequences**, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care.

Source: Braveman P, Arkin E, Orleans T, Proctor D, and Plough A. What Is Health Equity? And What Difference Does a Definition Make? Princeton, NJ: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2017.

Disparities

For the purposes of measurement, health equity means reducing and ultimately **eliminating disparities in health and its determinants** that adversely affect excluded or marginalized groups.

Progress toward health equity is assessed by measuring how these disparities change over time, in absolute and relative terms. The gaps are closed by making special efforts to **improve the health of excluded or marginalized groups**, not by worsening the health of those who are better off.

Source: Braveman P, Arkin E, Orleans T, Proctor D, and Plough A. What Is Health Equity? And What Difference Does a Definition Make? Princeton, NJ: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2017.

Excluded or marginalized groups

Excluded or marginalized groups are those who have often suffered discrimination or been excluded or marginalized from society and the health-promoting resources it has to offer. They have been pushed to society's margins, with inadequate access to key opportunities. They are economically and/or socially disadvantaged.

*Source: Braveman P, Arkin E, Orleans T, Proctor D, and Plough A. What Is Health Equity? And What Difference Does a Definition Make? Princeton, NJ: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2017.

Workshop Objectives - Consider...

- History of health equity issues in demographic groups who have above-average obesity risk.
- Principles and approaches to addressing these issues as part of obesity prevention and treatment efforts.
- Equity issues related to the creation, implementation, and evaluation of equity-oriented programs, policies, and systems changes, including those that affect opportunities for healthy eating and active living.
- Research needed to inform and mobilize equity-centered obesity prevention and treatment actions in the field.

Workshop Flow

Session 1 – Disparities in Obesity Prevalence – ethnic minority populations

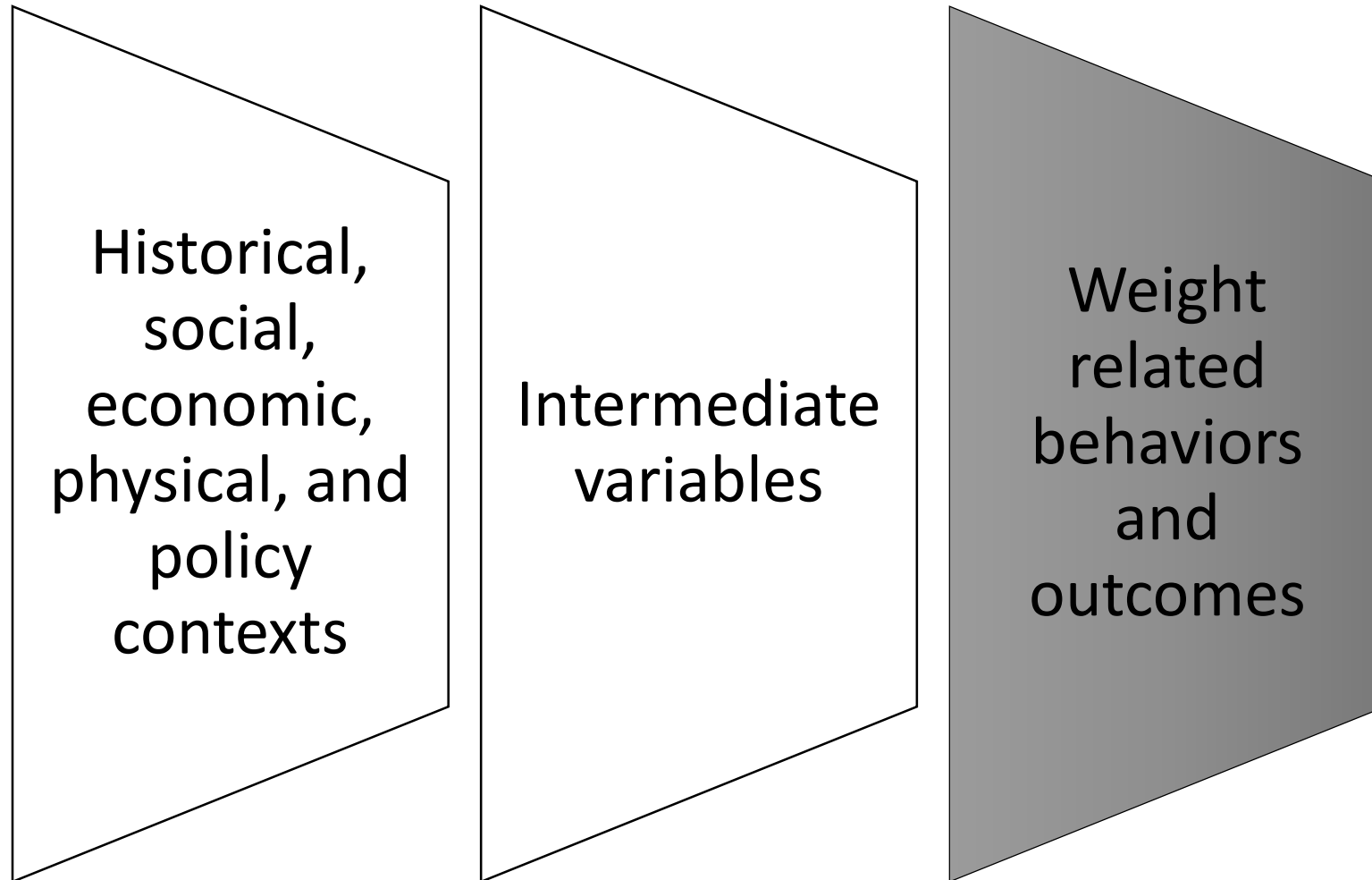
Session 2 – Social Determinants of Inequities in Obesity Prevention and Control

Session 3 – Lessons from the Field: Achieving Equity in Obesity through Community-Public Health Approaches

Session 4 – Lessons from the Field: Achieving Equity in Obesity Treatment in Health Care

Wrap up

Stage setting: How contexts influence obesity...



Weight control and related outcomes

- Food security
- Food intake (Calories in)
- Dietary quality
- Child feeding and parenting
- Physical activity (Calories out)
- Sedentary behavior
- Excess weight gain
- Ability to lose weight
- Ability to maintain weight
- Body composition and fitness
- Child growth and development

Intermediate Variables

Food-related

Food access, affordability, appeal
Exposure to food advertising
Federal nutrition assistance
Food and nutrition literacy
Food norms
“Dieting”

Chronic stress, including financial and other

Sleep health

Physical activity-related

Options for safe, affordable recreation
Personal transportation
Public transportation
Exposure to violence
Activity norms
“Exercise”

Resource limitations

Discretionary time
Discretionary income
Income stability
Energy insecurity
Housing stability
Health care access

Historical, social, economic, physical, and policy contexts

Legal risks and
protections

Employment

Neighborhood/
locality

Institutionalized racism
or other forms of
discrimination

Occupation

Political voice

Education

Economics

Contextual influences on weight control and related behaviors

Legal risks and protections

Institutionalized racism or other forms of discrimination

Economics:

- Debt
- Poverty
- Home ownership
- Wealth building
- Inheritance
- Health and other insurance
- Minimum wage
- Public assistance
- Housing costs
- Employment discrimination
- Market forces –cost of food; health care; marketing

Employment and Occupation

- Education
- Employment discrimination
- Health insurance
- Amenities
- Physical demands of job; sitting
- Job flexibility and control

Education

- School districting
- Neighborhood segregation
- Housing discrimination
- Public funding for schools
- School quality
- Higher education access

Neighborhood/locality

- Rurality
- Jurisdiction
- Public transportation
- Distance to health care
- Retail outlets
- Food access

Neighborhood/locality (continued)

- Racial/ethnic segregation
- % in poverty; wage deserts
- Job access
- Housing stock
- School quality
- After-school programs
- Walking and biking infrastructure
- Community centers
- Neighborhood safety and exposure to violence
- Parks and recreation
- Neighborhood resources, including higher education institutions
- Policing and law enforcement
- Stigma and interpersonal racism
- Blight; aesthetics; community ecology

Political Voice

- Voter registration