



Everyday Health

Health in All Policies

Health is more than just what happens in a physician's office or what medicines are prescribed. Policy issue areas that are often siloed away from health do in fact have powerful effects on the health of our communities and populations. Truly addressing our nation's health means addressing the social determinants of health (SDOH), including transportation, food, and housing.

The environments in which we eat, sleep, work, and play, and how we get to those places, has a major influence on our health. Building efficiency standards, bike lane availability, access to healthy and affordable food and beverages, and housing security all have direct and indirect impacts on the health of a community. But policies that impact these environmental factors often fall outside the realm of traditional "health care" policy.

Health, however, does not care about policy silos. To ensure the health of the nation, we need to understand how policy and regulation outside of health care's traditional purview impacts health, and make policy decisions in those spaces with health in mind. By embracing a "Health in All Policies" model, we can begin to move upstream to prevent chronic conditions and save lives, create healthier communities, and transform our healthcare system.

Transportation, Housing, and Food Policies all Affect Health





Power of Prevention

Using Virtual Reality to Experience the Social Determinants of Health

Highlighting and addressing the social determinants of health is a key part of reforming our health system. That is why the American College of Preventive Medicine (ACPM) has partnered with the de Beaumont Foundation, the Prevention Institute and Brightline Interactive as part of our Power of Prevention initiative to develop a virtual reality learning experience for healthcare decision makers in government, state and local health departments, and industry.

Virtual reality gives us the power to see the world from many other perspectives without ever leaving our desk. This immersive experience places the learner in a situation in which social determinants of health promote wellbeing, and then transports them to one where social conditions may be detrimental to health. In one virtual experience you may walk through a community with sidewalks and complete streets, a grocery store nearby, and public transportation right around the corner. In another, you may be walking along the street carefully avoiding traffic with no healthy food options or public transportation in sight.

By highlighting how policy beyond what we traditionally consider health care impacts health, and providing an immersive environment to see just how strong that impact is, we hope the key decision makers in health care will embrace a "Health in All Policies" model.