Health & Wellness – Will Rucker

Observations:

1. The COVID-19 pandemic has continued to exacerbate health disparities for Black Nevadans in several ways. Studies and data from 2020-2021 have shown that Black communities have been highly impacted by high rates of COVID-19 hospitalizations and deaths. In Nevada, Blacks had significantly higher rates of COVID-19 cases (7,0274.3 per 100,000) across the state of Nevada (Minority Health Report, 2023). These disparities can be attributed to various factors such as pre-existing health conditions, limited access to healthcare, socioeconomic factors, vaccine hesitancy, systemic inequities, etc.

2. In general, Black communities face higher rates of chronic diseases and barriers to healthcare access. Of all racial/ethnicity groups in Nevada, Black (non-Hispanic) populations had significantly higher death rates of the heart, with a death rate of 332.9 per 100,000 population in 2021 (Minority Health Report, 2023). Additionally, following Hispanic groups, Black populations couldn't afford to see a doctor last year.

Underlying Risk Factors:

Pre-existing health conditions: According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), age, heart disease, diabetes, and lung diseases are among the most significant risk factors for severe COVID19-related illness (CDC, 2020). Although risk factors can vary in prevalence among different racial and ethnic groups, minority groups, especially Blacks tend to have limited access to health care. Differences in access to health care as well as underlying health conditions may contribute to higher rates of COVID-19 (Guinn, 2020).

- Socio-economic challenges, limited healthcare facilities in Black neighborhoods.
- Systemic inequities in healthcare access and delivery.

Recommendations:

Addressing these disparities is indeed a colossal undertaking; the layers of systemic inequities embedded in our healthcare system and broader society make the challenge daunting, but it is not an impossible task. With targeted strategies and collective efforts, we can make a tangible difference. To promote health equity and safeguard the well-being of Black Nevadans, we must understand, acknowledge, and act upon these systemic issues contributing to health disparities. 1. First, we need to ensure equitable vaccine distribution. It's not just about the availability of vaccines, but also their accessibility. We must strive to bring vaccines to the neighborhoods most affected, to those who may not have the means or time to travel to distant vaccination sites. This might involve mobile vaccination clinics or partnering with local community centers to provide vaccines where people are. Second, culturally competent outreach and education is critical. We must meet people where they are, both physically and emotionally, understanding and respecting their experiences, concerns, and beliefs. This could involve working closely with trusted leaders within these communities, using linguistically appropriate and relatable materials, and engaging in open, honest conversations about the vaccine and the virus. Culturally competent care can lead to more effective communication, greater trust, and higher rates of vaccine acceptance.

Third, expanded access to healthcare is a broader strategy, but fundamental. This involves working towards ensuring all Nevadans have health insurance, reducing geographical barriers to healthcare, and tackling systemic issues within the healthcare system that disproportionately affect communities of color. It's about creating a system where everyone has regular access to a healthcare provider, preventative care, and the resources they need to maintain their health. Forth, financial support is vital. The economic hardships stemming from this pandemic have been particularly devastating for communities of color. Rent relief, unemployment benefits, and food assistance can help address immediate needs and we also should implement long-term, future focused strategies that include a guaranteed income commonly referred to as universal basic income, well-paying, stable jobs, and quality affordable housing.

- Expand healthcare access and improve socio-economic conditions.
- Culturally sensitive interventions and education on health maintenance.
- Develop economic strategies supporting job creation and financial literacy.

Related Resources:
- Nevada Minority Health and Equity Coalition, Compassionate Las Vegas, Community Partners for Better Health.

Conclusion:
- Focused action is needed to address systemic healthcare disparities and foster a more equitable health system in Nevada's Black communities.
- The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated existing health disparities among Black Nevadans. For example, essential workers in these communities experienced greater exposure to COVID-19.
- An Additional trend noted where Mental health needs of the death and hard of hearing community under sourced

Education & Youth - Kamilah Bywaters

Observations:
- **Incidence and Impact**: There has been an alarming trend in mass shootings on school campuses, where such events are defined as those where three or more individuals are killed without a cooling-off period. These incidents have significant psychological, physical, and social consequences on students, staff, and the broader community.
- **Diversity and Demographic Data**: Institutions like UNLV, known for their diverse student body, provide valuable demographic data that can help in understanding the varied impact of these incidents across different groups.

Underlying Risk Factors:
- **Individual Factors**: Mental illness, life circumstances, a history of being bullied, and a 'warrior mentality' are common among perpetrators.
- **Access to Firearms**: The most reliable predictor of school shootings, highlighting a critical area for intervention (Marshall & Clark, 2023).

- **Institutional and Societal Factors**: The role of institutions and societal norms in either mitigating or exacerbating these risks needs further exploration.

Recommendations:
- **Enhanced Mental Health Services**: Schools and communities should increase access to mental health services, including counseling and support for PTSD, depression, and anxiety.
- **Gun Control Measures**: Implementing stricter gun control laws could significantly reduce the likelihood of school shootings.
- **Bullying Prevention Programs**: Schools must adopt comprehensive anti-bullying programs to address one of the key risk factors.
- **Emergency Preparedness**: Regular drills and the development of clear protocols for handling such events can mitigate the impact.
- **Community Engagement and Education**: Raising awareness about the signs of potential violence and promoting community involvement in prevention efforts.

Related Resources:
- **UNLV Demographics**: Detailed student and faculty demographics for understanding the impact on diverse populations.
- **Mental Health Support Organizations**: Organizations like the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) provide resources and support.
- **Policy and Research Centers**: Institutions focusing on gun policy and violence prevention research.
- **Conclusions:** The increasing frequency and impact of school shootings necessitate a multi-faceted approach that includes addressing mental health issues, implementing effective gun control measures, and fostering a community-based approach to prevention and response. Understanding and mitigating the underlying risk factors are crucial in preventing future incidents and ensuring the safety and well-being of students and the broader community.

Public Policy, Law & Government - Adrienne Feemster Cobb

Political and Social Determinants of Health in the Black Community
Observations:
1. **Political Determinants of the Economic Costs of Wellness:** This section explores how political factors influence the economic aspects of health and wellness, particularly among Black individuals in Nevada. It delves into how policies, laws, and government practices shape health outcomes for marginalized and oppressed groups, emphasizing the importance of understanding these political determinants in order to address health inequities.
2. **Public Campaigns and Strategies to Promote Health Equity in Nevada:** This part of the report centers on the strategies and campaigns aimed at promoting health equity in Nevada. It underscores the need for targeted, culturally competent approaches to dismantle systemic barriers, improve healthcare access, and create equitable health outcomes.

Underlying Risk Factors:

- Housing insecurity in the Black community.
- Issues related to jobs, wages, racism, discrimination.
- Challenges in improving K-12 education, addressing gun violence, and protecting women's rights.

Recommendations & Related Resources:
- Strengthen rural healthcare infrastructure through increased funding.
- Establish AI ethics policies to address biases and ensure inclusivity.
- Prioritize climate justice initiatives in regions with heightened environmental risks.
- Enhance community engagement in policy development for inclusive solutions.
- Increase funding for healthcare workforce development in underserved areas

Conclusion:
- **Unveiling Stark Realities**: The report highlights the significant health disparities and economic burdens faced by Black individuals and communities in Nevada.
- **Imperative for Targeted Interventions:** There is a critical need for equitable interventions to address these disparities.
- **Political and Economic Intersectionality:** The report emphasizes the importance of understanding how political determinants intersect with the economic costs of wellness.
- **Need for Nuanced Policy Revision:** Calls for nuanced approaches in policy revision to address these complex issues.
- **Inclusive Institutional Practices**: Stresses the importance of inclusive practices within institutions to support health equity.
- **Empowering Communities:** Highlights the role of community empowerment in fostering better health outcomes.
- **Addressing Regional Variances:** Recognizes the differences between Northern and Southern Nevada, as well as urban and rural areas, and suggests that a universal solution is not feasible.
- **Region-Specific Strategies:** Recommends the development of strategies that are specific to the unique challenges of different regions in Nevada.
- **Diagnostic and Catalyst Tool**: The report is meant to serve both as a tool for understanding current issues and as a catalyst for positive change.
- **Advocacy for Health Equity:** A call to action for policymakers, stakeholders, and advocates to work towards an environment where health equity is a reality for Black Nevadans.
- **Future Guidance:** The insights from this report are intended to guide future efforts in making wellness accessible to all, regardless of racial or regional background

Communication, Arts, and Culture in the Black Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community in Nevada -Jewel Eldridge

Observations:

1. **Accessibility Challenges**: The Black Deaf and Hard of Hearing community in Nevada faces significant hurdles in accessing navigating the state network of supportive services. These include:
   o A dearth of resources available in sign language.
   o A scarcity of culturally competent practitioners, leading to a substantial gap in support services.
   o These issues pose barriers to effective communication and hinder the community's ability to address black death/hard of hearing concerns adequately.
2. **Artistic Expression Limitations**: Artistic avenues for expressing and addressing are constrained due to:
   o The absence of inclusive platforms for Black Deaf/Hard of Hearing artists.
   o Limited representation in mainstream cultural spaces, exacerbating struggles to express and navigate their well-being.
3. **Cultural Event Shortcomings**: Cultural events often fail to adequately provides or consider the accessibility needs of Nevada Black Deaf/Hard community address due to:
   o Lack of dedicated resources and discussions
   o Absence of awareness in these gatherings, perpetuating stigma and hindering open dialogue.

Underlying Risk Factors:
   o Systemic lack of tailored resources.
   o Insufficient professional training on the intersection of cultural nuances in the Black Deaf/Hard of Hearing community.
   o Societal and cultural stigmas surrounding mental health, particularly in minority communities.

Recommendations:(addresses this shortcomings)
1. **Advocacy for Increased Funding**: Lobby for more resources specifically tailored to the needs of the Black Deaf/Hard of Hearing community in Nevada.
2. **Professional Training and Development**: Focus on training more professionals in the nuanced intersection of cultural identity.
3. **Inclusive Platforms and Representation**: Create and promote platforms for artistic expression that are inclusive of the Black Deaf/Hard of Hearing community.
4. **Enhanced Cultural Event Focus**: Integrate mental health discussions and resources into cultural events to promote awareness and reduce stigma. Identify and utilize were feasible culturally sensitive accessibility resources such as Black ASL during cultural activities.

Related Resources:
• Reach out to community organizations focusing on the well-being of Black and Brown Deaf/Hard of Hearing individuals in Nevada for insights and connections.
• Initiate surveys and research studies to gather data within this community.
• Contact the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services for information on available resources.

- Collaborative efforts between community organizations, health departments, and advocacy groups are essential to bridge these gaps and create a more inclusive and supportive environment for mental well-being within the community.

Environmental Challenges in Vulnerable Communities – Dr. Mary House

Observations:

1. **Disproportionate Impact on Environmental Justice Communities**: Vulnerable groups, especially children, low-income communities, and communities of color, face greater health risks due to pollution.
2. **Higher Pollution Exposure**: These communities are exposed to more outdoor and indoor air pollution, leading to increased health issues like asthma.
3. **Inadequate Housing Conditions**: Poor housing conditions in these areas contribute to elevated pollution levels and health risks.

Underlying Risk Factors:

- Historical and systemic inequalities in housing, industrial zoning, and resource allocation.
- Higher susceptibility to health issues due to pre-existing conditions and inadequate living environments.
- Barriers to accessing health and safety resources and programs.

Recommendations:

1. **Enhanced Air Pollution Regulation**: Implement stricter regulations on air pollution sources, focusing on residential and commercial buildings.
2. **Equity-Focused Solutions**: Develop and enforce solutions that prioritize environmental justice communities.
3. **Infrastructure and Housing Improvements**: Invest in upgrading housing conditions and infrastructure in vulnerable areas.

Related Resources:

- Reports and studies from Green and Healthy Homes Initiative, RMI, and WE ACT for Environmental Justice.
- Federal programs like Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) and Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

Conclusion:

- The report underscores the urgent need for targeted efforts to mitigate environmental issues in vulnerable communities. Addressing systemic disparities and prioritizing equitable solutions is crucial for improving the overall health and well-being of these populations.

Black Faith-Based Communities – Bishop Derek A. Rimson, Religious Advisor

Observations:

1. **Holistic Services**: African American faith-based organizations offer wraparound services including family services, children's church, youth programs, social justice initiatives, job fairs, and emergency responses like free food distribution and vaccination promotions during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. **Cultural and Spiritual Support**: These organizations feature gospel singers, praise dancers, and motivational sermons that address real-time black cultural issues and self-improvement.

3. **Significant Role in Black Communities**: Sixty percent of Black Americans attend Black congregations, focusing on spiritual comfort, fellowship, and practical life skills. More than fifty percent prioritize helping the needy.

Underlying Risk Factors:
- Economic constraints limit the ability of these organizations to maintain a variety of services.
- Generational differences in religious participation among Black Americans.
- Comparative lack of resources compared to Caucasian faith-based organizations.

Recommendations:
- Focus on sustainable financial strategies to support the diverse array of services.
- Enhance engagement with younger generations in the community.
- Advocate for equitable resource distribution and recognition of the unique role of Black faith-based organizations in society.

Related Resources:
- "Exploring Faith and Black Churches in America," Trust Magazine.
- "The Black Church in the African American Experience" for historical context and understanding of evolving religious practices in Black communities.
- Faith and Health Coalition Annual reports

Conclusion: This report underscores the pivotal role of Black faith-based organizations in providing essential services and cultural support to their communities. Addressing financial constraints and generational engagement will be crucial for sustaining their impact.