Healthcare Sector

- Health disparities are strongly linked to economic inequality
- Social and racial factors also result in poorer health outcomes
- Theorists contend that poverty creates stressors that undermine health
- Powerful players influence politics of healthcare

Seven Core Problems

1. Consumer Rights

   Federal Patient’s Self Determination Act of 1990 ensures consumers the right to make medical decisions and decline treatment.

   Health Information Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA) protects individually identifiable health information from disclosure without consent.

2. Quality Health Services

   The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) promotes evidence-based medicine.

   The National Guideline Clearinghouse supports over 2,200 practice guidelines.

3. Culturally Competent Health Services

   Title IV of the 1964 Civil Rights Acts protects consumers’ right to communicate in their own language.

4. Preventative Health Services

   Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) developed numerous prevention programs.

   The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) put forth regulations to protect workers’ safety (i.e. emissions of toxic chemicals).

5. Affordable and Accessible Health Services

   An estimate of 30,000 uninsured people die each year due to lack of coverage.

6. Care of Health Consumers’ Mental Distress

   See Mental Health Sector quick guide.

7. Healthcare Linked to Households and Communities

   The Affordable Care Act (ACA) requires hospitals to establish “medical homes” for patients who need medical services to prevent or slow the development of chronic diseases.

Adapted from