The Movement towards Violence as a Health Issue

A scientific framework and coalition for viewing and treating violence as a health issue in the U.S.

Proposed/Draft Goal(s) of Initiative:

Develop a scientific framework and coalition to advance the understanding and practice of violence as a health issue – starting with health professionals; local and national organizations; and impacted communities.

1) Through new spokespersons (health and community), provide the public and policymakers with a new understanding and language on the reasons/rationale for treating violence as a health and public health issue by:

Seeing that violence is a health issue for persons–and for communities. Through this understanding of what the Health Lens and Health Approach is including the scientific evidence to support the approach, it will become evident that this extremely effective approach needs to be enhanced and ingrained as soon as possible.

2) Promote new policies that use/activate highly impactful health and public health approaches and practices to violence prevention through:

Increasing resources available to local and national health approaches by changing eligibility of violence prevention approaches to allow for health approaches and increasing research opportunities to enhance the evidence of health approaches.

3) Create and mobilize health and public health/community systems to reduce violence by:

Enacting social and behavioral methods/campaigns to reduce violence as part of a comprehensive health system (public health, mental health, behavioral health, school health, criminal justice health, health care, universities, community-based organizations etc.) to prevent and interrupt violence while developing methods for collection, use and reporting on violence and other critical metrics by the Health Sector, bridging data sets, creating more robust and timely data, creating cost/benefit data, developing predictive analytics.

4) Identify and implement best practices for the health approach to reduce violence while advancing racial and health equity, including addressing the Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) through:

Ensuring the policies, programs, practices, resources are designed for/by and implemented in/with communities of color and those disproportionately impacted by violence while mobilizing grassroots efforts to ensure buy-in, sustainability and effectiveness. This effort will remain inclusive of voices and strategies that support local and national work to reduce inequities caused by and perpetuated by violence.

5) Develop additional multi-sector partnerships and coalitions to address violence using the health approach by:

Developing and implementing trainings and steps to interact effectively with other systems while determining how to support, align, and leverage efforts with other movements with similar goals of elevating healthier, safer, more equitable communities.

The Movement towards Violence as a Health Issue is a combination of movement, leadership, programming, policy, practice, and research. An RWJF Sponsored National Initiative