

Centers for disease control and prevention health essay

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of paper Student's name Course name and number Instructor's name Date submitted Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 1600 Clifton Rd Atlanta, GA 30333 (800-232-4636) (888) 232-6348 12th March 2013 Assistant secretary for health, United States public health service, Department of health and human service Dear Sir/madam, This report is a recommendation on the Strategies and policy changes to prevent the prevalence of obesity in the United States by the Center for Disease Control. Obesity has become a health concern in the country and it accounts for over 400, 000 deaths in the country each year. The dangers associated with obesity affect the social status of those affected as well as the economy of the country since the government spends billions of dollars on treatment and other medications associated with obesity. The report seeks to offer recommendations which communities can implement in a bid to reverse the effects of obesity in the country. Your contribution to implement these recommendations will be very welcome. We will await your remarks concerning the strategies and measures on prevention of obesity. Garcia Michel, Assistant director, Report on Strategies and Measurements to Prevent Obesity

Abstract

This paper seeks to provide the United States government with recommendation from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) on ways to regulate obesity in adults and children by regulating unhealthy food choices and advocating for healthy lifestyles that include fresh foods, exercise and regular medical checkups. Obesity is a leading health concern in the country

and is a cause for major chronic illnesses such as diabetes, heart related diseases including some types of cancers. The CDC has introduced measures for prevention of obesity. These measures help the communities and local authorities to monitor the factors that inhibit healthy eating and active lifestyle choices.

Executive summary

As the rate of obesity reaches an all-time high, the health of the nation is at a critical point. Many deaths have been attributed to obesity related illnesses and this has led to intervention by various organizations to reverse these effects. Several recommendations have been made and they seek to have major contributions by the community. The lack of adequate information that helps the public to have better health choices and adopt healthier lifestyles is one of the contributors to rising cases of obesity. The report relied on scientific literature already published that gave recommendations on the policies to be incorporated into the lifestyle of the community. The report gave several recommendations that included a decrease in cost of healthier foods and increased tax on foods high in sodium and sugar content, making healthier foods readily available to the public.

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1. 0 INTRODUCTION

One of the major health concerns in the United States is obesity. The rate of obesity has continued to rise over the years making united states one of the leading countries in cases of obesity. A report done by the center for disease control estimated the rate of obesity in adults to be 33. 8% in 2008 while that in children was estimated to be at 17%. Obesity has led to over 400, 000 deaths per year and this is having a negative effect on the country's economy as it accounts for 10%expenditure by the government. This is compared to Social security welfare \$25. 5 billion, health \$13. 7billion, education \$12. 4 billion insurance among other costs. Fig. 1This is as more and more of its population is affected by this health issue (CDC, 2008).

1. 2 Problem statement

With over a third of the adult population in America diagnosed as being obese as well as one fifth of the children population, obesity has become a national concern and legislators are advocating for healthy food choices as they go about eliminating obesity in the United States. Health care costs going into preventive and curative measures are at an all-time high surpassing costsassociated with health effects of smoking and drinking. The government has embarked on a campaign to end obesity and educate the population on the dangers of obesity on their health, the country's economy and their social lives. Such a campaign will require the contribution and a

change in policies that govern the growth, manufacture and distribution of consumer foods. Environmental factors are the most immediate to consider such as access to fresh foods, safe space for exercise in residential areas especially for children, the high cost of healthy foods versus the low cost of unhealthy foods. The center for disease control has provided a number of ways in which to curb this growing menace and provides education available to the public on the dangers of unhealthy lifestyles and the kind of lifestyle choices they should pick. The Centre for Disease Control (CDC) initiated a number of campaigns to help end obesity in the United States. The main objective of these campaigns is to gather information and from this give proper recommendations that the government in conjunction with local authorities can use to monitor the obesity situation in the communities (CDC, 2005). The graph below shows the rate of obesity in adults in a research conducted in 2008 by the CDC. Fig 2

1.3 METHODOLOGY

The recommendations given in this report relied on scientific research on measures and strategies implemented to prevent obesity. The main goal of the project by the CDC was to identify sustainable policies to be adopted by local authorities and by extension the communities to reverse the effects of obesity and help those affected to take on healthier alternative to prevent both short term and long term effects of obesity. The CDC also relied on expert advice from several subgroups that provided guidelines and information on the state of obesity in the country, and gave their input on the strategies and recommendations given towards obesity prevention.

Phase 1 The project team first researched on a number of articles published

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during the last three years which would give the most accurate information. Their main focus was those that focused on making recommendations for changes in policies and other factors that led to obesity such as ecological factors. Phase 2 The second stage involved the selection and giving precedence to the strategies that the research yielded. The approaches for obesity prevention were then divided and sorted out according to their availability, flexibility, ease of transfer, their effect on the masses, and the level of sustainability and endurance they had on matters of health. In order to reach this conclusion, the team used an online survey in which they posed questions to members of the public which focused on their nutrition, exercise regime if they had on, and their take on the rate of obesity in the country. The CDC also used questionnaires which they placed in fast food joints and other food stores in which the participants were required to fill out a form that sort to give a brief account on their lifestyle choices. All this information was compiled and sorted through to give those that rated highest nationally and would have the most effect when put into action on a national scale. The recommendation made included production of food and the availability of healthier foods for the concerned communities. Phase 3 This phase needed the input of specialists in the fields of nutrition, physical activity and obesity related disorders that would help the community to implement the measures and recommendations given by project team. Of the measures given, the experts gave their thoughts on the feasibility of the proposed strategies and this was discussed by a panel of experts, a team from the CDC and other public health contributors. As they narrowed down the most effective measures they ensured that the diction and definitions given were easily

understood by the locals to whom the project would be proposed. Phase 4 This phase was the pilot test of the recommendations given by the CDC obesity prevention project team. The CDC sought the participation of government officials who would give guidelines on the most affected areas in the various selected communities in the country. The selection of communities was based on a number of factors such as the ethnic composition, and income levels for the residents. Demographic statistics were also included in order to compare the results gathered from other communities which had similar statistics.

1. 4 Findings by the CDC on reversing obesity prevalence

After the pilot test was completed, a discussion was held in which some startling findings were discovered (Starr, 2005). The public rated obesity as a killer disease and it came second to cancer according to most of them. This was given due to the chronic conditions caused by obesity that included heart attacks, diabetes, and kidney failure. The lack of proper exercise regimes were also given as reasons for the increased rates of obesity. This was coupled with too much time spent watching TV and in front of computers. With the advancements made in technology that have made access to products and services that much easier and one hardly needs to leave their home to make purchases. Lack of sufficient knowledge is also a major factor. Many American do not know how to control their food consumption and weight. They do not have the information that gives them alternatives to the unhealthy foods they consume. Many of those who are obese face discrimination from the public and this has them suffer from some form of depression and many will turn to excess and unhealthy eating

in an attempt to have some comfort. Suggestions were given to include more physical activities in schools and to have food manufactures have healthier alternatives as well as having information that will aid the public in making healthier lifestyle choices. There was a disconnect with one of the policies that sought to have a limit placed on the amount of food one can purchase or on the plan to increase taxes on fatty foods and drinks. Many thought with the right information it would help the public regulate and incorporate healthier choices to their meals. The local governments have the largest part to play in the implementation of anti-obesity measures. Since the physical and environmental factors rely on the maintenance of the local governments such as the provision of health clinics, walking paths, biking lanes, licenses for healthy food stores, farmers markets and so forth. When the local government does not provide adequate amenities then the community is prone to suffer from the effects of an unhealthy lifestyle. A healthy environment not only benefits the residents of the particular community but also has economy benefits since the costs associated with treating obesity related illnesses are significantly reduced and instead the money is used for other developments in the community. This is extended to the school system which the local authority has to ensure that they have adequate time for leisure activities and that they have healthy food choices to give them a well-rounded environment (Sanders, 1994).

1.5 Analysis on the Strategies and policy changes to prevent obesity the prevalence obesity

Some of the measures provided by the CDC to be implemented by the communities include: Communities should increase the availability of healthy

food choices especially in public areas. Amenities such as vending machines should have foods and drinks with low sugar and sodium and instead have alternatives such as water, fruits and vegetables. These policies are being highly enforced in schools with many banning carbonated drinks such as sodas. Increased availability should come in hand with affordability of these foods since many unhealthy foods are cheap and easier to access. This is especially for those in the low income level and as a result will have limited choice when it comes to foods and drinks. Some of the recommendations made include lowering the price of healthier foods such as fruits and vegetables, offering coupons, and discounts by stores. One of the recommendations is increasing the price of unhealthy foods while lowering that of healthier alternatives which is an effort to lower the purchase of these foods. Service stores such as supermarkets have a higher variety of fruit and vegetable stands and other healthy options that are low in cholesterol, sugar and sodium content and they are less expensive as compared to smaller convenience stores. By increasing the availability of these supermarkets in areas that do not have proper service will increase the healthier food choices (The Reinvestment Fund, 2007). Advertisements for unhealthy foods should be decreased. Much of the content of adverts viewed on television is related to the promotion of fast foods and snacks and this is a major contributor on the increased rate of obesity in the country. Lowered adverts will translate to lower purchasing and the local authorities can regulate these adverts in their jurisdictions. Communities should encourage increased physical activity among the youth. They should develop measures that have the youth participate in activities that are not only beneficial to them but to the

community. Such activities include camping trips, cleaning exercises, sporting activities. As well as implementing such activities they should be exposed to information on obesity and the long term dangers to them both socially and health wise. Physical education should be made mandatory in schools with qualified teachers and trainers to maintain and promote good health of the school population. Communities should work together to eliminate obesity in the community. This will include the input of various sectors in the community ranging from public health officials, school administrators, nutrition experts, organizations in the media, construction, food and beverage sectors that need to work together to ensure that the policies recommended are implemented and to discuss the ways in which these policies can be transitioned in to the current lifestyles. Mixed development is a policy that is slowly finding its way into many communities. It requires that development of institutional, residential, commercial areas to be constructed within reach of each other. This policy is meant to decrease reliance on automobile transport and instead advocate for persons to walk or ride bicycles to and from these areas thus increasing physical activities.

1. 6 Conclusion

As the American public is exposed to dangers associated with obesity, more people are adapting healthier lifestyles especially in schools a trend that is spilling over to the general population. However with recent budget cuts and inflation rates going up, the price of food items is increasing and the availability may soon be a concern. Analysts are calling for a review on the budgetary allocation for the fight on obesity since it has become a real danger to the health of the country. The health of a nation is one of the most

important issues. When the country focuses on building its economy but does not focus on the state of its citizens will not be able to sustain itself.