#PrepYourHealth
Discussion Guides

Social Determinants of Health Series

Introduction

Social determinants of health (SDOHs) are non-medical factors that influence health outcomes. They are the conditions in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life.

SDOHs are grouped by **Healthy People 2030** into five key areas.

- Economic stability
- Education access and quality
- Health care access and quality
- Neighborhood and built environment
- Social and community context

About The Discussion Guide Series

CDC's Center for Preparedness and Response (CPR) helps U.S. communities prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies with evidence-based recommendations, technical assistance, and resources.

CPR created these discussion-based activities to help public health departments develop "whole community" plans that consider the impacts of SDOHs on personal health preparedness and response.

What is a Discussion Guide?

A discussion-based activity is like a discussion-based preparedness exercise. It follows a facilitated process for evaluating preparedness and response plans, procedures, partnerships, and planning considerations. Its purpose is to help health departments and communities to

- better understand how conditions associated with SDOHs affect how people prepare for and respond to emergencies.
- identify gaps in emergency planning, procedures, and partnerships associated with the impacts.
- think of ways to build new and leverage existing partnerships in the whole community to reduce or remove barriers to personal health preparedness for and response to emergencies.

A discussion-based activity involves an appointed facilitator and invited participants. Participants include traditional response partners, such as public health departments, healthcare systems, and emergency management agencies, and nontraditional support partners, such as community- and faith-based organizations.

The goal of these discussion-based activities is to engage the whole community in efforts to

- understand the needs and capabilities of the community.
- create opportunities and conditions for everyone to prepare for and respond to emergencies to their full potential.

Only by taking a whole community approach can communities improve personal and public health preparedness, response, and resilience.

Limitations

The discussion guides have the following limitations:

- The guides assume that SDOHs impact personal health preparedness and response.
- The guides assume that facilitators and participants understand SDOHs or will learn about them before the discussion.
- The guides are a starting point for addressing the impacts of SDOHs on personal health preparedness and response. They are one of the tools available to help practitioners address SDOH.
- The scenario and discussion questions do not address all key issues in the key areas. Examples and evidence of SDOHs impacts and interventions are likely to evolve with additional research and experience.
- The usefulness of the information gathered from the discussions depends on who is invited to the discussion. Engage organizations, agencies, and people who represent populations affected by SDOH. Invite them to participate in the discussion and/or contribute to the conversation in other ways, such as through a survey.

The phrase "whole community" appears a lot in preparedness materials. It means emergency preparedness, response, and recovery are shared responsibilities.

Whole community includes:
- Individuals and families, including those with access and functional needs
- Businesses
- Faith-based and community organizations
- Nonprofit groups
- Schools and academia
- Media outlets
- All levels of government, including state, local, tribal, territorial, and federal partners

(source: https://www.fema.gov/glossary/whole-community)