

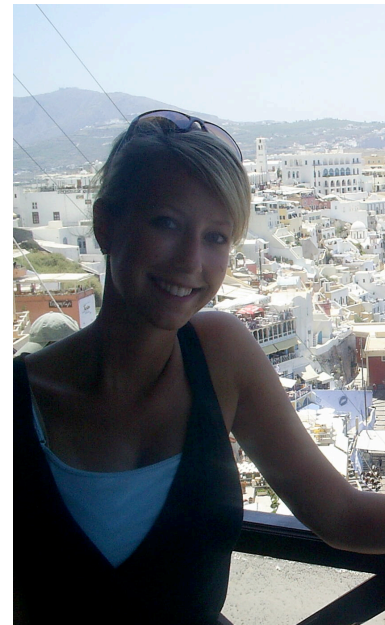
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Health Disparities: Minnesota Community Based initiatives and Their Methods

Although gaps in health have always been present in the United States, it wasn't until a 1985 report was issued by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services Margaret Heckler indicating the presence of health disparities amongst different racial and ethnic groups, that this issue became a focus of the Government. The state of Minnesota was one of the first states to address health disparities actively, coming out with its own report on Minority health in 1987. In 2001 the MN Department of Health provided Eliminating Health Disparities Initiative grants to community based organizations around the state. During the summer and early fall of 2007 I sought to analyze these community based organization, looking closely at their approach to and success at eliminating health disparities. I interviewed the member of each organization that dealt with this grant. Despite differing sizes and target populations, most of the organizations dealt with preventing future health problems due to resource restraints, leaving emergency health situations to larger hospitals or clinics. This approach coupled with communication and active participation of the community allowed many of the organizations to continue and expand their work. This community based method of eliminating health disparities could be seen working not only within Minnesota but around the country.



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