What physicians can do to address SDOH in their role as commissioners, managers and employers

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Israel’s economy at a Glance

• Sound economic situation:
  – Israel’s output growth remains relatively strong
  – Unemployment is at historically low levels
  – Internationally recognized high-tech sector

• However, Israel is among the countries with the highest income inequality, measured by the Gini coefficient, only surpassed by Chile, Mexico, the United States and Turkey.

• Living standards remain well below those of top-ranking OECD countries and the rate of relative poverty is the highest in the OECD area.
Health in Israel

- One of the highest life expectancies in the world- 8th among OECD countries (81.8)
- Infant mortality at 3.6 of every 1000 live births-lower than the OECD average of 4.
- Relatively low mortality rate from ischemic heart disease- 11th out of 34 countries
- Low mortality rate from cerebro-vascular disease- 3rd out of 34 countries
Poverty in Israel – Gini Index

Panel A. Gini coefficient of household disposable income and gap between richest and poorest 10% in 2010

https://www.google.co.il/#q=oecd+gini+index
Life expectancy in Israel and OECD – Since 1970

Continuous sharp rise in life expectancy over the last decades due, in part, to the health care system but also increasing the burden upon it.
Life expectancy in Israel and OECD - 2011

[Bar chart showing life expectancy rates per 100,000 population for various countries, with Israel and OECD highlighted in red.]
Infant Mortality in Israel and OECD

1.7.1. Infant mortality rates, 2011 (or nearest year)

Deaths per 1,000 live births

- Neonatal
- Post-neonatal

Ischemic heart disease mortality in Israel and OECD - 2011

How do SDOH affect us?

• Israeli health care system is a reflection of the general socio-economic disparities in the country.
• According to an IMA poll in 2011, about 28% of the general population and 39% of the lower income population would forego medical care due to their socioeconomic status.
• About 14% of the general population (21% of lower income population) would not purchase medications.
• Risky or unhealthy lifestyle leads to medical problems (e.g. low cost food = high fat)
• Stress as an outcome of security situation causes mental and physical difficulties
Health inequity in Israel

- Unequal distribution of health services, both geographically and according to population
- Long waiting periods, cost & time of travel, lack of services in remote areas (hospitals, doctors, MRIs)
- Cultural differences between physician and patient
Israel’s Health Inequity in Figures

OECD Economic Surveys ISRAEL
DECEMBER 2013
Are there sufficient specialists in or around your area of residence?
Role of Medical Associations

• Advocacy
• Cultural competency training
• Policy Development (polls, position papers, media)
• Development of quality indicators
• Promote research and evidence based data
• Collaborate with civil society and governmental bodies
• Promote economic incentives for cultural competency
Role of Scientific Associations

• Search, identify and examine the link between diseases and socioeconomic factors
• Prepare guidelines and protocols to instruct association members regarding SDOH in a specific field
• Help plan and execute designated intervention programs among weaker communities
Role of Physicians

• Fighting inequity is an essential part of the medical profession

• Physicians should identify the social & cultural risk factors to which patients and families are exposed and plan clinical activities (diagnostic and treatment) accordingly.

• Focus on preventative medicine (cost-effective) and socially personalized medicine.
IMA Actions

• Disparities in Health Committee
• IMA conducted surveys showing extreme access gaps between center and periphery in Israel
• Initiated discussion and proposed bills at the Israeli Parliament
• Raised awareness of the general public and politicians during the election period
• Advocated for the planning, together with the government, of a national program to sever the vicious cycle of poverty and illness (currently on hold because of national elections)
IMA Actions

• The IMA insisted upon including financial incentives in the latest collective bargaining agreement for doctors who choose to work in remote hospitals and clinics and/or in distressed fields of medicine in Israel.

• These incentives were meant to enhance access to health care for weaker communities all over the country.

• As a result, the number of interns in the northern and southern parts of the country significantly increased for the first time in many years.
Discussion

• How can we make physicians understand their responsibility and embrace their clinical and professional part in raising awareness and deal with SDOH?