#

HPM&B

Judging Dept.

Vanessa Saldanha

Student

HPM&B | 2 | Dr. Steven Szebenyi and Dr. Shadi Saleh

Dept or Program | Years in program | Mentor

Needs Assessment of New York State: A Study on Chronic Diseases

Author (s)

Vanessa Saldanha

Background. Chronic diseases comprise the highest rates of morbidity and mortality in the US, accounting for seven out of every ten deaths. In New York, nearly six million individuals have chronic ailments, contributing to 73% of deaths. Such diseases are largely indicative of poor lifestyle behaviors consisting of sedentary activities and consumption of foods high in fat and low in fruits and vegetables.

Methods. A thorough examination of the chronic disease burden using mortality and prevalence data per county was analyzed for cardiovascular disease (CVD), diabetes, and obesity. GIS software, Epi Info was used to geographically display high risk areas within the state. Counties studied were chosen based on urban-rural and sociodemographic classifications. County profiles were created to demonstrate the current status of response to these diseases.

Results. Listing of agency-wide programs within Albany, Columbia, Erie, Monroe, Onondaga, Schenectady, Sullivan and Ulster counties was developed. Findings from the needs assessment indicate financial disparities in rural counties pertaining to delivery of health services. Review of obesity initiatives revealed insufficient preventive and treatment programs geared towards children. Presently, NYS school policies do not regulate food services or physical education sessions that can reduce the prevalence of obesity. From analysis, recommendations include implementation of interventions involving parents of obese children, promotion of BMI scales as screening tools, creation of support groups, development of fitness locations for children to increase physical activity outside of school, among related activities. Addressing childhood obesity issues now is critical in preventing development of chronic diseases in the future.