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Building Healthy Communities: The Role of Hospitals

Friday, December 8, 2017

Write! Tweet! Post!

If you're interested in writing either an op-ed style article for our website or the session report, or a personal reflection blog post while you're here this week, please let Salzburg Global Communication Associate Oscar Tollast know or email your submission directly to otollast@salzburgglobal.org.

If you do intend to write for your own organization either while you're here or after the session, please make sure to observe the **Chatham House Rule** (information on which is in your Welcome Pack). If you're in any doubt, do not hesitate to contact Oscar.

We'll be updating our website with summaries from the panels and interviews with our Fellows, all of which you can find on the session page: www.SalzburgGlobal.org/go/592.

You can also join in the conversation on Twitter with the hashtag [#SGSHealth](https://twitter.com/SGSHealth) and see all your fellow Fellows and their organizations on Twitter via the list www.twitter.com/salzburgglobal/lists/SGS-592.

We're updating both our Facebook page www.facebook.com/SalzburgGlobal and our Flickr stream www.flickr.com/SalzburgGlobal with photos from the session during this week and also after the session. (If you require non-watermarked images for your own publication, please let Oscar know.)

We will also be posting photos to Instagram www.instagram.com/SalzburgGlobal. Use the hashtag [#SGSHealth](https://twitter.com/SGSHealth) and we might feature your photos in the newsletter!



@kaleemhawa: Beautiful day at @SalzburgGlobal Seminar on 'Building Healthy Communities: The Role of Hospitals' #sgshealth representing @UniofOxford and @MalariaAtlas



John Lotherington and Hilary Heishman set the scene for the program ahead

Reflecting on a Culture of Health

Health happens where we live, learn, work, play, and pray. That's just one of the thoughts participants considered on the first day of the Salzburg Global Seminar session, *Building Healthy Communities: The Role of Hospitals*.

Around 60 participants from 16 countries met at Schloss Leopoldskron, in Salzburg, Austria, on Thursday afternoon for the start of the five-day program, which is being held in partnership with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Over the next few days, participants will look at developing strategies to enhance effective collaboration and information-sharing between hospitals, social services and community organizations. They will also consider new approaches for hospitals to address the social determinants of health.

This session is part of Salzburg Global's multi-year series *Health and Health Care Innovation in the 21st Century*.

John Lotherington, a program director for Salzburg Global, and Hilary Heishman, a senior program officer for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, kickstarted the session by taking part in an on-stage discussion.

Beginning the conversation, Heishman suggested health care in the United States was effective at treating people with illness but was less effective at

keeping people healthy.

Things that contribute to being healthy in the long-term start early in life, participants heard. Heishman said several factors which enable people to be healthy don't sound health-related. Education, work, housing, and civic engagement were some of the examples highlighted which can have an effect.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, established in 1972, is committed to building a culture of health. Heishman said, "Within a culture of health, everyone has the opportunity to live the best life they can."

While there are several obstacles to developing this culture, there are also opportunities to help make it more of a reality. This includes new work with data, information, and alternate payment models. As more people in health care understand the social determinants of health, it might become easier to set up appropriate systems.

In response to this discussion, participants considered the definition of health and what society's expectations of hospitals were. One participant suggested if a hospital's role was to change, consumer fears would have to be allayed along the way.

These talking points, and more, will continue to be discussed in the days ahead, as the session continues.

Hot Topic:

“How can other sectors more effectively collaborate with hospitals in support of better health?”

Tomás De La Rosa and Mirva Villa

“When you say ‘health,’ it is not only about the disease. It means the life of the whole person. For example, some countries they suffer from malnutrition: so when you say malnutrition... we mean the minister of agriculture should intervene, the minister of local governments should intervene... you will find in most families they are malnourished because they have many, many children that they cannot manage – that’s where even the minister of family can intervene. So you can see that many, many [sectors] like agriculture - even finance [and] family. All those sectors should intervene for the better health of the people.

The first thing is to identify that gap that there is a need for all those sectors to intervene. Then, there should be a way to make awareness to the decision-makers who represent those different sectors that they should be aware of those programs, and that they should come together and try to find solutions together as all those clusters.”

Marcel Uwizeye

Chief medical officer and director general of Masaka District Hospital, Rwanda

“Ideally, all other sectors should understand the determinants of health and how their actions, their behavior, or lack of actions and behavior, change the health status of their population.

With that understanding, they could anticipate both opportunities for improving health status or risks that could affect health status. Exchanging that information and that collaboration with the health care network - not only hospitals but all the health care network - we could come together as a society to better take advantage of those positive elements to improve health status, as well as advance mitigating actions to reduce risks that are inherent from those activities in other sectors.”

Juan Pablo Uribe

Director-general of the Fundación Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia

“I think leaders from any sector, if they stop to think about it for very long, should analyze the way in which their work helps, or hinders, people from living the healthiest possible life. Once they’ve identified the way in which their work can help people live healthier lives in their communities on the ground, then I think it’s a natural next step to turn to hospitals in the community, who are often viewed as leaders, to start a dialogue about, “Here are the ways that our sector, our part of the economy, works upstream in ways that can keep people healthy.” How can we partner with hospitals who see the downstream consequences of the decisions other sectors make? So I’d start with the conversation about the role every sector plays in health.”

Anne Weiss

Managing director at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, USA

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Have an opinion on any of our hot topics this week?

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#FacesOfLeadership

“There’s a lot of things that inspire me to do the work that I do, but the major thing is to collaborate with the community health workers. They provide primary health care to the population: that is life-saving care for mothers, newborns, and children under five. Recently they also started treating malaria in adults. So they do a lot, and their work actually contributes a significant percentage to the reduction of deaths and all other health indicators that are handled in secondary and tertiary levels.

I have a passion for working with them, training them, supervising them, mentoring them and evaluating them – and then finally incentivizing them.

It gives me the satisfaction that I have done a lot for the community health workers, who also do a lot to improve the health of the population in general...

The major thing is that when you work with those people at the grassroots, they actually appreciate everything that is being done for them. Social protection – be it in health, be it in other things in terms of rural development – is at the bottom of my heart.”

Denis Nkunda

Community health specialist working with the Ministry of Health under the Directorate of Planning, Health Financing and Information Systems, Rwanda