

Who Deserves a Healthy Life?

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How views of Deservingness impact efforts to build a culture of health

- Whose health deserves society's attention, investment, or care? Who deserves what & why?
 - Answers play a pivotal yet often implicit role in public discourse on society's obligations to its members
 - “Everyone deserves to live the healthiest life possible”

- Study funded by RWJF will investigate notions of “Deservingness” within healthcare domain
- Two phase, mixed-methods study
- Interdisciplinary team from fields of medical anthropology, public health, public policy, law, sociology, urban studies, health psychology, & communications
 - Co PIs - Colleen Walsh, CSU & Sarah Willen, UCONN
- Phase I - qualitative investigation of deservingness among diverse stakeholders in Cuyahoga County given striking health disparities
 - e.g. 12yr. life expectancy gap St. Clair/Superior & Lyndhurst
 - Health Improvement Partnership Cuyahoga (HIP-C)
 - > 100 institutional partners & 600 individual
- Phase II – Pilot & Valid a Deservingness Assessment Instrument to be administered to a national sample

Research questions & contributions

- Q1: How do individuals conceptualize their own sense of deservingness in the health domain, and with what effects?
- Q2: How do individuals conceptualize what different social groups, including their own, deserve in the health domain, and with what effects?
- Q3: When and how can deservingness assessments change, and with what effects?
- Contribute to growing interdisciplinary literature on deservingness in general and in the health-related realm in particular
- Produce case study report, teaching modules, scholarly publications, & documentary