Why Should Health Systems Address Social Needs?

Learning Objectives

- Discuss an example of how home environments impact health.
- Identify one model for hospitals to improve care in the community.

Description: Medicine holds incredible power to save lives. But what happens when the risks to health are outside the scope of health care? In this video, Aswita Tan-McGrory, MBA, MSPH, Deputy Director of the Disparities Solutions Center at Massachusetts General Hospital, tells a powerful story of the impact of home environments on health. She describes “the limits of medicine” and challenges health systems to look outside their walls to improve health outcomes for their patients.

Watch the video at [https://youtu.be/psI7giH1tyo](https://youtu.be/psI7giH1tyo) or read the transcript.

Discussion Questions

1. How might the neonatal intensive care team have improved the baby’s chances of surviving at home?
2. Have you ever seen a case where non-medical needs affected the patient’s outcome? How are you equipped or not equipped to address non-medical needs?
3. Do you think hospitals have ignored the influences on health outside of their walls? Why or why not?
4. Do you know of any models where hospitals are working in the community to support patients after discharge?