Mayors and the Health of Cities

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June 4, 2019
Washington, DC

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Methodology

Analyses based on several datasets and sources:

• **2018 Menino Survey of Mayors**: nationally representative survey of 110 American mayors leading cities over 75,000; Gauge of perceptions and attitudes

• **City Health Dashboard 500 Cities**

• **Supplemental information** from federal sources
Greatest Health Challenge Facing the City?

Greatest Challenge:
- 25% Obesity, Diabetes
- 24% Opioids/Addiction
- 14% Access to Care

15% reference mental health
27% cite specific groups: children or homeless

Source: 2018 Menino Survey of Mayors, Mental health based on any mention
Sedentary lifestyles directly and indirectly contribute to chronic health problems, including the leading cause of mortality in the US.”

“You can look at the issues people are dealing with (diabetes, cancer, STDs), but at the core is access to health care.”
How Healthy Are the Cities Citing Obesity?

- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Cardiovascular Deaths
- Physical Inactivity
- Limited Health Food
- Poor Walkability
- Limited Park Access

Source: 2018 Menino Survey of Mayors, City Health Dashboard
Perceptions of Constituent Accountability

Traffic accidents
Gun violence
Lead and other toxicants
Hunger/malnourishment
Other substance abuse
Opioids
Mental health
Asthma
Obesity

What explains responses?
Transportation, Police, Inspectional Services & Housing departments common
While only ~20% of cities have a municipal health agency
However, health agency type not correlated with perceived accountability

Source: 2018 Menino Survey of Mayors
What Else Explains Perceptions of Accountability?

Highly significant differences in perception by party affiliation and gender.

Prevalence was highly significant only once: opioid overdose deaths.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Mayors Responding Very or Somewhat Accountable</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gun violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunger/Malnourishment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hunger/Malnourishment</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2018 Menino Survey of Mayors
Key Findings:

• Many mayors talk knowledgably about health, including social determinants

• Mayors report obesity, addiction and access to care as key health challenges

• Common challenges shared by heterogeneous groups of cities

• Perceived accountability differs: traffic accidents, gun violence, lead and other toxicants top list; obesity at bottom

• Accountability may be attributed to resources, although not dedicated health resources

• Some perceptions differ significantly based on mayoral political affiliation or gender
Thank you!
Katharine Lusk, Co-Director

Special thanks to co-authors Luisa Godinez Puig & Prof. Monica Wang, plus Profs. Max Palmer, Katherine Levine Einstein and David Glick; & Stacy Fox

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## Appendix: Municipal Health Authorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authority Type</th>
<th>Percentage in 2018 Menino Survey Sample (N=110)</th>
<th>Percentage in the US (N=2533 Health Departments)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Municipal</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
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