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Consumerism

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Consumerism

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Overview of Consumerism

Definition:

Consumerism/materialism is when material possessions are made more important than physical and/or spiritual needs (Material). It is not only affected by the buying of material possessions, but also the hoarding of them. Hoarding is keeping a large amount of something, typically material possessions. This includes, but is not limited to, hidden items of high value (Hoard).

Why is it important?

Consumerism affects our every day lives. It is something that can easily take over without us even noticing. Within the world, it has one of the greatest impacts on our lives.

How does it impact health?

It impacts every day life as well as the interactions that patients and doctors have.



Overview of Impact.

Prevalence

- High school and college kids – increased by 10% (H., T.)

Personal Costs

- Relationships
- Jobs
- Happiness
- Self-Esteem

Community/Social Costs

- Economic
- Disconnected



Determinants of Health

Definition: the overlapping structures and systems that are responsible for most health inequities.

Social

- Parents spending/hoarding habits
- Environment raised/currently living in

Individual

- What people choose to spend and keep

Health Services

- The potential of not being able to afford health care due to spending habits



Pharmacy Impact

Consumers are beginning to have a greater influence various things within the world of pharmacy. Part of this is how drugs are marketed and which ones are sold. They are also gaining influence over how they are priced (Colopoulos).



“The proliferation of HSAs, which require that pharmacy expenses will be subject to the high deductible plan, not low per drug co pays as has been the case with traditional Rx benefit plans. This will significantly increase the percentage of pharmacy costs paid by the consumer vs. those paid now by the employer’s traditional co pay pharmacy benefit plan” (Colopoulos).



Directly Impacted Health Indicators

The unemployment rate is an example of a health indicator that is directly impacted by consumerism. There are some people who get so caught up in the stuff that they have that they cannot find or maintain a steady job. Another health indicator that is directly impacted by consumerism is mortality rate by a means of injury or homicide. Black Friday shopping deaths contribute to this.

Indirectly Impacted Health Indicators

Access to care is a health indicator that is indirectly impacted by consumerism. This comes from the direct impact on the unemployment rate. If you do not have a job, or a sufficient one, you will not have the insurance that you need. Without insurance, you lose access to care. The mortality rate is not only directly impacted by consumerism, but it is also indirectly impacted. If you do not have access to care, you cannot receive the help you need when you are critically ill. An example would be dying from an infectious disease because you could not afford care.



Recommendations for Reduction

Be Aware

- Be aware of what you are taking in and what you are buying.
- Be aware of the consumerism that is in your life.

Prioritize

- “Money can’t buy happiness.”
- Put the immaterial things in your life ahead of the material objects.

Ask Questions

- Ask questions about consumerism so you are more aware.
- Ask questions about your health care to make sure that you are doing what is best for you.



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