**Adult Obesity in Miami-Dade County**

**Introduction**

Obesity among adults is a growing health concern in Miami. Among each group of eight people in Florida, one of them is categorized as obese and at a danger for diabetes, heart disease, depression and arthritis. For people in Miami-Dade County, this is especially concerning because about 70 percent of Adults in this area are either obese or overweight (Florida Health-Miami Dade County, 2013). The issue of Obesity among Adults in Miami-Dade County is a concern of the Administrator of the Miami-Dade County Health Department, Lillian Rivera. Rivera is responsible for formulating policies that promote and protect the health of people in the County. For nurses, they can take action by becoming informed regarding adult obesity and thus to position themselves as educators and role models. Nurses have the ability to be change agents in their communities. Nurses ought to advocate enhancing the health of their patients and community by concentrating on the obesity issue. As a nurse, I have a special role in enhancing activities that promote health and decrease the risk of being obese as a role model and an educator for my individual family, patients and community. It is significant that as a nurse, I consider cultural and psychological parameters that can influence health behaviors linked with obesity to ensure efficient treatment and prevention.

**Obesity in Adults**

Obesity is a label for a range of weight that is more than what is clinically considered appropriate or healthy for a specific height (Lee, Shook, Drenowatz & Blair, 2016). The term also identifies a range of weight that has been indicated to increase the possibility of specific illnesses and other health issues. Among adults, the range of obesity is established with height and weight to compute Body Mass Index (BMI). This index is used because it correlates with the quantity of body fat for a majority of people.  For instance, an adult with a BMI that ranges between 25 and 29.9 is regarded overweight; whereas an adult with a BMI of 30 or greater is regarded obese. Obesity has specific aspects associated with it, such as the environment, the caloric balance equation and genetics. Obesity and overweight originate from an imbalance in energy that involves consumption of too many calories without getting adequate physical activity. Caloric balance acts as a scale. The consumed calories from foods ought to be balanced by the used calories by the body in terms of exercise, daily activities and normal functions of the body in order for a person to remain in balance and maintain his/her body weight. Obesity increases the risk of numerous illnesses and conditions, such as heart disease, stroke, Type 2 diabetes, cancer and respiratory problems.

**Context**

Physical activity comprises a major element of a healthy lifestyle. Physical activity encompasses anything that keeps a person moving, for instance, biking, walking, jumping, skipping or swimming.  Maintenance of an active lifestyle affects the general health of an individual positively.  The quality of life for residents of Miami relies on their well-being. Improved physical health is related to improved job productivity and improved general happiness. The health of Miami County residents is linked to initiatives and policies that involve the county government, nonprofits organizations and the wider economy.  A continued collaboration among different stakeholders is required to achieve goals such as improved access to healthcare in order to advance holistic solutions.

**Goals**

I identified three goals below as good targets for the success of Miami residents.  Miami residents have access to healthcare, recreation and social services facilities; Miami residents make healthy decisions, and Miami residents are physically healthy.

**Evaluation of Options**

Miami residents have access to health care: the reason this is important is that a number of studies have established that improved access to health care is linked with better health among people. Lack of health insurance coverage comprises a substantial hindrance to accessing required health care that includes preventive services. Based on the U.S statistics, Miami County has a low rate of insurance coverage than the average in the U.S and other big cities (U.S Census Bureau, 2014). Improved coverage of health insurance leads to better health in the community. Lack of access to required health care, encompassing preventive services, may lead to poor management of health and increase the danger for negative outcomes of health. Uninsured residents are more likely to depend on emergency room visit to deal with health concerns. The high cost linked with such visits may lead to high costs of health care for the whole community.

Miami residents make healthy decisions:  obesity increases the danger for specific illnesses and other health issues, such as cardiovascular disease and cancer. Some of the leading cause of death in Miami region, encompassing certain types of cancers and cardiovascular illnesses originate from unhealthy behaviors.  Miami County has among one of the highest percentages of people with BMI of 30 or greater (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013). The unhealthy decision may lead to the prevalence of severe illnesses that are costly for employers in terms of lost productivity.  Based on data from the CDC, disability, absenteeism or decreased output at work associated with chronic illnesses may cost higher that direct medical expenses. Healthy decisions may reduce the risk of severe illnesses, for instance, cardiovascular disease.

Miami residents are physically active: general health correlates strongly with improved happiness levels.  Physical activity that includes strength and aerobic training activities comprise part of healthy lifestyle and play a substantial role in attaining and maintaining a healthy body BMI. Frequent physical activity decreases the danger of obesity and assists in improving overall health.

**How to Find the Status of Obesity in Adults**

Miami Matters, the health Council of South Florida initiative, is a community-based platform that offers information regarding health, environmental and quality of life issues for Miami-Dade County (Miami Matters).  The platform offers resources to promote informed community actions. The platform also offers data and highlights the past status and existing status of issues. The website provides updated data on the issue of obesity and is maintained by the Healthy Communities Institute.

**Level of Government Involved**

The issue of adult obesity involves the local government in Miami-Dade County. The county is addressing the issue of adult obesity that has a rate of obesity of about 70 percent. About 22.1 percent of adults in the county meet the agreed level of vegetable and fruit consumption whereas about 25 percent of the adults do not engage in physical activity.  While the county has implemented several measures to deal with the issue, there is still more to be done to promote healthy lifestyles of its community members. The legislator concerned with the issue of adult obesity is the Administrator of the Miami-Dade County Health Department, Lillian Rivera.

**Recommendations**

The paper has identified issues of greater concern to the county and the following recommendations are suggested:

Miami City government has to improve the quality of Transit Service in order to enhance access to major health care, social services and recreation facilities. The authorities have to provide and promote active lifestyles choices to the residents, for instance through walking, biking and accessibility to mass transit services. The public health experts, city planners and traffic engineers have to collaborate to achieve this objective.

Authorities have to establish ways that they can use to educate the community regarding healthy food decision and increase the community access to fresh and locally produced products. Creation of market for locally produced fresh products is important to increase the production and accessibility to the products by the local populations.

Authorities have to find ways of dealing with the uninsured rates and ensure that the whole community can easily access primary care services in order to promote their health and prevent diseases.

**Conclusion**

This paper has evaluated the issue of adult obesity in Miami-Dade County and has examined the health issues related to obesity, behaviors and needs of people in the area. Thus, this information can be used to formulate policies in order to enhance the health of people in the community.

**References**

Bowling, A. (2014). *Research methods in health: investigating health and health services*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).

Lee, D. C., Shook, R. P., Drenowatz, C., & Blair, S. N. (2016). Physical activity and sarcopenic obesity: definition, assessment, prevalence and mechanism. *Future Science OA*, (0).

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2013, October 25). *Community Profile: Miami-Dade County Florida*. Retrieved from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dch/programs/communitiesputtingpreventiontowork/communities/profiles/obesity-fl\_miami-dade-county.htm

Florida Health-Miami Dade County. (2013). *Health-Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County.* Retrieved from Florida Health-Miami Dade County: http://miamidade.floridahealth.gov/about-us/\_documents/chip-010715-new.pdf

Miami Matters. (n.d.). *Adults who are obese*. Retrieved from Miami-Dade Matters: http://www.miamidadematters.org/index.php?module=Indicators&controller=index&action=view&indicatorId=54&localeId=414

U.S Census Bureau. (2014). *Community Facts*. Retrieved from U.S Census Bureau: factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml