

Congressional Men's Health Caucus Briefing Sheds Light on State of Men and Women's Health

Despite Years of Progress, Male Life Expectancy Declines for the 3rd Year, Increase of Suicide and Drug Overdose to Blame

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, June 21, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- WASHINGTON – The Congressional Men's Health Caucus in partnership with Men's Health Network joined a coalition of representatives from leading health, advocacy, and government organizations to hold a briefing on Capitol Hill June 19 to discuss health outcomes for men and women.

The briefing comes just one week until the end of Men's Health Month, an annual awareness period solely dedicated to education and activities on the health and wellness of men and boys, and following the 25th year of [National Men's Health Week](#) (June 10-16), a special awareness period recognized by Congress.

Speakers at the briefing—including representatives from PCORI (Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Center), the National Black Men's Health Network, HealthyWomen, the Office of Population Affairs, and the National Center for Health Statistics—outlined health outcomes for men and women over the last 25 years. The average life expectancy of males and females in the U.S. has increased substantially over the last century. However, life expectancy declined between 2014-2015 for both males and females and has continued to decline for males since then.

"Often times we may find ourselves guilty of letting our health go. It becomes something that is put to the back of our minds. However, I am a firm believer in the progress and the promise of a better tomorrow. We have some of the best and brightest minds working to find cures for even the most complex ailments," said Congressman Donald Payne Jr. (D-NJ) co-chair of the Congressional Men's Health Caucus. "Our screening processes today are quicker and less evasive than ever before, able to catch disease early. Equally important is what we do. Our personal health starts with us. Healthy living is not simply a one-time commitment; it is the formation of habits that require a conscious effort one day at a time."

"The health of families—men, women, and children—is the backbone to any community, which is why these discussions that include legislators, policymakers, and advocates are so crucial to the



health and wellness of our nation,” said Ana Fadich Tomsic, Vice President of Men’s Health Network. “I’m glad that as we close out Men’s Health Month and the 25th year of Men’s Health Week, that the topic of health for men and boys remains relevant and continues to push toward stronger outcomes.”

“Being healthy is not something that happens overnight, it’s something that we have to work at every single day,” said Congressman Markwayne Mullin (R-OK), co-chair of the Congressional Men’s Health Caucus. “Whether it is making the bed, eating right, or getting in a full workout every morning, we have to make sure each and every day that we are doing what we can to take care of ourselves. The little successes we experience every day add up to living a healthy, disciplined life. As we approach the end of Men’s Health Month, I would like to thank Men’s Health Network for helping to raise awareness on the importance of health and wellness.”

While heart disease and cancer continue to be the main causes of death for men and women in the U.S., young men, in particular, have seen an increase in deaths due to suicide and drug-overdose, according to data from the National Center for Health Statistics of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Some 66.4 percent of drug overdoses in 2016 were due to opioids; men are more likely to die of an overdose than women.

During the meeting, speakers said that the increase in deaths included unintentional injuries— a broader category that includes unintentional drug poisoning and overdose deaths.

“Life expectancy at birth has been decreasing since 2014 [among males],” said Renee Gindi, a statistician at the National Center for Health Statistics. “We’ve seen significant increases in homicide, suicide, and unintentional injuries ...We’re seeing death from all causes increase [in younger age groups]. We’ve seen substantial decreases in the life expectancy of men.”

Representatives for the nonprofit HealthyWomen said even though mortality rates have stabilized for women after a decline in 2015, the health and wellness of women remains fundamental to the health of families.

“Women are the CEOs of their family. As such, we make health care decisions for our family. We also need to be informed,” said Heidi Rosvold-Brenholtz, Senior Vice President for Strategic Engagement & Health Policy at HealthyWomen. “It’s not women’s health, it’s not men’s health, it’s the health of a unit. Two healthy houses make a whole.”

To see a report card on the health of men and women in each state, go to:
www.StateOfMensHealth.com

Men's Health Network (MHN) is an international non-profit organization whose mission is to reach men, boys, and their families where they live, work, play, and pray with health awareness messages and tools, screening programs, educational materials, advocacy opportunities, and patient navigation. Learn more about MHN at www.menshealthnetwork.org and follow them on Twitter @MensHlthNetwork and Facebook at www.facebook.com/menshealthnetwork. For more information on MHN's ongoing Dialogue on Men's Health series, visit www.dialogueonmenshealth.com

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