



## Press Release

# Chronic Disease: Community-Level Factors and Policy Options

ANDREW EVANS | NOVEMBER 24, 2020

Individual-level factors, such as lifestyle, can obviously contribute to chronic disease, but community and environmental-level issues can as well. In new research, AAF's Director of Human Welfare Policy Tara O'Neill Hayes and Serena Gillian examine a number of community-level factors that contribute to chronic disease and outline potential policy responses. While factors such as community safety, pollution, and access to fresh foods and medical care can all contribute to chronic disease themselves, these factors are also correlated with income, they note.

An excerpt:

In recognition of the impact of these risk factors, health insurers across the country, including Medicaid and Medicare, are investing in their enrollees' social determinants of health. But health insurers will not be able to achieve the changes needed on their own. Those who are suffering the most need bottom-up interventions across the policy spectrum to reduce their risk of developing chronic disease. Access to appropriate healthcare, healthy foods, safe environments, and more are all essential to individual health.

[Read the Research](#)