



AT THE  
**nexus**  
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WASHINGTON, DC, USA

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The National Forum for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention  
*is pleased to partner with the*  
National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)  
**A TOWN HALL MEETING**  
*Featuring a Documentary for PBS Television on the root causes of health inequities,  
produced by California Newsreel*

**Groundbreaking Town Hall Meeting to Explore  
Why Race, Income and Geography can Predict Health**

*Social determinants of health discussed by international experts*

Washington, DC, (March 27, 2008)-- A town hall meeting in the nation's capital will, for the first time, bring together leading heart disease and stroke prevention experts from around the world to examine how race, income, education and geography can predict how healthy we are in the United States.

The meeting, to be held March 28 on the campus of George Washington University, will bring together thought leaders from health care, business, industry, the policy arena, academia, and faith organizations to examine health disparities related to heart disease and stroke – the first and third killers of men and women in the U.S. At the center of dialogue will be the acclaimed California Newsreel PBS documentary “*Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?*”

The California Newsreel PBS documentary “UNNATURAL CAUSES ... Is Inequality Making Us Sick?” illustrates that the growing inequity in the distribution in disease results from the effect of social and economic inequalities in the United States. The documentary validates that how people live, where they live, and their overall social conditioning create chronic stress, which leads to chronic conditions such as heart disease and stroke.

“It is not enough to just talk about eliminating disparities in heart disease and stroke. Those of us in positions to influence resources and policies that can improve housing, education, employment and healthcare must join together in deliberate actions that will ensure the elimination of these disparities. The mission of the Association of Black Cardiologists (ABC) obligates us to be a catalyst for stimulating this kind of action--in order to improve the health of all Americans and to ensure that African American children know their grandparents. The National Forum Town Hall Meeting and Leaders Luncheon are an opportunity to further encourage collaborations that keep elimination of disparities as a top priority in arenas where we can have influence,” says Dr. Gerald DeVaughn, President of the Association of Black Cardiologists, Inc.

Evidence of those disparities is highlighted in a new Centers for Disease Control

and Prevention (CDC) report – *The Atlas of Stroke Hospitalization Among Medicare Beneficiaries*, which will be released during the National Forum. The *Atlas*, produced in collaboration with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) provides for the first time, county-level, computer-based, interactive maps of stroke hospitalizations among Medicare beneficiaries. The interactive maps highlight the racial and geographic disparities in stroke hospitalizations for blacks, Hispanics, and whites ages 65 and older. These computer-based interactive maps can assist key decision makers in allocating human resources and funds where they are most needed within specific geographic areas.

The Town Hall Meeting and Leaders Luncheon are part of the 6<sup>th</sup> National Forum for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention meeting being held in Washington, D.C. on March 27-28, 2008.

The National Forum was established in 2003 to provide a comprehensive public health strategy and a framework to guide health practitioners' and policy makers' actions in heart disease and stroke prevention. It is a partnership of more than 80 national and international organizations working to implement the *Public Health Action Plan to Prevent Heart Disease and Stroke*.

For more information on the 6<sup>th</sup> National Forum for Heart Disease and Stroke meeting- "*At the Nexus for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention*," visit the 2008 National Forum for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention website at [www.2008NationalForum.com](http://www.2008NationalForum.com).

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For more information about the National Forum  
for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention  
[www.hearthealthystrokefree.org](http://www.hearthealthystrokefree.org)

