



Andress & Associates, LLC
"Bridging the Health Gap"

Media Advisory

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Health Expert says Race is not the Only Factor in Health Disparities

Lauri Andress, J.D., Ph.D., outlines a strategy to help local governments address health disparities.

The new PBS documentary, *Unnatural Causes...Is Inequality Making Us Sick*, which will begin airing in cities across the country March 27, explores the impact our social, economic, and physical environments have on health. Texas Southern University professor Dr. Lauri Andress has created a strategy to help local governments address these factors and the resulting health disparities.

"It is fitting that governments begin to think about the health gap in light of the PBS series *Unnatural Causes*. Recognition of how social conditions affect health and longevity, even more than medical care, behaviors and genes, means governments need to take broader action. It is now clear that most socioeconomic policies affect health," Dr. Andress has said. "When it comes to health disparities and group differences in health you must look at both race and socioeconomic status to get a complete understanding of the wide disparities that we see in health among those at the top and the bottom of the health gap in the U. S."

Dr. Andress has worked with governments in Louisville, Ky and Wisconsin to examine proactive responses to health disparities beyond traditional health education and lifestyle campaigns. "Governments influence the health and well-being of its citizens through at least five realms of policy making and community engagement. At the local level and state level, governments can directly influence factors like municipal planning and design, employment and job training, and access to a wide range of services, systems, and institutions that all affect health," said Dr. Andress.

Dr. Andress is the Managing Partner for *Andress & Associates, LLC*, an advisory firm on health inequities serving local and state health departments. Most recently, she served as the Director of the *Center for Health Equity at the Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness*. The Louisville Center is the first of its kind at the local public health level in the United States. Under Dr. Andress' guidance, the Milwaukee Center for Health Equity will be the second Center operating in the U.S.

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