



# **Through the Kaleidoscope: Viewing the Contributions of the Behavioral and Social Sciences to Health -- The Barbara and Jerome Grossman Symposium (The compass series)**

*Summary of the Institute of Medicine Symposium on Contributions of the Behavioral and Social Sciences to Health, Institute of Medicine, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education, National Research Council*

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The importance of behavioral, social, economic, and environmental influences on health is increasingly recognized. Further, the relationships among genetic factors, social influences, and the physical environment are now of growing interest to the research, policy, public health, and clinical communities. As research in these areas yields new knowledge about these interactions, we are faced with the challenge of applying and translating that knowledge into practical applications or policy directions.

To advance this challenge, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) brought together experts and collaborators at a symposium in May 2001. The symposium featured five reports released in the last 12 months by the IOM and the Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education (DBASSE). The reports were the starting point for assessing the status of behavioral and social science research relating to health, identifying where the greatest opportunities appear to lie in translating this research into clinical medicine, public health, and social policy; and recognizing the barriers that continue to impede significant progress in conducting and utilizing this field of research. This report is a proceedings of the symposium from these experts in the field. Topics covered include research design, training, infrastructure investments, grant making, etiology, interventions, and priority investments necessary to support rapid advances in the behavioral and social sciences.

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