



# Introduction to Health and Community



## *Learning Objectives*

**This chapter is designed to enable the learner to:**

- ☞ Comprehend health in different perspectives
- ☞ Define health
- ☞ Interpret people's experience of health through the findings of the cross-cultural studies
- ☞ Define public health, community health and population health
- ☞ List down the elements of community
- ☞ State the types of communities
- ☞ Describe the factors affecting the health of the community
- ☞ Define public health nursing and community health nursing
- ☞ List down the principles of community health nursing
- ☞ List primary tools of community health nursing
- ☞ Describe the process of communication
- ☞ Explain the changing concepts of health
- ☞ Describe the dimensions of health
- ☞ Describe health continuum
- ☞ List down the prerequisites for health
- ☞ Define health promotion
- ☞ Describe the levels of prevention
- ☞ Recognize the difference between health promotion and health protection
- ☞ Identify the components of health promotion logo
- ☞ Describe the elements of health promotion



## *Key Terms*

- |                                 |                            |   |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| ☞ Health                        | ☞ Community health nursing | ☞ Good physical health                      |
| ☞ People's experience of health | ☞ Public health nursing    | ☞ Wellness illness and health continuum     |
| ☞ Community health              | ☞ Collaboration            | ☞ Prerequisites for health                  |
| ☞ Population health             | ☞ Contracting              | ☞ Health promotion                          |
| ☞ Community                     | ☞ Biomedical concept       | ☞ Health maintenance (or health protection) |
| ☞ Healthy community             | ☞ Ecological concept       | ☞ Primary prevention                        |
| ☞ Geographic community          | ☞ Psychological concept    | ☞ Secondary prevention                      |
| ☞ Common-Interest community     | ☞ Holistic concept         | ☞ Tertiary prevention                       |
| ☞ Community of solution         | ☞ Right to health          |   |
| ☞ Community organizing          | ☞ Dimensions of health     |   |



## INTRODUCTION: CONCEPTS OF HEALTH

In our daily life, most of us have the practice of greeting one another usually using a phrase “How are you?” Yes, we really want to know how a person is doing. The answer to it may be “fine”, “nice”, “excellent”, “well”, “ok”, “not bad”, “not ok”...goes on. The answer is based on one’s own feeling and perception related to his physical/mental/social or any other state. What is health? Seems a bit silly question; surely we all know what health is? But, is that right? Do we really know what health is, health for ourselves and health for others? A large part of what we do is help people regain and maintain health. Therefore, it is important to explain what *health* is.

**What is health?** There are no easy, straightforward answers to this. In addition, some people use entirely different words when they actually mean what others would call “health”. The word *health* is derived from *hal*, which means “hale, sound, whole.” Trying to define health relies on developing understanding about a wide range of perspectives, subjectivities and experiences that are, in turn, socially, historically and culturally located.

Discussing our health is one of the most common topics of conversation when people meet and in the media and in our own conversations we talk of having a healthy bank account, having a healthy attitude, mind, body or appetite, buying healthy foods and having a healthy respect for someone. Health can mean many things in addition to the personal beliefs. It can also be an adjective to describe the provision of a service (health visitor, health inspector, multipurpose health worker) or something you can buy such as food (Health mix, Health drink), or a broad community (Community health) or world (world health). The mouth is connected to stomach through “food pipe” and “the heart has four chambers” are the facts that through anatomical investigation we can find conclusive proof for. “Health” is not as easy to prove, or agree upon and find evidence.

Health is highly individualized perception. Health is not something that a person achieves suddenly at a specific time. It is an ongoing process. Many factors affect individual definitions of health. Definitions may vary according to an individual’s previous experience, expectations of self, age and sociocultural influences. Nurses should be aware of their own personal definitions of health and appreciate that the other people have their individual definitions as well.

### People’s Experience of Health

Cross-cultural studies indicate that people’s experience of health can be organized (Lyn Talbot and Glenda Verrinder) as follows:

- Feeling vital
- Having good social relationships

- Experiencing a sense of control over one’s life and one’s living conditions
- Being able to do things one enjoys.
- Having a sense of purpose in life.
- Experiencing a connectedness to community.

**Health** in the abstract refers to a person’s physical, mental, and spiritual state; it can be positive (as being in good health) or negative (as being in poor health).

On April 7, 1948, the World Health Organization provided a definition of “health” that has become very famous. ‘Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity’. The 21 word definition has interestingly not been amended since 1948 and is found in the first pages of the Constitution of the World Health Organization as adopted by the International Health Conference, New York, June 19-22, 1946 which was signed on July 22, 1946 by the representatives of 61 states.

### Public Health

The health of the individuals and country are influenced by the public health practices of the country. India’s health care system is comprising of governmental sectors, private sectors, voluntary health agencies and health programs. Public health is given the prime importance; the population based community health practice brings multiple communities under one umbrella. The aim of public health practice is the health of the entire country. Public health care is rendered at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. The major focus of the community health nursing is to plan and provide care to individual, group, family and community.

### Definitions of Public Health

Historically, Winslow (1923) defined public health as the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life, and promoting physical health and efficiency through organized community efforts for the sanitation of the environment, the control of community infections, the education of the individual in principles of personal hygiene, the organization of medical and nursing services for the early diagnosis and preventive treatment of disease, and the development of social machinery which will ensure to every individual in the community a standard of living adequate for the maintenance of health.

The IOM defines public health as “organized community efforts aimed at the prevention of disease and promotion of health”.

### Community Health

Community health is the identification of needs and the protection and improvement of collective health within a geographically defined area. There are many definitions



available on community health. **Community health** refers to the health status of a defined group of people and the actions and conditions, both private and public (governmental), to promote, protect, and preserve their health.

## Population Health

The term *population health*, which is similar to *community health*, has emerged in recent years. The primary difference between these two terms is the degree of organization or identity of the people. **Population health** refers to the health status of people who are not organized and have no identity as a group or locality and the actions and conditions to promote, protect, and preserve their health.

## Community

*“Community” refers to a multidimensional system, which encompasses interactions across both horizontal and vertical levels and is characterized by people and organizations, actions, context, and consciousness perceptions and cultural constructs. Community is variable and permeable, shaped and reshaped continuously by changing actions and relationships.*

—Walter, 1997

The term **community** refers to a collection of people who interact with one another and whose common interests or characteristics form the basis for a sense of unity or belonging.

*“Community” implies people acting together in some way as a group, and the whole meaning more than the sum of its parts. A community is not just a collection of individuals; those individuals are part of something bigger, which has meaning for them and for others. The function of any community includes its members’ collective sense of belonging and their shared identity, values, norms, communication, and common interests and concerns.*

—Bruce and McKane, 2000; Clark, 2002

**Communities** are “systems composed of individual members and sectors that have a variety of distinct characteristics and interrelationships.” They can be defined by the characteristics of its people; geographic boundaries; shared values, interests, or history; or power dynamics.

—CDC, 1998

The definition of a **community** should take into account “opportunity for interpersonal and networking interactions within the unit.”

—Hancock et al., 1997

## Elements of Community

1. A sense of membership.
2. Common symbol systems; common values.
3. Reciprocal influence.
4. Common needs and a commitment to meeting them; and
5. A shared history. (Israel et al., 1994)

## Healthy Community

A healthy community, first described by Cottrell (1976) as a competent community, is one in which the various organizations, groups, and aggregates of people making up the community do at least four things:

1. They collaborate effectively in identifying the problems and needs of the community.
2. They achieve a working consensus on goals and priorities.
3. They agree on ways and means to implement the agreed goals.
4. They collaborate effectively in the required actions.

## Types of Communities

### Geographic Community

- A community often is defined by its geographic boundaries and thus is called a geographic community. A city, town, or neighborhood is a geographic community. (E.g. North Indian, South Indian)

### Common-interest Community

- A community can also be identified by a common interest or goal. A collection of people, even if they are widely scattered geographically, can have an interest or goal that binds the members together. (E.g. The members of student’s nurses association.)

### Community of Solution

- A type of community encountered frequently in community health practice is a group of people who come together to solve a problem that affects all of them. (Villagers seeking transport communication to their village)

## Features of Community

A community has three features, location, population and social system.

1. **Location:** Every physical community carries out its daily existence in a specific geographical location. The health of the community is affected by this location, including the placement of the service, the geographical features.
2. **Population:** Consists of specialized aggregates, but all diverse people who live within the boundary of the community.
3. **Social system:** The various parts of communities social system that interact and include the health system, family system, economic system, and educational system.

## Factors that Affect the Health of a Community

Many factors affect the health of a community. They are classified as: (Fig. 1)

- Physical factors
- Industrialization

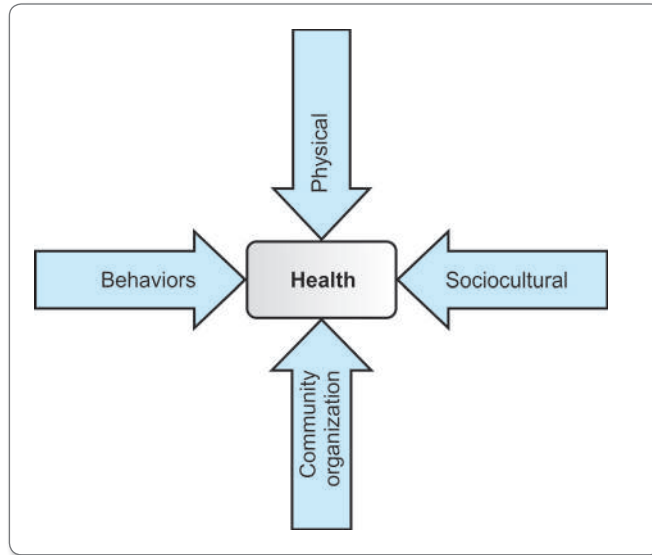


Fig. 1: Factors affecting the health of a community

- Social and cultural factors
- Community organization
- Individual behaviors

### Physical Factors

Physical factors include the influences of geography, the environment, community size, and industrial development.

- **Geography:** A community's health problems can be directly influenced by its altitude, latitude, and climate. In tropical countries where warm, humid temperatures and rain prevail throughout the year, parasitic and infectious diseases are a leading community health problem.
- **Environment:** Environment has good and bad influences on our health. Many experts believe that if we continue to allow uncontrolled population growth and continue to deplete nonrenewable natural resources, succeeding generations will inhabit communities that are less desirable than ours.
- **Community size:** The larger the community, the greater its range of health problems and the greater its number of health resources. Larger communities should have more health professionals and better health facilities than smaller communities should.

The size of the community can have an impact on the health status of the community. This could be positive or negative. Efficient planning, organizing and utilization of resources will always lead to an effective management. The resources can be wasted, ruined, or damaged if decisions are not made in a timely fashion or if the wrong decisions are executed. Trained community always saves money and avoids waste. Proper governmental administration and practices help to reduce any kind of waste.

### Industrialization

Industrialization of a country may give rise to positive and negative effects. For example, industrialized country can have improved communication network that enhances the relationship for trading and other communication between the countries and at the same time it becomes the major reason for polluted environment and health hazards related to occupation.

### Social and Cultural Factors

Social factors are the ones that influence the relationship between the people and groups within the community. Social factors emerge because of interaction between people. Man being a social animal cannot stay in isolation. Due to increased urbanization and industrialization, man leads a machine life specifically in urban areas; he does not find time to interact even with his own family members and mostly lives under stress. Concerning this, the rural community leads life much leisurely. On the other side, urban communities have access to huge number and choices of health care facilities which is not possible in rural communities.

- **Culture** is the most important factor that decides the health of the community. Each culture will have different cooking and eating practices. Diet is the basic determinant of one's health. Culture is the one that determines child-rearing practices, coping with stress and pain, valuing health and showing positive and negative attitude towards health care. So it is very important for a community health nurse to understand the culture of the community where she serves.
- **Beliefs, traditions, and prejudices:** People tend to practice wrong things because they believe that it is been practiced from generation to generation. They have a kind of predetermined belief about someone or some object without having adequate rational knowledge. For example in the community, mothers do not wean their babies on time because they believe that weaning before 1 year of age will cause diarrhea. This wrong belief will disturb the growth and the children will be malnourished inviting many infections.
- **Economy:** Economic status of the country can affect the health status of the community because the provision of health services is totally depending upon the resources available.
- **Politics:** The decisions of ruling government in a state level or at a central level can either promote or demote the health of the community.
- **Religion:** A number of religions have taken a position on health care. For example, some religious communities limit the type of medical treatment their members may receive. Some do not permit immunizations; others do



not permit their members to be treated by physicians. Still others prohibit certain foods.

- **Social norms:** Social norms determine the acceptable or unacceptable behavior of the people in a given society. This can cause positive or negative effects. For example in Saudi Arabia, alcoholism is an unacceptable behavior. In some countries public smoking is prohibited this has reduced the number of passive smokers.
- **Socioeconomic status:** Socioeconomic status (SES) contributes to the health of the people; poor people live in houses without basic sanitation facilities, this invites many diseases. The rich people live in good houses with all amenities. Although, the rich people can keep away some diseases relating to hygiene, they are more prone to diseases like obesity, diabetes and hypertension due to their inactive state, overeating and socialized lifestyle.

### Community Organization

Community organizing is the efficient means of organizing the resources of a community. If community resources are put together it becomes a unified force that avoids any duplication and unnecessary cost and thereby increases its productivity. This would also help in avoiding the solutions that are not meeting the needs of the local community and culture.

### Individual Behaviors

The behavior and practices of each individual of the community contribute to the health status of the community. For example if the mothers are volunteering for bringing their children to health subcenter for polio drops instillation, more children will be immunized against poliomyelitis, this will strengthen the **herd immunity** of the community.

## COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSING

*Community health nurses are on the front lines of health care and prevention. Community health Nursing is the synthesis of nursing and public health practice applied to promote and protect the health of population. It combines all the basic elements of professional, clinical nursing with public health and community practice. Community health nursing is community based and, most importantly, it is population focused. Operating within the environment of rapid change and increasingly complex challenges, this field of nursing holds the potential for positively shaping the quality of community health services and improving the health of the general public. Community health nursing, as a field of nursing, combines nursing science with public health science to formulate a community-based and population-focused practice.*

—Williams, 2000

Community health nurses mobilize the efforts of the community through engaging the community, collaborating with the community and making partnership with the community. These efforts help in organizing the community

to work collectively for common good of the community health. The focus of the population-based practice is to identify the problems of the population under care. Population-based data guide in identifying the problems of the community. The identified problems are approached on priority base.

### Common characteristics of community health nursing include:

- Planning and executing services to the community.
- Emphasize on promotion of health and maintenance of health.
- Rendering care in the community at all three levels.

## Public Health Nursing

According to ANA (1999) public health nursing is a population-focused community nursing practice with the goal of prevention of disease and disability by creating the conditions where people can be healthy.

Public health nursing is the practice of promoting and protecting the health of populations using knowledge from nursing, social, and public health sciences (American Public Health Association, Public Health Nursing Section, 1996).

## Community Health Nursing

**Community health nursing** is a synthesis of nursing practice and public health practice, applied to promoting and preserving the health of populations. Health promotion, health maintenance, health education and management, coordination, and continuity of care are used in a holistic approach to the management of the health care of individuals, families, and groups in a community (American Nurses Association, 1986).

### Characteristics of Community Health Nursing

- It is a field of nursing.
- It combines public health with nursing.
- It is population focused.
- It emphasizes prevention, health promotion, and well-ness.
- It promotes client responsibility and self-care.
- It uses aggregate measurement and analysis.
- It uses principles of organizational theory.
- It involves interprofessional collaboration.

### Principles of Community Health Nursing

In community health nursing practice, nurses build their expertise in a specialty area and demonstrate skills using following principles:

- Promote, protect and preserve health, prevent disease and injury.
- Promote, protect and preserve the environment that contributes to health.



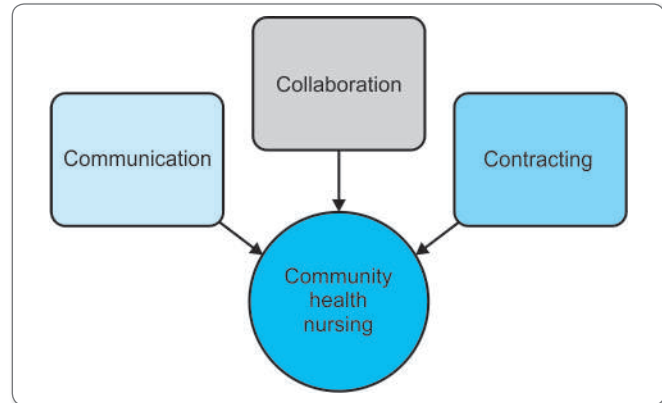
- Advocate for healthy public policy
- Lead the integration of comprehensive and multiple health promotion approaches that build the capacity of clients.
- Respect the diversity of clients and caregivers, focus on the linkages between health and illness experiences and enable clients to achieve health.
- Provide evidence informed care in a variety of settings such as the client's home, school, office, clinics, on the street, communal living settings or workplace.
- Cooperate, coordinate and collaborate with a variety of partners, disciplines, and sectors.
- Recognize that healthy communities and systems that support health contribute to health for all. Engage a range of resources to support health by coordinating care, and planning services, and programs.
- Work with a high degree of autonomy to initiate strategies that will address the determinants of health and positively impact people and their community.

#### **Essential Elements of Community Health Nursing (ANA, 1999; Williams, 1977, 2000)**

- History and philosophy of public health, including emphasis on the greatest good for the greatest number.
- Concept of aggregates—assessing needs, planning and providing services, and evaluating services' impact on population groups—including aggregate-level decision-making.
- Priority of preventive, protective, and health-promoting strategies over curative strategies.
- Means for measurement and analysis of community health problems, including epidemiologic concepts and biostatistics.
- Influence of environmental factors on aggregate health.
- Principles underlying management and organization for community health, because the goal of public health is accomplished through organized community efforts.
- Public policy analysis and development.
- Health advocacy and the political process.

#### **Primary Tools of Community Health Nursing**

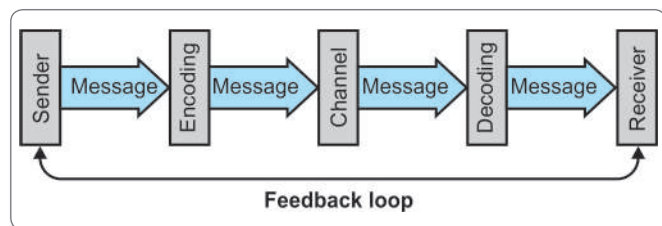
- Communication, collaboration, and contracting are primary tools for community health nurses (Fig. 2).
- They form the basis for effective relationships and for the protection and promotion of aggregate health.
- Clients and health care professionals get into contract, to address specific client needs.
- The concept of contracting can further assist the collaborative process.



**Fig. 2:** Primary tools of community health nursing

#### **Communication Process**

The process is made up of seven basic parts: (Fig. 3)



**Fig. 3:** The feedback loop

1. **The sender** is the person (or persons) conveying a message.
2. **The receiver** is the person (or persons) to whom the message is directed and who is its actual recipient.
3. **The message**, which is an expression of the purpose of communication. Without the message, there can be no communication.
4. **Encoding**, which refers to the sender's conversion of the message into symbolic form. This involves how the sender translates the message to the receiver.
5. **Channel**, or the medium through which the sender conveys the message. The channel may be a written, spoken, or nonverbal expression.
6. Once the sender has conveyed a message through a channel, the receiver must translate the message into an understandable form, called **decoding**.
7. The final part is a **feedback loop**, which refers to the receiver's indication that the message has been understood (decoded) in the way that the sender intended (encoded). It requires feedback from the receiver to the sender.

#### **Core Communication Skills**

Community health nurse need to have effective communication skill because her job starts with establishing wonderful



relationship with the community. But she has to remember one thing that she is a professional working amidst of unknown people.

The very basic of community health nursing practice is the communication. This includes:

- Sending skills
- Receiving skills
- Interpersonal skills.
- **Sending skills: Two main channels are used to send messages: nonverbal and verbal.**
  1. **Nonverbal messages:** People send messages non-verbally in many ways.
    - Personal appearance, dress, posture, facial expression, and physical distance between sender and receiver all communicate messages.
    - Body language often speaks louder than words. Facial expressions convey acceptance or rejection, interest or boredom, anger or patience, fear or confidence.
    - Gestures and bodily movements such as clenched hands, crossed arms, tapping fingers, hands on hips, or a turned shoulder all communicate messages. Eye contact or lack of it carries additional meaning.
    - Tone of voice and use of silence also send nonverbal messages. Accepting food in certain situations may communicate acceptance and the desire to be friendly.
  2. **Verbal messages are communicated ideas, attitudes, and feelings transmitted by speaking or writing.** Nurses cannot assume that the intent of their words always is understood by clients or other professionals.

*The basic rules for effective sending:*

- Keep the message honest and uncomplicated.
- Use as few words as possible to state it.
- Ask for reactions (feedback) to make certain that it is understood.
- **Receiving skills:** Receiving skills involve not only listening to what people say but also observing their behavior. An essential skill needed for receiving messages is active listening or reflective listening, which is the skill of assuming responsibility for and understanding the feelings and thoughts in a sender's message. Active listeners demonstrate their interest, perhaps by sitting forward, sustaining eye contact, nodding the head, and asking occasional questions for clarification (Kar, Arcalay, and Alex, 2001).
  - Interpersonal skills
  - Showing respect
  - Empathizing developing trust.

## Factors Influencing Communication

Effective communication, both sending and receiving, is strongly influenced by three factors: previous experiences, culture, and relationships.

### Collaboration

In the context of community health nursing collaboration means a purposeful interaction between nurses, clients, other professionals, and community members based on shared values, mutual participation, and joint effort.

### Characteristics of Collaboration and Partnerships

- Shared goals
- Mutual participation
- Maximized use of resources
- Clear responsibilities

### Contracting

Contracting means negotiating a working agreement between two or more parties in which they come to a shared understanding and mutually consent to the purposes and terms of the transaction.

### Characteristics of Contracting

*The concept of contracting, incorporates four distinctive characteristics:*

- Partnership and mutuality
- Commitment
- Format
- Negotiation

## CHANGING CONCEPTS OF HEALTH

### Biomedical Concept

Perception of the concept of health differs from one individual to another, one professional community to another.

Traditionally health was considered as “absence of disease”.

An individual was considered healthy, if he is free from diseases. This concept is referred to as biomedical concept.

Medically human body is equated to a machine, and disease was looked as breakdown of machine while doctor was considered as the repairer of the machine. Thus, health became the ultimate goal of medicine.

### Criticism

Biomedical concept has minimized the role of other determinants of health namely social, environmental, psychological and cultural. Thus, was found inefficient in solving major health related problems (drug abuse, accidents, malnutrition, etc.).



## Ecological Concept

- Human ecology is a part of the science of ecology. Human ecosystem includes all dimensions of man-made environment- physical, chemical, biological and psychological in addition to natural environment.
- According to the ecologists health is viewed as a dynamic equilibrium between man and environment, and disease is viewed as an imbalance between the two. Human ecological and cultural adaptations do determine not only the occurrence of disease, but also food security and population explosion.
- The ecological concept revolves around two issues: Man and environment. Adaptation of man to natural environment can result in prolonged life expectancies and better quality of life even in the absence of modern health amenities.

Man has created new health problems by altering the environment in terms of various activities like urbanization, industrialization, deforestation, construction of dams and canals.

## Psychological Concept

- Developments in social sciences revealed the fact that health is not only absence of disease but also is a social, economic, psychological, cultural and political entity.
- These factors should be considered while measuring health.

## Holistic Concept

- This concept corresponds to the view of ancient population that health implies sound mind in a sound body in a sound family and in a sound environment.
- This concept encompasses all the other concepts. The influence of social, economic, political and environment on health has been well identified.
- It has been described as unified or multidimensional process of achieving well-being of a person in the context of environment.
- The holistic approach indicates that all sectors of the society have an influence on health.
- Sectors include agriculture, animal husbandry, food, industry, education, housing, public works, communication and alike, with emphasis on promotion and protection of health.
- Environmental factors and ecological considerations must be built into the total planning process. Prevention of disease through ecological or environmental is much cheaper, safer and sustainable rational approach than other means of control.

## Right to Health

Universal Declaration of human rights established a declaration in 1948, 'Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family'. The preamble to the WHO constitution also affirms that it is one of the fundamental rights of every human being to enjoy "the highest attainable standard of health".

### The concept "right to health" encompasses

- Right to medical care
- Right to responsibility for health
- Right to healthy environment
- Right to food
- Right to procreate or not
- Right of the deceased persons (determination of death, autopsies, abortion, etc.)
- Right to die.

## DIMENSIONS OF HEALTH

There are many scholars who contributed volumes in explaining the various dimensions of health. We can take a base for the dimensions of health from World health organization's definition on health, which was presented, in early paragraph of this chapter. In addition to the aspects (physical, mental, and the social) of health mentioned, there are few more aspects of dimensions of health described by many scholars. These dimensions of health cannot be seen as factors in isolation since they all continuously interact and complement each other for contributing to the health of an individual or community (Fig. 4).

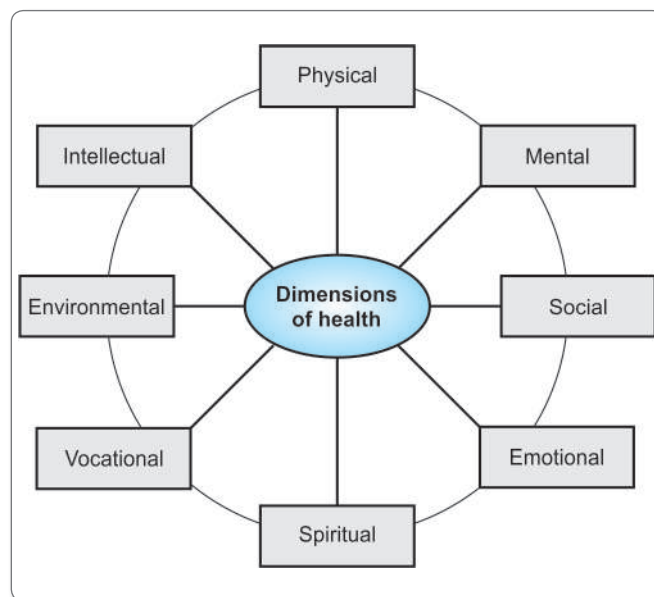


Fig. 4: Dimensions of health



## Physical Dimension

Physical dimension of health means the physical routines of a person. A person with good routines like saying no to tobacco, drugs, alcohol and other kinds of practices that may lead to ill health is placed on basic pillars of a good physical development. In addition to “saying no” to bad habits as mentioned, inculcation of good habits like recognizing the importance of good balanced diet, avoiding the inactive physical state are the foundation for building physical health. While traveling in the path of wellness man has to show interest in building his physical strength using various measures like exercise, good nutrition, character building and morality. In his journey, the man should have the knowledge and ability to recognize his health-related warning signs so that he can prevent himself by taking necessary precautions to prevent the disease. He must be capable to seek medical care for treating his illnesses. The man should also have a very good access to medical care. The benefits of good physical health are so many from feeling good to having a sense of esteem, actualization and a sense of well-being.

### Signs of Good Physical Health

- Good complexion
- Clear skin
- Bright eyes
- Lustrous hair
- Body well clothed
- Firm flesh
- Not too fat
- A sweet breath
- A good appetite
- Sound sleep
- Regular activity of bowels and bladder
- Smooth, easy, coordinated movement of the body
- All the organs of the body are of unexceptional size and function normally
- All the special senses are intact
- The resting pulse rate, blood pressure, and exercise tolerance are all within the range of normality for individuals' age and sex
- In the young and growing individual there is a steady gain in weight.

### Assess Various Aspects of Your Physical Health

- Self-assessment on overall health.
- Assess for symptoms of risk and illness.
- Assess your shape and size and try to be fit.
- Encouraging good habits (Exercise and eating habits).
- Discourage bad habits (Alcohol tobacco chewing, smoking).

- Enquiry in to medical services and routine master health check up.
- Assess your nutrition pattern and relate it to your performance.
- Assess the level of self-achievements and self-actualization.
- Finally assess the related issues enhancing or disrupting your physical health.

## Mental Dimension

A good state of mental health is the ability to respond to many varied experiences of life with flexibility and a sense of purpose. Mental health is defined as a state of balance between the individual and the surrounding world, a state of harmony between oneself and others, a coexistence between the realities of the self and that of other people and that of the environment. A few decades ago mind and body were considered as separate entities but now it is not so. Researchers have identified that psychological factors can induce all kinds of diseases not only the mental illness.

**To assess or identify we need to know the following characteristics of a mentally healthy person:**

- A mentally healthy person is free from internal conflicts; he is not at war with himself.
- He is well adjusted, i.e., He is able to get along well with others. He accepts criticism and is not easily upset.
- He searches for identity.
- He has a strong sense of self-esteem.
- He knows himself; his needs, problems and goals. (Self-actualization).
- He has good self- control balances- rationality and emotionality.
- He faces problems and tries to solve them intelligently, i.e., coping with stress and anxiety.

## Social Dimension

Man is a social animal. People who go for work from morning to evening return back to the families in the evening. When they meet each other the sharing of whole day's experience occur. Social well-being is defined as the “Quantity and quality of the individual's interpersonal ties and the extent of involvement in the community.” The social dimension encourages contributing to one's environment and community. It emphasizes the interdependence between others and nature. As you travel a wellness path, you will become more aware of your importance in society as well as the impact you have on multiple environments. You will take an active part in improving our world by encouraging healthier living and initiating better communication with those around you. You will actively seek ways to preserve



the beauty and balance of nature along the pathway as you discover the power to make willful choices to enhance personal relationships and important friendships, and build a better living space and community.

#### **To assess your social dimension of health**

- Assess your interpersonal skills and your ability to gel with the family and community.
- Evaluate your contribution to the common welfare.
- Assess conflict levels and learn to develop harmony in living with others.

### **Intellectual Dimension**

The intellectual dimension distinguishes one's creative innovative and motivating mental activities. A well person always looks for food opportunities to expand his knowledge as well trying to share it with others. No matter where the place is: Person with intellectual abilities uses his abilities in all places like classroom, family, smaller communities and community at large. Wellness path is a big ever-ending journey and each one born on the earth need to be alert on abdicating wrong diversions from wellness road. Person with intellectual abilities takes extra precautions to safeguard his journey in the wellness path. Classroom learning, independent learning through various media and experiencing with experienced/experts are some of the means for earning intellectual skills. All these would help a person exploring issues related to problem solving, creativity, and decision-making.

#### **Assessing intellectual dimension of health**

- Try always challenging our minds with intellectual and creative tasks and never try to remain self-satisfied and uncreative.
- Recognize possible difficulties in your path and take appropriate courses of action based on available information. Do not wait and worry with major struggles later.

### **Spiritual Dimension**

The spiritual dimension identifies and explores the meaning and purposes of our life. While hunting for meaning of human existence man deeply appreciates the natural forces and God's creations on this universe. This gives a peace and paradoxical balance between his feelings and hard stretches of his life path. All the religions try to tune man's behavior by showing him the spiritual path. Man may have varied feelings in his spiritual journey from doubt, despair, fear, disappointment and dislocation to pleasure, joy and happiness. The spirituality functions as component of value system of a person. Spirituality is one of the essential components of holistic nursing care.

#### **Assessing spiritual dimension of health**

- Consider and internalize the meaning of life and necessity in accepting the beliefs of others.
- Each day we must behave consistently using our values and beliefs; this may help us to be free from worrying about our deceitfulness to ourselves.

### **Emotional Dimension**

The emotional dimension recognizes awareness and acceptance of one's feelings. Emotional wellness includes the degree to which one feels positive and enthusiastic about one's self and life. It includes the capacity to manage one's feelings and related behaviors including the realistic assessment of one's limitations, development of autonomy, and ability to cope effectively with stress. The well person maintains satisfying relationships with others. Personal choices and decisions made using the synthesis of feelings, thoughts, philosophies, and behavior. Able to form interdependent relationships with others based upon a foundation of mutual commitment, trust, and respect.

#### **To assess or evaluate emotional dimension of health**

- It is better to be aware of and accept our feelings than to deny them.
- It is better to be optimistic in our approach to life than pessimistic.

### **Vocational Dimension**

The vocational dimension recognizes personal satisfaction and enrichment in one's life through work. Vocational or occupational development is related to one's attitude about one's work. When work is fully adapted to human goals, capacities and limitations, work often plays a role in promoting both physical and mental health.

Contributing one's own unique gifts, skills, and talents to his or her work is both personally meaningful and rewarding. Values conveyed through involvement in activities that are gratifying a person. The choice of profession, job satisfaction, career ambitions, and personal performance are important components of this dimension.

#### **To assess or evaluate vocational dimension of health**

- Choosing a career which is consistent with our personal values, interests, and beliefs.
- Developing functional, transferable skills through structured involvement opportunities.

### **Environmental Dimension**

Ryff and Singer (2006) describe environmental mastery as a dimension of wellness and state that, to make the most of



our lives and our world, we need to advance the science of interpersonal flourishing. In their definition of environmental wellness, Renger and co-authors (2000) include the balance between home and work life, as well as the individual's relationship with nature and community resources (i.e., involvement in defining wellness and its determinants a recycling or community clean-up effort).

Some other dimensions below are also suggested for consideration to define the health aspects of a person:

- Philosophical dimension
- Cultural dimension
- Socioeconomic dimension

First, most authors incorporated the idea that wellness is not just absence of illness, as first outlined by the World Health Organization (WHO) wellness definition. Second, wellness is described in terms of various factors that interact in a complex, integrated, and synergistic fashion, and the dynamic interaction of the dimensions causes the sum of the dimensions to be greater than the whole. Each dimension is integral to the whole and no one dimension operates independently.

### WELLNESS, ILLNESS AND HEALTH CONTINUUM

People are either well or ill. Yet wellness is a relative concept, not an absolute, and **illness** is a state of being *relatively* unhealthy. There are many levels and degrees of wellness and illness. Community health practitioners place a strong emphasis on **wellness**, which includes the definition of health mentioned but incorporates the capacity to develop a person's potential to lead a fulfilling and productive life, one that can be measured in terms of quality of life. Because health involves a range of degrees from optimal health at one end to total disability or death at the other, it is often described as a continuum (Fig. 5). This **health continuum** applies not only to individuals but also to families and communities. A nurse might speak of a dysfunctional family, meaning one that is experiencing a relative degree of illness; or a healthy family might be described as one that exhibits many wellness characteristics, such as effective communication and conflict resolution, as well as the ability to work together and use resources appropriately. Likewise, a community, as a

collection of people, may be described in terms of degrees of wellness or illness. The health of an individual, family, group, or community moves back and forth along this continuum throughout life.

The level (degree) of illness increases as one moves toward total disability or death; the level of wellness increases as one moves toward optimal health. This continuum shows the relative nature of health. At any given time a person can be placed at some point along the continuum.

A person's relative health is usually in a state of flux, either improving or deteriorating. This diagram of the wellness–illness continuum shows several examples of people in changing states of health.

### PREREQUISITES FOR HEALTH

The fundamental conditions and resources for health are:

- Peace
- Shelter
- Education
- Food
- Income
- A stable ecosystem
- Sustainable resources
- Social justice and equity.

Improvement in health requires a secure foundation in these basic prerequisites.

### HEALTH PROMOTION

Nursing is a holistic profession that examines and works with all aspects of individuals' lives, and has a strong focus on family and community as well. Nurses therefore are uniquely positioned to provide health promotion and health maintenance activities. In fact, these activities should be a part of each encounter with families. Considerable differences appear in the literature regarding the use of terms health promotion, primary prevention, health protection and illness prevention. Health promotion is the process of empowering people to make healthy lifestyle choices and motivating them to become better self-managers. To achieve this, health promotion strategies focus on patient education, counseling, and support tools. Improved health requires coherent policies on health promotion, as well as collaboration among governments, international organizations, the society, and private agencies (WHO, 2005).

### Definitions of Health Promotion

Health promotion was defined in the Ottawa Charter as “the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health. To reach a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, an individual or group must be

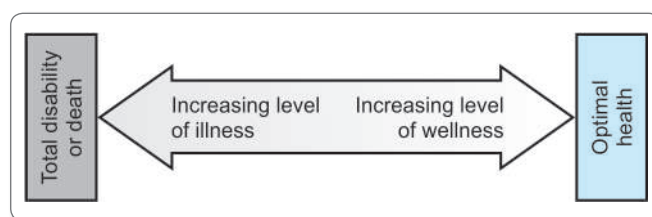


Fig. 5: Wellness, illness continuum



able to identify and to realize aspirations, to satisfy needs, and to change or cope with the environment. Health is, therefore, seen as a resource for everyday life, not the objective of living. Health is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities. Therefore, health promotion is not just the responsibility of the health sector, but goes beyond healthy lifestyles to well-being” (WHO 1986).

**Health promotion** is, “behavior motivated by the desire to increase well-being and actualize human health potential,” and disease prevention or health protection (health maintenance) is “behavior motivated by a desire to actively avoid illness, detect it early, or maintain functioning with the constraints of illness”.

—Pender, Murdaugh and Parsons, 2006

**Health promotion** refers to activities that increase well-being and enhance wellness or health.

—Pender, Murdaugh, and Parsons, 2006

**Health promotion** is concerned with developing sets of strategies that seek to foster conditions that allow populations to be healthy and to make healthy choices (WHO, 2001). Health promotion is the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health.

### Health Maintenance or Health Protection

Pender (2002) defines health protection as, “an illness or injury-specific “avoidance” motivated, and seeks to prevent insults to health and well-being.” According to Pender (2002) and colleagues health protection is motivated by a desire to actively avoid illness, detect it early or maintain functioning within the constraints of illness.

Efforts to preserving the present health status of an individual through prevention of diseases or occurrence of injuries refer to health maintenance or health protection. It simply means preventing people from disease and helping to maintain the state of health through various measures at individual and at societal level. Several examples can be given for this. Students see and practice these in day-to-day practice in the community. The health promotion and health maintenance cannot be seen as two different entities. They relate to each other and run through all the levels of prevention. During every health care visit, the mother is educated on the needs or problems and solutions for the child and mother.

### Examples

- **Developmental screening activities:** It includes physical and motor developmental screening to identify any deviations from normal. Developmental surveillance helps in recognizing children who might be at risk for developmental delays. This is done through history collection from parents, observation, etc. This would

help in providing necessary medical services in its early period itself.

- Teaching the mother on prevention of home accidents: This knowledge would help her prevent the child from any home accidents.
- Immunizing the newborn with BCG vaccine to prevent from tuberculosis

### The major differences between health promotion and health maintenance are:

Health promotion identifies needs and goals of the individual, family and community and utilizes them to promote and maintain the health. This requires partnership with individual, family, community and real support from other professionals to achieve the set goals.

Health maintenance either prevents the potential health risks or identifies them early and provides necessary intervention.

Examples are breast self-examination (BSE) and early diagnosis and treatment.

### Levels of Prevention

The levels of prevention occur at various course of disease progression. Leavel and Clark (1965) defined three levels of prevention: primary, secondary and tertiary (Figs 6 and 7). Five steps describe these three levels of prevention:

#### Primary Prevention

- **Primary prevention** focuses on health promotion and protection against specific health problems (e.g., immunization against poliomyelitis). The purpose of primary prevention is to decrease the risk or exposure of the individual or community to the disease.
- Primary prevention obviates the occurrence of a health problem; it includes measures taken to keep illness or injuries from occurring. It is applied to a generally healthy population and precedes disease or dysfunction.
- Examples of primary prevention activities by a community health nurse include:

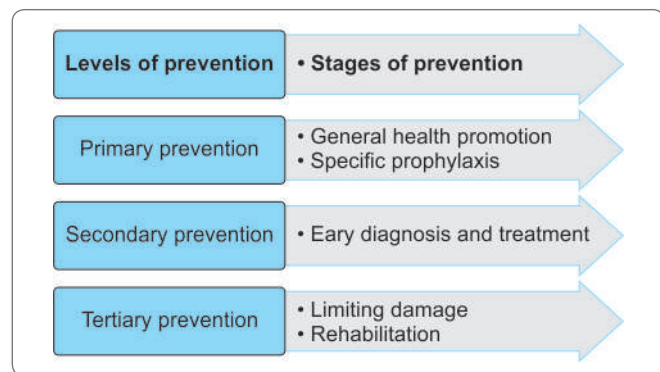


Fig. 6: Stages of prevention

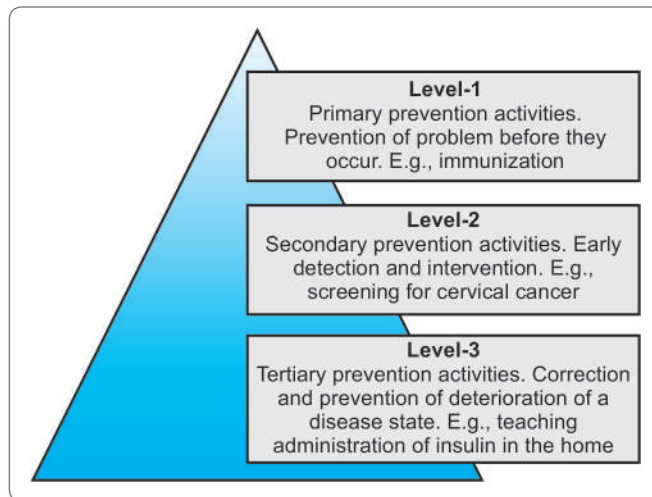


Fig. 7: The three levels of prevention

- ❑ Encouraging elderly people to install and use safety devices (e.g., hand rails on steps), to prevent injuries from falls;
- ❑ Teaching young adults healthy lifestyle behaviors so that they can adopt changes for a lifetime, for themselves and their children;
- ❑ Working through a local health department to help control and prevent communicable diseases such as rubeola, poliomyelitis, or varicella by providing regular immunization programs.

### Secondary Prevention

- **Secondary prevention** focuses on early identification of health problems and prompt intervention to alleviate health problems. Its goal is to identify individuals in early stage of disease process and limit future disability.
- Secondary prevention involves efforts to detect and treat existing health problems at the earliest possible stage when disease or impairment already exists.  
**Example:** Cervical cancer screening through pap smears help in early detection of cervical cancers.
- Hypertension and cholesterol, screening programs in many communities help to identify high-risk individuals and encourage early treatment to prevent heart attacks or stroke.

### Tertiary Prevention

- Tertiary prevention focuses on restoration and rehabilitation with the goal of returning the individual to an optimum level of functioning.
- Tertiary prevention attempts to reduce the extent and severity of a health problem to its lowest possible level, so as to minimize disability and restore or preserve function.  
**Example:** Treatment and rehabilitation of persons after a stroke to reduce impairment.

- Post mastectomy exercise programs to restore functioning
- Early treatment and management of diabetes to reduce problems or slow their progress.

#### Differences between health promotion and health protection:

- Health promotion is not disease-oriented. Health protection is illness or injury specific.
- Health promotion is motivated by personal, positive approach to wellness. Health protection is motivated by avoidance of illness.
- Health promotion seeks to expand positive potential to health. Health protection seeks to thwart the occurrence of results to health and well-being.

### Sites for Health Promotional Activities

Health promotion programs are found in many settings. Programs and activities may be offered to individuals and families in the home or in the community setting and at schools, hospitals, or worksites. Some individuals may feel more comfortable having a nurse, diet counselor, or fitness expert come to their home for teaching and follow-up on individual needs.

#### Characteristics of health promotion and health maintenance programs:

- Address defined, measurable and modifiable risk factors
- Involve proactive care, targeting programs and services to “well” individuals and communities.
- Use multiple strategies based on best evidence and accepted clinical practice guidelines.
- Encourage integrated and collaborative service delivery.
- Empower patients and communities to take greater responsibility for their health.
- Include an evaluation component to ensure that programs are effective.

### OTTAWA CHARTER

In November 1986, the first International Conference on Health Promotion was held in Ottawa, Canada. Primarily this conference was conducted in response to the expectations for a new public health global initiation. WHO recognized the symbol as the logo for health promotion (Fig. 8). Prior to this (Ottawa) conference there were many conferences held highlighting the importance of health promotion. The previous conferences include: Alma Ata Primary Health Care Conference (1978), health promotion conferences in Adelaide (1988), Sundsvall (1991), Jakarta (1997), Mexico (2000), Bangkok (2005) and Nairobi (2009). The main components of these conferences were strengthening the principles of health promotion and practice, public health policy, providing supportive environments, and establishing healthy relationships.

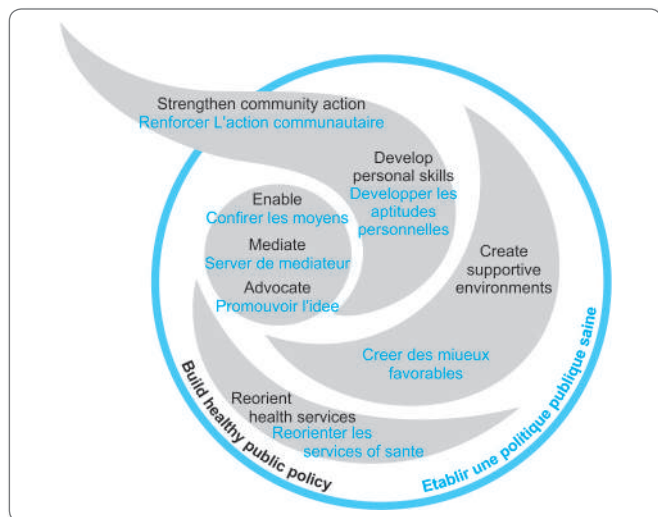


Fig. 8: Ottawa charter health promotion emblem (1986), WHO

The WHO chose to adopt the emblem of the conference as the “logo for health promotion” as it perfectly describes the approaches to health promotion.

The **logo** comprehends the following components:

- The **outer circle** that is red in color includes “**Building Healthy Public Policies**” to denote the importance of policies to “hold things together.”
- A **round spot** inside the circle from which the wings originate and one alone flouts the outer circle. The round spot encompasses three strategies for health promotion. The strategies are:
  - Enable
  - Mediate
  - Advocate

The three wings comprehend the five major “action areas” for health promotion.

1. The **upper wing** that **FLOUTS** the circle reminds the action required to **strengthen the community action and to develop personal skills**. This flouting wing of the circle alerts that the society and communities and individuals are continually changing, hence the scope of the policy has to reflect these changes.
2. The **middle wing** on the right side signifies the action is required to “**create supportive environments for health**”
3. The **bottom wing** represents that action is needed to “**reorient health services**” towards disease prevention and health promotion.

**Ottawa charter has identified five major action areas for promoting health. They are:**

1. **Build healthy public policy:** Public health policies are the regularizing forces used as the core by the government

and nongovernmental agencies. Policies will unify the components to achieve the health promotional goals. This combines legislation, fiscal measures, taxation and organization change as complimentary approach toward health promotion.

2. **Create supportive environments for health:** This concentrates on protecting the natural and built environment. This also has the additional responsibility of conservation of natural resources.
3. **Strengthen community action for health:** The available human and material sources are utilized to strengthen the community. This will help to support self and society community development.
4. **Develop personal skills:** This helps people to learn and prepare themselves to protect them throughout the lifespan. This is achieved through information, education and training activities. This opportunity is provided in school, at home, in worksites, and generally in the community.
5. **Reorient health services:** The health sectors should specifically move toward the direction of health promotion, at no point it should stop or limit itself with curative and clinical services. Reorientation also include extensive research, changes in professional education and training.

*In addition, Ottawa charter has developed three major strategies for health promotion. They are:*

1. Enable
2. Mediate
3. Advocate

These three strategies are presented in the inner circle.

### Enable

This means helping the community to achieve their fullest health potential. The basic idea here is to reduce the differences in current health status and make health available to all people. For example the health facilities in India is not equally distributed. Many experts commented this as a “social injustice”. To enable people achieve their health they need to be provided with secured environment with opportunities to make their life choices. There should not be any discrimination between treating men and women. This would help the people achieve their fullest potentials to enjoy their health.

### Mediate

Health sector alone cannot take up the responsibility of providing health to all people. It is a coordinated work and it calls for the efforts and support from all the sectors. This includes government sectors, private sectors, health and



other social and economic sectors, voluntary organizations, community, family, individual, and the media.

### Advocate

Good health is a base to live healthy, economically productive and maintain name and fame in the society. There are many factors interplay and have positive or negative impact on man's health like biological, environmental, behavioral, social, political, economic and cultural. The aim of health promotion is to make all these factors favorable or helping forces to promote health through necessary advice on health.

The role of the health sector must move increasingly in a health promotion direction, beyond its responsibility for providing clinical and curative services.

### Moving into the Future

Health is created and lived by people within the settings of their everyday life where they learn, work, play, and love.

Health is created by caring for oneself and others, by being able to take decisions and have control over one's life circumstances, and by ensuring that the society one lives in creates conditions that allow the attainment of health by all its members.

As the novice-nursing students get in to the real world of community, they may have to explore too many things in the community. This chapter introduced the students to the basic concepts of health, and community health, and community health nursing. This would give them a base to accumulate further learning about community health nursing.



## Points to Remember

A large part of what we do help people regain and maintain health. It is important to explain what health is. There are no easy, straightforward answers to this. In addition, some people use entirely different words when they actually mean what others would call "health". Health is highly individual perception. Health is not something that a person achieves suddenly at a specific time. It is an ongoing process. Health in the abstract refers to a person's physical, mental, and spiritual state; it can be positive (as being in good health) or negative (as being in poor health). The health of individuals and our nation are dependent on public health practice. Population-based public health practice provides one paradigm that can influence the health of multiple communities within our nation.

Community health refers to the health status of a defined group of people and the actions and conditions, both private and public (governmental), to promote, protect, and preserve their health. **Population health** refers to the health status of people who are not organized and have no identity as a group or locality and the actions and conditions to promote, protect, and preserve their health.

The term community refers to a collection of people who interact with one another and whose common interests or characteristics form the basis for a sense of unity or belonging. There are three types of community: (1) geographic community, (2) Common-interest community, (3) Community of solution.

**Many factors affect the health of a community. They are classified as:**

- Physical factors
- Social and cultural factors

- Community organization
- Individual behaviors

Community health nursing is a synthesis of nursing practice and public health practice, applied to promoting and preserving the health of populations.

Communication, collaboration, and contracting are primary tools for community health nurses. They form the basis for effective relationships and for the protection and promotion of aggregate health. Clients and health care professionals get into contract, to address specific client needs, perception of the concept of health differs from one individual to another, one professional community to another. The concept of contracting can further assist the collaborative process. Effective communication, both sending and receiving, is strongly influenced by three factors: previous experiences, culture, and relationships.

The health continuum applies not only to individuals but also to families and communities. People are either well or ill. Yet wellness is a relative concept, not an absolute, and illness is a state of being relatively unhealthy. There are many levels and degrees of wellness and illness. A community, as a collection of people, may be described in terms of degrees of wellness or illness. The health of an individual, family, group, or community moves back and forth along this continuum throughout life.

*Health promotion was defined in the Ottawa Charter as "the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health. Health promotion refers to activities that increase well-being and enhance wellness or health".*

—Pender, Murdaugh and Parsons, 2006



Health protection refers to activities that preserve an individual's present state of health and that prevent disease or injury occurrence. Health maintenance focuses on known potential health risks and seeks to prevent them, or identify them early so that intervention can occur. The levels of prevention occur at various levels of a course of disease progression. There are three levels of prevention: Primary, secondary and tertiary.

Health promotion programs and activities may be offered to individuals and families in the home or in the community setting and at schools, hospitals, or worksites. In 1986 the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion was launched. Since then, WHO kept this symbol as the Health Promotion logo (HP logo).

Overall, the logo visualizes the idea that Health Promotion is a comprehensive, multistrategy approach.



## Assess Yourself

### I. Multiple choice questions:

The community health nurse provides family centered care in the community. The tools for community health nursing form the basis for effective relationships and for the protection and promotion of aggregate health. Questions 1 to 7 are based on this concept.

1. Which of the following refers to the “tool of community health nursing”?
  - a. Communication
  - b. Leadership skills
  - c. Community theories
  - d. Family relationship
2. Which of the following refers to the sender's conversion of the message into symbolic form?
  - a. Decoding
  - b. Encoding
  - c. Evaluation
  - d. Channel
3. Community health nurse seldom practice in isolation. Which of the following refers to negotiating a working agreement between two or more parties?
  - a. Collaboration
  - b. Contracting
  - c. Communication
  - d. All of the above
4. Collection of people who interact with one another and whose characteristics form the basis for a sense of belonging appropriately refers to
  - a. Population
  - b. Aggregate
  - c. Community
  - d. None of the above
5. Tertiary prevention attempts to
  - a. Detect and treat problems
  - b. Minimize disability and restore function
  - c. Prevents disease occurrence
  - d. Diagnose the disease
6. The efforts to detect and treat existing health problems at the earliest possible stage when disease or impairment already exist is referred to
  - a. Primary prevention
  - b. Secondary prevention
  - c. Tertiary prevention
  - d. Optimum prevention

### 7. The broader concepts of health promotion are

- a. Early diagnosis and treatment
- b. Health education and health maintenance
- c. Diagnosis and disability prevention
- d. Health education and disability prevention

### II. State whether the following statements are true or false:

- a. \_\_\_\_ Body language speaks louder than words.
- b. \_\_\_\_ Receiving skills involve listening and observing the behavior of the people
- c. \_\_\_\_ Disability limitation refers to secondary level of prevention
- d. \_\_\_\_ Early detection and treatment refers to tertiary level prevention

### III. Write short answers in one or two sentences:

1. Define health
2. Define public health
3. Define community health
4. Define community health nursing
5. Define health promotion
6. Define population health
7. List changing concepts of health
8. State two dimensions of health
9. Give two differences between health promotion and health protection
10. Define two different types of communities
11. State the concept of “Right to health”
12. List four sites for health promotion activities

### IV. Write short notes on:

1. Dimensions of health
2. Changing concepts of health
3. Types of communities
4. The primary tools of community health nursing
5. Process of communication
6. Wellness-illness continuum



7. Health promotion
8. Levels of prevention
9. Elements of health promotion-action
10. Health promotion logo
11. Sites for health promotional activities

**V. Write essay or long answers:**

1. Define community health. Describe the factors affecting community health.
2. Define community health nursing. List down the principles of community health nursing.

3. What are the tools of community health nursing? Describe in detail about "communication process".
4. Define health. Describe the changing concepts of health
5. Define health. Describe the various dimensions of health.
6. Define health promotion. Describe the three levels of prevention.
7. Define communication. Describe the factors influencing communication.
8. Define community. What are all the principles of community health nursing? State the types of communities.

**ANSWERS**

- |                 |              |              |              |              |              |              |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>I. 1. a.</b> | <b>2. b.</b> | <b>3. b.</b> | <b>4. c.</b> | <b>5. b.</b> | <b>6. b.</b> | <b>7. b.</b> |
| <b>II. a. T</b> | <b>b. T</b>  | <b>c. F</b>  | <b>d. F</b>  |              |              |              |