Public health – short explanation

Comparison Paper Brittany Seawright NUR/ 408 February 11, 2013 Beth Edwards Comparison Paper According to a report published in 1988 by the Institute of Medicine, publichealthwas defined as " what we, as a society, do collectively to assure the conditions in which people can be healthy" (Stanhope & Lancaster, p. 7, 2012). The mission of public health was " to generate organized community effort to address the public interest in health by applying scientific and technical knowledge to prevent disease and promote health" (Stanhope & Lancaster, p. , 2012). The definition and mission of public health has not changed. " In the United States, the local-state-federal partnership includes federal agencies, the state and territorial public health agencies, and the 3200 local public health agencies" (Stanhope & Lancaster, p. 990, 2012). Healthy People 2020 and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are agencies of public health at the national level. The state health department is an agency of public health at the state and county levels. The interaction of these agencies is critical to effectively leverage precious resources, both financial and personnel, and to protect and promote the health of populations" (Stanhope & Lancaster, p. 990, 2012). History of Public Health People who are born today can expect to live 30 years longer than those who were born in 1990 (Stanhope & Lancaster, 2012). Advocacy begun in the late 1910s, policymakers and social welfare representatives strived to constitute national health insurance (Stanhope & Lancaster, 2012). In 1965 congress amended the Social Security Act to include health insurance benefits for older adults (Medicare) and increased care for the poor (Medicaid)" (Stanhope & Lancaster, p. 36, 2012). The Social Security Act did not cover preventive services, and home health care was only reimbursed with a doctors order (Stanhope & Lancaster, 2012). Local

and state health departments changed their policies to allow agencies o reimburse home care as bedsidenursing, which reduced health promotion and prevention (Stanhope & Lancaster, 2012). In the 1970s, nursing was viewed highly for improving the health care of communities (Stanhope & Lancaster, 2012). " Nurses made significant contributions to the hospice movement, the development of birthing centers, daycare for older adults and disabled persons, drug abuseprograms, and rehabilitation services in long-term care" (Stanhope & Lancaster, p. 38, 2012).

In the 1980s, there was concern about high cost of health care in the United States, and health promotion and disease prevention services were not top priority because funding was more essential in other areas (Stanhope & Lancaster, 2012). Fewer nurses were employed by official public health agencies because of low state and federal funds (Stanhope & Lancaster, 2012). During the 1900s and 2000s, the focus was on cost, improving quality of care, access to health care services, and advancing the public health nursing profession (Stanhope & Lancaster, 2012). Federal public health agencies develop regulations that implement policies formulated by Congress, provide a significant amount of funding to state and territorial health agencies for public health activities, survey the nation's health status and health needs, set practices and standards, provide expertise that facilitates evidence-based practice, coordinate public health activities that cross state lines, and support health services research" (Stanhope & Lancaster, p. 90, 2012). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention was established on July 1, 1946 on a floor of a small building in Atlanta, Georgia (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2012). " The Centers for

Disease Control and Prevention was initially focused on fighting Malaria by killing mosquitos" (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Para 2, 2012).

Presently, the " Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is the nation's premier public health agency", and has a mission to " collaborate to create the expertise, information, and tools that people and communities need to protect their health- through promotion, prevention of disease, injury and disability, and preparedness for new health threats" (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Para 2, 2012). Healthy People 2020 is also a national public health agency. " Since 1979 the U. S. Surgeon General has worked with local, state, and federal agencies; the private sector; and the U. S. population to evelop objectives for preventing disease and promoting health for the nation" (Stanhope & Lancaster, p. 999, 2012). Healthy People 2020 objectives were presented in 2009 to the public, and one of thegoalsis to " promote quality of life, healthy development and healthy behaviors across all life stages" (Stanhope & Lancaster, p. 999, 2012). The health department is a state public health agency that prevents disease, improves health and wellness, promotes quality of life, and assists the people of each region in building healthy communities (South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, 2012).

The county health department is where much of the direct health care is provided to the people of the communities in each state. County and state level public health agencies collaborate and partner with national agencies to promote healthy communities. Local public health departments are responsible for implementing and enforcing local, state, and federal public

health codes and ordinances while providing essential public health services (Stanhope & Lancaster, p. 1003, 2012). Differences between public and community health Public and community health are specialty areas and each have their own focuses.

Public health focuses on the communities and populations as a whole, and community health focuses on the individuals, families, and groups within a community. Both specialty areas have the same goal, and that is to promote health and prevent disease and illness. " Public health is not a branch of medicine; it is an organized community approach designed to prevent disease, promote health, and protect populations" " (Stanhope & Lancaster, p. 990, 2012). The settings of where public health nurses and community health nurses work are different.

Public health nurses may work for organizations or government areas, such as the state health department. Community health nurses may work in schools, clinics, hospitals, home health, county health department, or nursing homes. Health care is changing and improving every day. Nurses have a huge role in promoting health and preventing disease and illness in populations. Public health is built on partnerships (Stanhope & Lancaster, 2012). Governmental agencies at the local, state, and federal levels are partners in the public health system that must work together to develop and implement solutions hat will improve a community's health (Stanhope & Lancaster, p. 990, 2012). References Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2012). Our History - Our Story. http://www. cdc. gov/about/history/ourstory. htm South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. (2012). Region 2 Public Health Office. Retrieved from

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