

Critical thinking on public and community health

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



Critical Thinking Paper on Public Community Health

Introduction

Many of today's healthcare problems arise from the blurring of the distinction between public or community and personal healthcare. In this paper, a clear line will be created between the two, emphasizing their similarities and differences. In summary, personal healthcare refers to healthcare decisions that generally affect only an individual while public or community healthcare pertains to healthcare decisions that affect a wider range of population. These two also differ in terms of goals, and other determinants.

- Define Public or Community Health. How does this differ from personal health?

The ultimate goal of healthcare is to prevent the spread of diseases. The entire healthcare industry has been on a persistent battle against the rapid increase of the prevalence of already-discovered diseases brought about by the thousands, if not millions of pathogens, and the diversification of environmental and man-made entities that cause or lead to disease. These are the main objectives of public or community health. One distinct characteristic of this health category is that it mainly deals with issues and threats that may potentially lead to contagion or an endemic. Among the list of priorities in its list would be the control of the spread of diseases and their prevention more than their cures. At some point, individual healthcare issues such as the ones one usually finds in case studies tackling very rare diseases may be ignored if focusing on such condition is not that beneficial to the health of many. In public or community health, healthcare decisions are

made as a group in an effort to reach a common goal. It is important to know however, that despite the focus of this particular health category on groups, the size or population of such groups may greatly vary. The “community” in the community health may be as small as several people living in the same remote area or as big as the population of people inhabiting an entire continent. Nonetheless, the goals and focus of this particular healthcare category remains the same and that is to prolong life, prevent diseases, and promote health and wellness in general. Perhaps the most prominent organization in the field of public health would be the World Health Organization (WHO), who defined health as “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”. Personal health on the other hand is another category of health management that focuses more on an individual’s health interests rather than on a group’s. One good thing about this particular health management category is the fact that healthcare decisions can be very detailed. Personal health deals with details which can be as minute as any of an individual’s decision that may have direct or indirect implications on his health (i. e. smoking, drinking, drugs, unsafe sex, obesity, exercise, sensible eating, health habits and even risky behaviors). The goal of personal and public or community health is basically the same: to prolong life, prevent diseases, and promote health and wellness in general. Their main distinction feature lies on their target population. Public health focuses on the health concerns of a considerably larger group while personal health focuses on an individual’s personal health decisions which of course, can either be good or bad, depending on an individual’s perceptions of what good personal health

is or whether he simply ignored to consider them in his lifestyle decisions.

Nonetheless, these are the things that delineate the two.

- What are the benefits of public health assessments? What are the disadvantages, if any? Give an example of a potential conflict within the community that could arise as a result of public health assessments. How can public health advocates and policy makers prevent and/or manage such a conflict?

There can be a lot of benefits of public health assessments. Public health assessments refer to the process of evaluating a certain community's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats with regards to their health. Of course, along the process, it can be determined whether there are existing health problems in that community such as communicable diseases, unsanitary places and practices, and other issues that may have direct implications on the members of the community's health. In general, public health assessments are meant to diagnose health-related problems within a community. The advantages of conducting public health assessments are actually quite obvious. Community health workers get to know what they can improve and focus on in their upcoming health and wellness programs. They can, for example, focus on what a certain community really needs more than what one wants. They can make more appropriate actions and efficient problem solving strategies that would ideally directly address any given healthcare problem. All of these would be very difficult to attain if not for the routine public health assessments being done within communities. So theoretically, community health assessments are meant to help the health authorities manage the healthcare problems in a particular community and

so they are not supposed to lead to any problems. If there can be one case wherein they can lead into a healthcare or any type of problem, that would be when the community health assessments are filled with errors—errors that could lead to a false positive or a false negative. Suppose the health authorities suspect the presence of a new virus that causes widespread sickness within a particular community and a disorganized community health assessment has been done and because of that disorganization, the results of the assessment became erroneous. In that case, the procedure would become more of a menace than a help. Fortunately, this issue can only be solved by following all the provided standards and protocols in conducting community health assessments. If these protocols and standards are what are erroneous, then health advocates and policy makers can definitely raise the issue to the legislative body of the government for improvements.

- How can public health assessments be used to form a public policy?

Conducting public health assessments is like doing a research. In the scientific method of solving a problem, this is the part where all of the problems are being identified. How can a problem be solved without even knowing what the problems are first. By knowing the problems first, which in this case, would most likely be problems that are related to health, policy makers would be able to see the problem or problems from a bigger picture and from that, they can draw a more feasible, appropriate, efficient, and cost-effective solution to almost any problem that can be identified by community health assessments .

- Choose one health concern and cite legislation that has been passed to address this concern. Discuss how this legislation has affected or could affect

your community.

One of the long standing but still controversial healthcare and legal issue being the source of debates today is the legislation of the use of marijuana, at least for medical purposes. Marijuana has been used by millions of people for the past centuries because of its apparent soothing and relaxing effect, that even medical doctors of today believe it still possess. However, during the late 20th century, the federal government of the United States started to classify marijuana as a Schedule I drug, implying that it can be addictive and that it does not possess any form of medical benefit and thus cannot be prescribed even by doctors for medical use. Despite the legislation disallowing the use and trade of the substance several decades ago imposed by the U. S. federal government, some of its member states decided not to share the same sentiment. One of the states who decided to go the other way is the state of California. Here, marijuana can freely be used as a substance be it in the field of medicine or alternative medicine. This has affected a lot of people, particularly those who reside within the state because they can finally be prescribed the one substance that they have been deprived of. According to some literatures, marijuana, when used for medical purposes, can contribute to the management of mental and psychiatric disorders . The legalization of the use of marijuana can also serve as a stimulant for researchers to study whether the illegalization of the substance by the federal government has valid grounds, a process which has been directly impeded because of that very legislation . This can serve as the first step for the academic community to conduct more studies about marijuana. This way, it can be a lot easier to establish the dos and don'ts of

using this drug, be it as a form of alternative medicine, or a recreational substance.

References

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