Health Policy
Subject 1
Basic Definitions

Associate Professor Dr Eman A. Al-Kamil

Objectives

The main objectives of this lecture include:

1. Explain some important definitions.

2. Discuss some factors affecting health.

3. Discuss health indicators.

4. Aims or objectives of studying health policy.

Associate Professor Dr Eman A. Al-Kamil

Health:

The World Health Organization (WHO) defined health as: A state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

Another definition of health is that " health is a successful adaptation of the human body to stresses and stimuli (in the environment) to which it is exposed, such that it expresses adequate functioning under given genetic and environmental conditions.

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Disease (Dis-ease): Failure of the adaptive mechanism of an organism to counteract the stimuli and stresses to which it is exposed, <u>resulting</u> in abnormal structure and function of one or more parts of the body.

➢ A disorder of structure or function in a human, animal, or plant, especially one that produces specific symptoms or that affects a specific location and is not simply a direct result of physical injury.

➢*Synonyms:* illness, sickness, ill health;

➢It characterized by an identifiable group of signs or symptoms.

➢It can be measured.

Communicable disease: is an infectious disease that can be transferred from an infected person to another individual. **or**

Examples of these include: Measles , tuberculosis, Covid-19, cholera, Malaria, etc.

Non-communicable disease is a disease which is not infectious.

A non-communicable disease is an illness that is caused by something other than a pathogen. It might result from:

➢ hereditary factors,

➢ lifestyle related factors, i.e: unhealthy diet, smoking, or

➢ environmental factors.

They are also called chronic diseases , i.e. hypertension, diabetes, coronary heart diseases, depression and cancer.

Non-communicable disease

- They are the leading cause of death and disability globally.

- Multiple causes or risk factors.

- Long period of onset.

- Possibility of secondary prevention.

Leading cause of death:

- Tobacco related diseases

- Unhealthy diet

- Physical inactivity

- Infections

- Chemicals and toxic agents

- Road Traffic Accidents (RTA)

- Drug abuse(addiction)

Accidents : Burn , Drowning, Falls, occupational accidents

Public Health : is the science of protecting and improving the health of communities through education, promotion of healthy lifestyles, and research for disease and injury prevention.

- Public health professionals analyze the effect on health of genetics, personal behaviors and the environment in order to develop programs that protect the health of your family and community.

- Overall, public health is concerned with protecting the health of entire populations.

- These populations can be as small as a local neighborhood, or as big as an entire country.

- **Population:** A group of individuals or items that share one or more characteristics from which data can be gathered and analyzed.

- Population, in human biology, the whole number of inhabitants occupying an area (such as a country or the world) and continually being modified by :

  - increases (births and immigrations) and

  - losses (deaths and emigrations).

Lifestyle factors:

❖ The way in which a person lives, way of living, i.e.; the habits, attitudes.

❖ A way of living of individuals, families , and societies, which they manifest in coping with their environments on a day-to-day basis.

❖ Lifestyle is a combined of motivations, needs, and wants and is influenced by factors such as culture, family, and social class.

❖ Life tyle factors shape the health of people:

▪ healthy lifestyle

▪ unhealthy lifestyle

HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

Healthy Lifestyle Factors:
They are factors which affect health in a positive way; i.e. healthy diet, physical activity and exercise, adequate sleep, work.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?
A healthy lifestyle is important for:
- ❑ reducing the incidence and impact of health problems,
- ❑ Enhance recovery,
- ❑ coping with life stressors,
- ❑ improving quality of life.
- ❑ play a part in how healthy we are.

All will affect our health, not only in terms of life expectancy, but how long we can expect to live without experiencing chronic disease.

Unhealthy Lifestyle Factors:

These are many factors contributing to the damaging of health or affect health negatively.

- ❑ Lack of Exercise
- ❑ sedentary life
- ❑ Stress
- ❑ Unhealthy diet
- ❑ Smoking
- ❑ Drinking alcohol
- ❑ poor sleep
- ❑ poor hygiene and lack of cleanness

Unhealthy lifestyle factors contribute to the occurrence of many chronic diseases (non-communicable diseases) i.e.

➢ hypertension
➢ diabetes,
➢ Coronary heart diseases
➢ Obesity
➢ Cancer

Most of these diseases are preventable by modifying or changing the lifestyle factors or behaviors , with the result of increasing life expectancy.

Life expectancy: is the expected number of years of life remaining at a given age based on the year of their birth , or their current age.

There are great variations in life expectancy between different parts of the world, mostly caused by differences in :

➤ Gender ; females have higher LE than males
➤ public health services
➤ medical care
➤ Lifestyle factors or behavior
➤ Culture
➤ Education
➤ Socioeconomic status
➤ standard of living
➤ Emerging diseases; AIDS, cancer

Life expectancy is one of the factors in measuring the Human Development Index , and country development; in regard to:

❑ health and medical services,

❑ Education

❑ Socioeconomic status

❑ physical quality of life

Life span

Maximum life span, the maximum lifespan observed in a group, the length of life, the length of period an individual lives.

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Fertility indicators

Crude birth rate: The total live births in a population in a specified community or area over a specified period of time. The birth rate is often expressed as the number of live births per 1,000 of the population per year.

Fertility rate:
the ratio of live births in an area to the population of that area; expressed per 1000 population per year

General fertility rate: number of live births per 1000 women between the ages of 15 and 44 years.

Marital fertility rate: Number of live births to married women per 1,000 married women ages 15-44 or 15-49 in a given year

Mortality rate

Crude death rate is the number of all deaths (at all age groups, both sexes and due to all causes)per 1,000 of the population per year.

Maternal mortality rate: the death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, irrespective of the duration and site of the pregnancy, from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management .

Infant mortality rate: is the number of deaths of babies under one year of age per 1,000 live births rate in a given region, therefore, is the total number of children dying under one year of age divided by the total number of live births during the year, then all multiplied by 1,000.

Family planning services : educational, comprehensive medical or social activities which enable individuals to determine freely the number and spacing of their children and to select the means by which this may be achieved.

Dependency ratio: is an age-population ratio of those typically not in the labor force (Economic dependents) and those typically in the labor force (the *productive* part). It is used to measure the pressure on productive population

Economic dependents: are defined as those under 15 (children who are in full time education and therefore unable to work) and those over 65 (those who have the option of being retired).

Global burden of disease (**GBD**) is a comprehensive regional and global assessment of mortality and disability from diseases , injuries and risk factors.
It provide a full picture of which diseases, injuries and risk factors contribute the most to poor health in a specific population, including identification of the most important health problems and whether they are getting better or worse over time.

Demography is the statistical study of living populations and sub-populations.
It is, one that changes over time or space . It encompasses the study of the size, structure, and distribution of these populations, and the changes in them in response to birth, migration, aging and death.
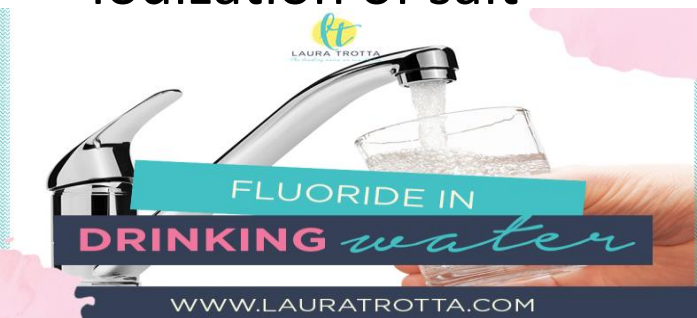
Health Policy

HP are decisions, plans, and actions that are undertaken to achieve specific **health** care goals within a society.

An explicit **health policy** can achieve several things: it defines a vision for the future which in turn helps to establish targets and points of reference for the short and medium term.

i.e. :

✓ vaccination policy,
✓ tobacco control policy
✓ breastfeeding promotion policy.
✓ Seatbelt policy
✓ Fluoridation of drinking water.
✓ Iodization of salt

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The aims or goals of health policies include:

1. Disease prevention

2. Health promotion

3. Modifying health by enforcing health-related behaviors.

4. Trying to modify biologic processes related to diseases by early detection and treatment of diseases through improved access to high-quality medical care .

Major improvements in the health cannot be achieved without attention to the root causes of ill health and to the policies and programs that affect them.

Aims or objectives of studying health policy:

1. Describe the health status and demography of the population, including the incidence and prevalence of disease, as well as the mortality rates and life expectancy.

2. Describe the organization of the healthcare system.

3. Have an idea about planning of healthcare services.

4. Have some views on important health problems of global importance.

5. Know some important health policies and its role in the improvement of population health.

6. Able to discuss the need to develop new health policies according to the need of the population.

7. Describe the role of decision makers in the formation and implementation of health policy.

 Associate Professor Dr Eman A. Al-Kamil 10/15/2023

Thank you

Associate Professor Dr Eman A. Al-Kamil