

PREFACE

Population health describes a population-based approach to population-oriented health issues, based on an examination of interactions among multiple determinants of health over the population's life course with the aim of developing affordable, effective, and replicable outcomes. Further, a population health approach encompasses patterns of health determinants, the measurement of resultant health outcomes, and those outcomes' distribution in the population, as well as the policies that influence health determinants (Kindig and Stoddart 2003). Thus, population health requires an effective integration of the public health and healthcare systems.

A passage from *Toward a Healthy Future: Second Report on the Health of Canadians*, by the Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Advisory Committee on Population Health (1999), describes the intersection of the public health and healthcare systems and, I would argue, highlights the need for further integration of these systems:

Why is Jason in the hospital?

Because he has a bad infection in his leg.

But why does he have an infection?

Because he has a cut on his leg and it got infected.

But why does he have a cut on his leg?

Because he was playing in the junk yard next to his apartment building and there was some sharp, jagged steel there that he fell on.

But why was he playing in a junk yard?

Because his neighborhood is kind of run down. A lot of kids play there and there is no one to supervise them.

But why does he live in that neighborhood?

Because his parents can't afford a nicer place to live.

But why can't his parents afford a nicer place to live?

Because his Dad is unemployed and his Mom is sick.

But why is his Dad unemployed?

Because he doesn't have much education and he can't find a job.

But why . . . ?

The health of populations is complex, and multiple determinants—both those within our control and those not within our control—have a powerful impact. The interventions implemented to improve health must involve multiple stakeholders, and resources must be affordable, available, and effective to address the inequities in the community. If an intervention to address health inequality is not effective at a reasonable cost, then the intervention will be out of reach for many populations to consider. Furthermore, the metrics for monitoring a population's health outcomes differ from the metrics that would be used to measure an individual person's health outcomes.

A population health approach involves a new way of delivering healthcare to populations. In our reformed healthcare system, this “new way of doing business” requires that healthcare providers be reimbursed for keeping their patients healthy as opposed to being compensated for the volume of sick patients treated. Thus, when taking this approach, we must consider the role of health determinants in the population, the associated health outcomes, and the way we measure those outcomes. The principles and skills that administrators and practitioners need as they monitor, assess, and manage the health of populations in our newly reformed healthcare system are described in the three sections of this textbook.

Population Health: Principles and Applications for Management examines, in great detail, topics that are pertinent to the education and practice of public health and healthcare management in today's dynamic environment. Representative topics include core functions of public health, public health system organization, the basic science of public health, how to assess the health of communities, the role of managerial epidemiology, ways of improving the health of populations, and the contribution of data to this process, as well as the management of the health of diverse populations.

In addition, the chapters of *Population Health* use real case studies to educate today's students about the unique challenges and innovative approaches to promoting the health of populations. The case studies highlight examples of public health and healthcare practice that occurred in different situations, such as the international Ebola outbreak, a nationwide

foodborne illness, and a local investigation of a pediatric fatality related to lead poisoning. Educational methodologies complement the case studies to impart the knowledge and skills required of today's healthcare manager and public health professional, presenting a roadmap for a population health approach.

This book is a detailed resource that presents evidence-based approaches useful to instructors and students as they learn how to promote health, prevent disease, and navigate the public health and healthcare challenges of an ever-changing environment. The lessons and topic areas within the text are timeless and offer a framework that can be expanded upon by instructors based on their own experiences. Although public health and healthcare crises can and will change over time, the key concepts and lessons provided within this book are essential to our efforts to improve the health of populations.

REFERENCES

Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Advisory Committee on Population Health. 1999. *Toward a Healthy Future: Second Report on the Health of Canadians*. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada.

Kindig, D., and G. Stoddart, G. 2003. "What Is Population Health?" *American Journal of Public Health* 93 (3), 380–83.

INSTRUCTOR RESOURCES

This book's Instructor Resources include a test bank; presentation PowerPoint slides; answer guides to the book's discussion questions, exercises, and assignments; and resource lists.

For the most up-to-date information about this book and its Instructor Resources, go to ache.org/HAP and browse for the book's title or author name.

This book's Instructor Resources are available to instructors who adopt this book for use in their course. For access information, please e-mail hapbooks@ache.org.