PUBLIC HEALTH

Local and Global Perspectives

Third edition

Public Health: Local and Global Perspectives presents a comprehensive introduction to public health issues and concepts in the Australian and international contexts. It provides students with fundamental knowledge of the public health field, including frameworks, theories, key organisations and contemporary issues.

The third edition features a new chapter on the public health workforce and the importance of advocacy in the profession and a thorough update that includes current research and case studies. Discussion of the COVID-19 pandemic and other contemporary public health issues offers students the opportunity to apply theory to familiar examples. Each chapter contextualises key concepts with spotlights and vignettes, reflective questions, tutorial exercises and suggestions for further reading.

Written by an expert team of public health professionals, Public Health is an essential resource for students.

Pranee Liamputtong is a medical anthropologist and Professor of Behaviour Sciences at the College of Health Sciences, VinUniversity, Vietnam.
Cambridge University Press acknowledges the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation. We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which our company is located and where we conduct our business. We pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past and present. Cambridge University Press is committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships with the land, waters and seas, and their rich contribution to society.
PUBLIC HEALTH

Local and Global Perspectives

Third edition

EDITED BY
Pranee Liamputtong
In loving memory of my youngest daughter

Emma Inturatana Rice

who will forever be in my heart
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Preface

What is public health? The answer to this question can differ, depending on who provides the answer. One thing that many public health writers tend to agree on is that public health is both a science and an art, and in combination can be used to protect and promote the health of the public (Lin et al., 2014; White et al., 2014). Charles-Edward Amory Winslow, one of the leading figures in the history of public health, stated in 1920 that public health could not be achieved solely through the application of pure science. He saw public health as both the science and art that public health practitioners adopt for the prevention of disease and illness, and for the promotion of health to prolong the life of members of the public. The ‘science’ that Winslow referred to includes the research, biological, technical and medical knowledge utilised in public health practice. The ‘art’ is the translation of scientific knowledge into practice in different settings, which can vary according to the situation, circumstances and needs of the people (Lin et al., 2014). This argument is evident in many chapters in this book, which also makes clear that public health deals with health issues of the public as well as with the social, cultural, economic and political issues that influence the health of people. Chapters in the first and second parts of this book point to these issues. More concrete discussions and examples are illustrated in the last part of the book, where chapters discuss public health issues as they affect different groups and communities.

Many changes have occurred in public health over time, including environmental change and social, economic and political developments. For example, human rights and social justice have become central concerns in public health worldwide, yet not many undergraduate texts in public health discuss such important matters. Similarly, the health of some vulnerable groups, including children, adolescents, people living with disability, refugees, migrants, Indigenous peoples and rural people, has been largely neglected in public health texts. These population groups have unique health-related issues that public health practitioners must understand so that sensitive health care can be provided to meet their needs.

The book includes perspectives on public health from both local and global perspectives. Thus, readers will learn about public health issues within local settings as well as about important issues that are occurring globally. The book provides a comprehensive understanding of public health and covers relevant theoretical frameworks, key concepts in public health, the health of special groups and populations, research and policy. The book’s authors are from across Australia: public health researchers as well as teachers in public health programs in different Australian universities. All authors are expert in their fields, and their chapters contain information from their own empirical research as well as reviews of literature from local and global perspectives.

The scope of the text is limited to public health as relevant to undergraduate and professional contexts. Although the book is primarily designed for undergraduate students in the public health discipline, it will also be useful for undergraduate students in other disciplines, including nursing, medicine and health social sciences.
Although public health in Australia is the setting, the book also includes public health relevant to other countries and from a global perspective. This provides readers with a comprehensive understanding of public health issues that affect people around the globe. It will help to expand their understanding of public health beyond the Australian context. The text also includes discussion of research methodology and evidence-based practice in public health.

This third edition comprises four parts and 22 chapters. Part one deals with historical and theoretical perspectives. Determinants of health are covered in Part two. Public health and research are discussed in Part three, and public health issues and special populations are covered in Part four.

In bringing this book to life, I owe my gratitude to many people. Like any other publication, this book could not have been possible without assistance from others. First, I wish to express my gratitude to Lucy Russell of Cambridge University Press, who believed in the value of the book and contracted me to edit the third edition. I also thank Jodie Fitzsimmons, who assisted me in bringing this book to the final form. Thank you for your great input into its production. Most importantly, I wish to express my sincere thanks to all the contributors who helped to make this book possible. Most of you worked so hard to meet our timetable and endured our endless emails requesting chapters from you. I hope that this journey has been a positive one for all of you.

This book is dedicated to my parents, who raised their children amidst poverty in Thailand. They believed that only education would improve the lives of their children, and hence worked hard to send us to school. I have made my career thus far because of their beliefs and the opportunities that they both provided for me. I thank them profoundly. I also dedicate this book to my youngest daughter, Emma, who physically left us too soon. You will forever stay in my heart.

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July 2021

REFERENCES


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