

# Public Health

## LOCAL & GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Second edition

*Public Health: Local and Global Perspectives* provides students with a comprehensive overview of Australian and international public health issues and contexts. It introduces the discipline of public health and aims to deepen students' understanding of the determinants of health, historical and theoretical perspectives of public health, current health research and evidence-based practice.

This fully revised and expanded edition includes new chapters on public health ethics, individual decision-making in public health, planning and evaluation, and public health approaches to drug use. Each chapter features a strong pedagogical foundation, including learning objectives, key terms, illustrative case studies, tutorial exercises, further reading and comprehensive summaries that equip students with a deeper understanding of key concepts.

Written by an accomplished author team led by Pranee Liamputtong, *Public Health* remains an essential learning resource.

**Pranee Liamputtong** is a medical anthropologist and Professor of Public Health in the School of Science and Health at Western Sydney University.

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LOCAL & GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Second edition

Edited by

Pranee Liamputtong



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In memory of my late father:  
**Saeng Liangputtong**

To my mother:  
**Yindee Liangputtong**

To my two daughters:  
**Zoe Sanipreeya Rice and Emma Inturatana Rice**

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# Preface

What is public health? The answer to this can be different depending on who provides the answer. However, one thing that many public health writers tend to agree on is that public health is both a science and an art, combined to protect and promote the health of the public (Lin, Smith & Fawkes, 2014; White, Stallones & Last, 2014). Charles-Edward Amory Winslow, one of the leading figures in the history of public health, stated clearly 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 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 be varied according to the situations, 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 not only with health issues of the public but also with the social, cultural, economic and political issues that influence the health of people. Chapters in the first and second parts pointed 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 of people.

Many changes have occurred in public health, including the effects of 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, such as children, adolescents, people living with disabilities, 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 need to 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: not only public health researchers but also 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 focus, the book also includes public health relevant to other countries and from a global context. This will provide readers with a comprehensive understanding of public health issues that affect people around the globe. It will 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 second edition comprises four parts and 21 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 Olivia Tolich of Cambridge University Press, who believed in the value of this book and contracted me to edit the second edition. Thank you for your great input into the production of this book. 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 getting 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 two daughters, who have been an important part of my life, and thank them for understanding the busy life of their mother.

**Pranee Liamputtong**  
*Sydney, November 2018*

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# Acknowledgements

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