

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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Second edition

Edited by

Pranee Liamputtong



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In memory of my late father:
Saeng Liamputtong

To my mother:
Yindee Liamputtong

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

Contents

Preface	xv
About the authors	xvii
Acknowledgements	xxii
1 Public health: An introduction to local and global contexts	1
Pranee Liamputtong	
Introduction	3
What is public health?	3
Public health in the Australian context	6
Public health: Global concerns	8
Social model of health and the new public health	11
Health inequality and social justice	13
Summary	16
Tutorial exercises	16
Further reading	17
References	17
Part 1 Historical and theoretical perspectives	23
2 Public health: Historical and contemporary principles and practices	25
Rebecca E. Olson	
Introduction	27
Ancient to medieval Europe: Sports, swamps and citizens	27
Modern European history part one: Statistics, socialism and science	29
Modern European history part two: Economics and excretory ducts	32
Early Antipodean health	33
The Antipodean public health story: 'Old public health'	35
The Antipodean public health story: 'New public health'	37
Summary	39
Tutorial exercises	40
Further reading	40
References	40

3 Health promotion principles and practice: Addressing complex public health issues using the Ottawa Charter	43
Bernadette Sebar, Kirsty Morgan and Jessica Lee	
Introduction	45
Building healthy public policy	46
Creating supportive environments	48
Strengthening community action	49
Developing personal skills	51
Re-orienting health services	53
Summary	56
Tutorial exercises	56
Further reading	57
References	57
4 Primary health care and community health	60
Irene Blackberry	
Introduction	62
Definition and concept of PHC and community health	62
Understanding the context of PHC and community health within the healthcare system in Australia	65
Effective models of care within PHC	71
Challenges and future directions in PHC	74
Summary	79
Tutorial exercises	79
Further reading	79
References	80
5 Public health ethics	84
Jane Williams and Stacy Carter	
Introduction	86
What is public health ethics?	86
Consequentialist approaches to public health	87
Liberty and paternalism: The role of the state in public health	89
Justice	92
Equality and equity	93
Putting it all together: Can public health ethics frameworks help?	95
Summary	97
Tutorial exercises	98
Further reading	98
References	100

Part 2	Determinants of health	103
6	Social determinants of health	105
	John Oldroyd	
	Introduction	107
	Where is health created?	108
	Health inequalities and inequities	109
	Social justice	111
	The social gradient in health	112
	Key social determinants of public health: <i>The Solid Facts</i>	114
	Summary	119
	Tutorial exercises	119
	Further reading	120
	References	120
7	Behavioural, nutritional and environmental determinants and public health	124
	Jonathan Hallett, Gemma Crawford, Christina Pollard and Toni Hannelly	
	Introduction	126
	Behavioural determinants of health	128
	Nutritional determinants of health	130
	Environmental determinants of health	133
	Summary	136
	Tutorial exercises	136
	Further reading	137
	References	137
8	Individual decision-making in public health	141
	John Bidewell	
	Introduction	143
	Social and individual determinants of health	143
	Perceptions, cognition, affect and behaviour	144
	Theories of individual behaviour	145
	Health as chosen or determined	152
	Summary	154
	Tutorial exercises	154
	Further reading	155
	References	156
9	Political determinants of public health	160
	Marguerite C. Sendall	
	Introduction	162
	Government's role in health	163
	Australia's healthcare system	164

The policy environment	166
Evidence for policy	168
Ethical advocacy	170
Summary	173
Tutorial exercises	174
Further reading	174
References	174
10 Human rights, social justice and public health	178
Ann Taket	
Introduction	180
What are human rights?	180
Why are human rights important to public health practitioners?	184
Holding governments to account	186
Human rights and empowerment	189
Summary	191
Tutorial exercises	191
Further reading	192
References	193
Part 3 Public health and research	197
11 Qualitative research methodology and evidence-based practice in public health	199
Pranee Liamputtong	
Introduction	201
Qualitative inquiry	201
The nature of qualitative research	202
Why qualitative research in public health?	205
Evidence-based public health and qualitative research	207
Summary	211
Tutorial exercises	211
Further reading	212
References	213
12 Assessing the health of populations: Epidemiology in public health	217
Patricia Lee	
Introduction	219
Highlights of the definition of epidemiology	219
Frequency of disease occurrence	221
Descriptive epidemiology: Time, personal and place characteristics	224
Epidemiological study designs	227
Measures of association	234

Summary	238
Tutorial exercises	239
Further reading	239
References	239
13 Public health: Planning and evaluation	241
Stuart Wark	
Introduction	243
Why plan? Development of a public health intervention	243
What is evaluation?	252
Summary	257
Tutorial exercises	257
Further reading	258
References	258
Part 4 Public health issues and special populations	261
14 Health of children: The right to thrive	263
Lisa Gibbs, Elise Davis and Simon Crouch	
Introduction	265
Prevention of obesity in childhood	266
Child oral health	268
Children in same-sex parent families	270
Children and mental health	273
Summary	275
Tutorial exercises	276
Further reading	276
References	276
15 Promoting adolescent wellbeing: Health concerns, help-seeking and models of public health	281
Jessica Heerde and Sheryl Hemphill	
Introduction	283
Internalising and externalising problems	283
Help-seeking behaviour	286
Homelessness	288
Substance use	290
Bullying and cyberbullying perpetration and victimisation	292
Summary	295
Tutorial exercises	296
Further reading	296
References	297

16 Healthy ageing	300
Elizabeth Cyarto and Frances Batchelor	
Introduction	302
What is healthy ageing?	302
The health of older people	308
Strategies to promote healthy ageing	311
Summary	314
Tutorial exercises	315
Further reading	315
References	315
17 The health inequalities of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities: Strategies for change	318
Teresa Iacono and Christine Bigby	
Introduction	320
The effects of health inequalities	320
Reasons for health inequalities	322
Barriers to care	325
Creating a responsive healthcare system	327
Summary	330
Tutorial exercises	330
Further reading	331
References	331
18 The health of indigenous peoples	336
Sharon Chirgwin and Heather D'Antoine	
Introduction	338
Factors influencing the health of indigenous peoples of the world	338
The determinants of health in indigenous peoples	340
The complexities of indigenous health in today's world	343
A snapshot of three programs and strategies addressing the complexities of indigenous health	346
Summary	348
Tutorial exercises	348
Further reading	349
References	349
19 Health of migrants and refugees	352
Celia McMichael	
Introduction	354
Social determinants of migrant health	354
Contemporary migration flows	356
Health challenges and opportunities across stages of migration	358
Policy and practice responses	364

Summary	366
Tutorial exercises	366
Further reading	367
References	367
20 The health of rural peoples	371
Alan Crouch, Lisa Bourke and David Pierce	
Introduction	373
A framework of rural health	375
Summary	385
Tutorial exercises	386
Further reading	386
References	387
21 Drug use in Australia: A public health approach	391
Andrew Smirnov and Jake Najman	
Introduction	393
Types of drugs	393
The drug-related burden of disease	396
Alcohol and illicit drugs – pleasure and prejudice	401
Why do people use drugs? What types of drugs do they use?	403
Drug policies: A way forward	405
Summary	411
Tutorial exercises	411
Further reading	412
References	412
Index	419

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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