Key concepts and approaches

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New Ways of thinking about the Social Determinants of Health
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Outline of presentation

Part 1: Key Concepts
1. Graffiti wall exercise
2. Clarifying key concepts and terminology
3. Plenary discussion

Part 2: Conceptual Frameworks
1. WHO framework
2. Jigsaw

Part 3: Role of the Health System
Activity 1:
1. What creates health?
2. What creates health inequity?

Draw a picture, give 3 ideas of action that can be taken.

Activity 2:
1. Is it your responsibility to address the social determinants as part of your work:
   • Agree / disagree / not sure
   • Why?
   • Who are the other actors?
Clarifying key concepts

What we mean by:

• Differentials/Inequality
• Equity
• Vulnerability
• Role of values
Social determinants & health: one explanation

Source: Dahlgren and Whitehead (1991), Figure 1
Social determinants & health:

Figure 1.1: A framework of socioeconomic determinants of health

UPSTREAM (Macro-level) factors
- Government
  - Policies
    - Economic
    - Welfare
    - Health
    - Housing
    - Transport
    - Taxation
- Global forces
  - Policies
    - Economic
    - Welfare
    - Health
    - Housing
    - Transport
    - Taxation
- Determinants of Health (social, physical, economic, environmental)
  - Education
  - Employment
  - Occupation
  - Working conditions
  - Income
  - Housing & Area of Residence
- Culture (Belief and meaning systems, attitudes, values, knowledge, norms)

MIDSTREAM (Intermediate-level) factors
- Health care system
  - Access
  - Availability
  - Affordability
  - Utilisation
- Physiological systems
  - Endocrine
  - Immune
- Health reactions
  - Mortality
  - Morbidity
  - Life expectancy
  - Quality of life

Psychosocial factors
- Demand / strain
  - Control
  - Stress
  - Networks
- Perceptions
  - Expectations
  - Depression
- Self-esteem
  - Isolation
  - Anger
- Hostility
  - Attachment
  - Coping
- Social support

Health behaviours
- Diet / nutrition
- Smoking
- Alcohol
- Physical activity
- Self-harm / Addictive behaviours
- Preventative health care use

Culture
- Priority groups
  - Low income
  - Low education
  - Single parents
  - Indigenous
  - Unemployed
  - Ethnic groups
  - Disabled
  - Homeless
- Life-course stages
  - Infants
  - Children
  - Adolescents
  - Working-aged adults
  - Retired / elderly
- Settings & contexts
  - Work / employment
  - Community
  - Home
  - Education (school, vocational, tertiary)
  - Other community settings (clubs, church, recreation, voluntary organisations)

UNSW Australia
Centre for Primary Health Care and Equity
Social determinants & health: explanation (3)

Equity in health

Equity in health implies that ideally everyone should have a fair opportunity to attain their full health potential and that no one should be disadvantaged from achieving this potential if it can be avoided.

(Whitehead, 1990; 9)
Health equity

• Absence of avoidable, unfair, or remediable differences among groups of people, whether those groups are defined socially, economically, demographically or geographically.

• Implies that ideally everyone should have a fair opportunity to attain their full health potential and, more pragmatically, that no one should be disadvantaged from achieving this potential.

• Health equity is the absence of health inequalities.

(European Commission, 2009)
Aim of policy for equity in health

… to reduce or eliminate those health differences which result from factors which are considered to be both avoidable and unfair.

(Whitehead, 1990; 9)
Differentials/Inequality and Equity

- Equality/Inequality – descriptive –
  - Differences
  - Differentials
    That may or may not be due to factors that are avoidable & unfair

- Equity/Inequity – involves analysis and a decision about whether the differences are due to factors that are avoidable & unfair, e.g. gender norms and socioeconomic status / position
Equity in practice: the role of values and context

Lead exercise
Action on social determinants & equity

• Action to tackle social determinants ≠
  – Action to improve health equity or decrease health inequities
  – Action to tackle the social determinants of health inequities

• Action on social determinants = increasing public transport to increase physical activity in the population generally
Clusters

Structural determinants of health inequity
• Context
• Socio-economic position

Intermediate Social Determinants of health
• Material, psychological and behavioural factors
• Access to social resources, and services including health system

Outcomes
• Reduce disadvantage
• Close the gap
• Address the gradient
Approaches to improving equity

1. **Remedying health disadvantage**
   - To improve the health of a specific population such as people living in poverty, Indigenous people, migrants, women or men, different ethnic groups, unemployed etc

2. **Gaps – reducing gaps between groups**
   - To reduce the difference in the health outcome(s) between two groups in the population, e.g. between those in the highest socioeconomic quintile and those in the lowest socioeconomic quintile

3. **Gradient – across the population**
   - To reduce the difference in the health outcome(s) between more than two groups in the population, e.g. differences between socioeconomic quintiles
Remedying health disadvantage: smoking

Decreasing smoking rates of people in the lowest socioeconomic quintile without reference to other socioeconomic quintiles or the rate of change in order to remedy (existing) health disadvantage. Eg. targeted smoking cessation services.

Source: Australia’s Health 2012. In Brief. (AIHW; p. 26)
Closing the gap: smoking

Decreasing smoking rates of those in the lowest socioeconomic quintile at a faster rate in order to close the gap between the percentage of people smoking in this group and the percentage of people smoking in the highest socioeconomic quintile.

Source: Australia’s Health 2012. In Brief. (AIHW; p. 26)
Decreasing the percentage of people smoking in the lower socioeconomic quintiles at a faster rate than the percentage of people smoking in highest socioeconomic quintile in order to level up across the social gradient.

Source: Australia’s Health 2012. In Brief. (AIHW; p. 26)
Putting the jigsaw together

- What is context?
- What are the intermediate or social determinants of health?
- What outcomes are we hoping to achieve?
- What is the role of the health system?
  - Universal high quality care
  - Proportional universalism
Points of intervention

Exercise:

Putting notes on the framework
Conclusion

- Addressing social determinants of health is different from addressing the social determinants of health inequity.
- Need to be clear what trying to achieve as this will affect the point of entry.
- The health system has an important role and is itself a social determinant of health.
Introduction to Case Study