

PUBH5015 Public Health Principles and Practice Core

Credit points: 6

Semester: 1

Delivery mode: Fortnightly lecture/seminars plus on-line activities

Pre-requisites: nil

Co-requisites: nil

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Summary

This unit aims to provide students with an understanding of the principles and practices of public health in the local and global context. It also aims to introduce students to different ways of thinking about both economic and applied policy and about specific problems in environmental health and communicable diseases. Candidates will gain an understanding of the patterns of health in the community and the biological and environmental determinants of health. Within the context of the burden of disease in Australia, case studies in communicable diseases and environmental health, both core functions of a public health system, will be used as a means of modelling ways of thinking about the structures, processes and outcomes of health systems. Students will have the opportunity to apply these core conceptual approaches to a range of current problems based on public health practice.

Aim

This unit aims to provide students with an understanding of the principles and practices of public health in the local and global context. It also aims to introduce students to different ways of thinking about both economic and applied policy and about specific problems in environmental health and communicable diseases.

Learning objectives

After completing this unit, students should be able to:

- Understand the value base of public health
- Define the concept of burden of disease and compare the current burden globally and in Australia.
- Outline key features of the Australian public health system and health care context
- Apply the principles of communicable disease control to specific outbreaks
- Apply the concepts and methodology of health policy and health economic analysis to problems in communicable disease control
- Describe pathways of exposure to environmental health hazards
- Apply the concepts and methodology of health policy and health economic analysis to problems in environmental health
- Understand the principle of opportunity cost and how it might be applied to public health resource allocation through the use of economic evaluation
- Identify and analyse contexts in which health policy decisions are made; how

priorities are formed and issues are framed

- Critique the relationship of policy and practice

Content

- The burden of disease in Australia and globally
- Health systems: core concepts and the Australian experience
- Principles of communicable disease control: theory and application to current problems
- Environmental health hazards: pathways of exposure, risk assessment and the implementation of controls
- The Australian health care system and the Federal/state divide
- Introduction to health economics, markets and market failure, behaviour and incentives
- Public health policy decisions: context, process, practice
- Cost-benefit analysis and the public health impacts of infrastructure

Instructional format

Fortnightly lecture/ seminars

Online activities, for example lectures, quizzes, surveys

Assessment

1. 2 x take home exam - 80%
2. Topic and content quizzes - 20%

Learning materials

Resources/References:

Compulsory text book: Lin V, Smith J, Fawkes S 2007: ***Public Health Practice in Australia: the organized effort***. Sydney: Allen and Unwin

For other readings, please see unit reading list on Web CT