

Overview of Community Health

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1. Definition & Scope

Aspect	Description
Community Health	The collective health status of a defined group of people (geographic area, cultural group, or shared interest) and the actions taken to improve it.
Key Focus Areas	• Disease prevention • Health promotion • Access to care • Social determinants of health (SDOH)
Levels of Intervention	- Primary – Prevent disease before it occurs (vaccinations, health education). - Secondary – Early detection and treatment (screenings, rapid response). - Tertiary – Reduce complications and improve quality of life (rehabilitation, chronic disease management).

2. Core Components

Component	What It Involves	Typical Activities
Epidemiology	Collection & analysis of health data to identify patterns.	Disease surveillance, outbreak investigations, health surveys.
Health Promotion	Empowering individuals & groups to take control of health.	School programs, media campaigns, community workshops.
Disease Prevention	Strategies to stop illness before it starts.	Immunization drives, vector control, safe water & sanitation projects.
Health Services Delivery	Organization of care that meets community needs.	Mobile clinics, community health workers (CHWs), telehealth.
Policy & Advocacy	Shaping laws, regulations, and resource allocation.	Lobbying for smoke-free zones, nutrition labeling, affordable housing.
Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)	Non-medical factors influencing health outcomes.	Income, education, housing, transportation, environment.

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3. Stakeholders & Roles

Stakeholder	Primary Role	Example Contributions
Public Health Agencies	Planning, monitoring, and evaluating community health programs.	CDC, local health departments, WHO.
Healthcare Providers	Direct service delivery, health education, referrals.	Primary care physicians, nurses, pharmacists.
Community Health Workers (CHWs)	Bridge between health system & community; culturally competent outreach.	Home visits, chronic disease coaching.
Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)	Supplement services, advocate for vulnerable groups.	Red Cross, local NGOs focusing on maternal health.
Schools & Educational Institutions	Early health education, nutrition programs, vaccination sites.	School-based health clinics, health curricula.
Businesses & Employers	Workplace health promotion, insurance benefits.	Employee wellness programs, onsite flu clinics.
Residents & Community Leaders	Provide local insight, mobilize participation, sustain initiatives.	Neighborhood associations, faith-based groups.

4. Process of a Community Health Assessment (CHA)

1. Define the Community

- Geographic boundaries, demographic characteristics, cultural context.

2. Gather Data

- **Quantitative:** morbidity/mortality rates, hospital admissions, census data.
- **Qualitative:** focus groups, key informant interviews, community forums.

3. Analyze Findings

- Identify health priorities, risk factors, resource gaps.

4. Develop a Health Improvement Plan

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- Set SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound).
- Choose evidence-based interventions.

5. Implement & Mobilize Resources

- Assign responsibilities, secure funding, engage partners.

6. Monitor & Evaluate

- Use process