

HEALTH PROMOTION AND PREVENTION OF DISEASES. PREVENTING STRATEGIES

PhD Student **Mariana BIRSA**

ABSTRACT

Health concept, defined by World Health Organization, is about a “good physical, psychic and social state“. Health has three big dimensions: biological (or physical), psychological and social.

Health expresses the person’s capacities to adapt at the natural and social environment. Work, as a specific human modality to adapt at the environment, is also the most eloquent criterion to assess the health’s status, putting under condition the biological status and also the social integration.

Public health is the ensemble of knowledge, skills and attitudes oriented toward maintaining and improving population’s health.

The activities for health promoting imply:

- *a unified concept for those who admit the fundamental need to change both the life style and life conditions;*
- *a mediating strategy between individuals and environment, combining the personal choice with social responsibility with the purpose to assure a healthier future;*
- *a new strategy in the domain of health and social services who can be looked, on one hand, as a policy because aim the government’s action line in health domain and, on the other hand, as an approach who favour health because is orientated towards life styles.*

The main programs and sub-programs for health promoting, financed by the state budget and managed by the Public Health Ministry, are:

- *Public health community program*
- *Surveillance and control for transmissible diseases;*
- *Surveillance and control for HIV/AIDS infection;*
- *Surveillance and control in Tuberculosis;*
- *Evaluating health status and risk factors;*
- *Health promoting and education for health;*
- *Hematology and transfusion security.*

The main factor for promoting health is education for health. He concerns in the transmission and assimilation for those information which assure the cognitive base for the decisions regarding health, training some attitudes as base for a behavior in favor of health.

Preventing strategies address maintaining in a good healthy state during all life, aim to establish some measures necessary to change life style thru elimination of risk factors. Changing life style is the first step, important and compulsory, which allowed establishment of the life status and who involve more actions such as: Quit smoking, Fighting against sedentary lifestyles, Obesity management, Nutritional habits, Stress management, Assistance for employee, Education for health.

KEYWORDS: *public health; health promoting ;education; prevention; prophylaxis*

1. Health concept

Health concept, defined by World Health Organization, is about a “**good physical, psychic and social state**”¹, extending the notion sphere from the biological domain to the social domain.

Having the best health status on which is capable the human being is one of the fundamental rights of the human person.

Health has three big dimensions: *biological (or physical), psychological and social.*

- *From biological point of view* health can be defined as a status of an organism untouched by disease, in which all organs, apparatus and systems function in normal way.

- *From psychological point of view* health can be understood as the harmony between the daily behavior and fundamental life values assimilated by person.

This health dimension has four big sub-dimensions:

Emotional – Emotional dimension emphasize the self-consciousness and acceptance of one person’s feelings.

Occupational – Occupational dimension is involved in training for work, in which a person can obtain personal satisfaction and good wealth.

Intellectual – Intellectual dimension encourage creative activities which stimulate mental activity.

Spiritual – Spiritual dimension presume searching for sense and purpose for human existence.

Within the context of health promotion, this is considerate not an abstract state but mostly as a possibility for one person’s achievement, to answer positively to environment stimulation. From this point of view, health is presented as a resource for daily life, not as purpose of life, is a positive conceiving who put the accent on personal and social resources and also on physical capacities.

Health express the person’s capacities to adapt at the natural and social environment. Work, as a specific human modality to adapt at the environment, is also the most eloquent criterion to assess the health’s status, putting under condition the biological status and also the social integration.¹

2. Public health concept

Public health concept evolved in time, fact illustrated by the acceptances reflected in definitions received during time:- in 1950 **Henlon** says – “Public health is the ensemble of knowledge, skills and attitudes oriented toward maintaining and improving population’s health”².

The essential functions of public health are:

1. Preventing, surveillance and checking of transmissible and non-transmissible diseases;
2. Population’s health status monitoring;
3. Health promotion;
4. To ensure the occupational health;
5. Environmental protection;
6. To elaborate regulations and laws for public health domain;

¹ In 1967, WHO declared that health is a status of phisic, mental and social welfare and not – the absence of a disea

7. Public health management;
8. Specific public health services (school health, emergency in case of disaster, laboratory in the domain of public health);
9. Personnel for caring and health for vulnerable populations



Picture 1 – Health promotion sphere

3. Health promoting

The activities for health promoting imply:

- a unified concept for those who admit the fundamental need to change both the life style and life conditions;
- a mediating strategy between individuals and environment, combining the personal choice with social responsibility with the purpose to assure a healthier future;
- a new strategy in the domain of health and social services who can be looked, on one hand, as a policy – because aim the government’s action line in health domain and, on the other hand, as an approach who favour health because is orientated towards life stiles.

Principles of promoting health:

- work with people, not against them;
- is a process who go on within the local community;
- is addressed to causes adjacent to health more than other immediate;¹
- is addressed both people an environment;
- stress the positive dimensions of health;
- contain and should involve all society’s areas, and should appeal to everybody’s participation;
- involve all population;
- has the aim to creating a way “to know how to live” and developing people’s capacities to influence health’s determinant factors and also environment changes to enhance the factors that favors a healthy life stile and elimination of the bad ones facilitating “healthy choices”².

Health problems that are considered as a national priorities are:

- preventing and controlling the transmissible diseases;
- -health’s protection for mothers, children and youth;
- realization of the program for family planning;
- preventing and fighting against diseases who generates 50 % from the potential lost years and also severe incapacity.

¹ John J. Hanlon & George E. Pickett, *Public Health: Administration and Practice* (9th ed. 1990)

² Vlădescu Cristian *Health Services Management*, ed. Expert București. (2002), pp.56

4. Health promoting programs

The main programs and sub-programs for health promoting, financed by the state budget and managed by the Public Health Ministry, are:

✓ **Public health community program;**

The general objectives of this program are: a better information and knowledge regarding public health, enhancing the capacity to answer fast and in a coordinated way at threats against health, promoting health and preventing diseases approaching decisional factors over health, as a part of all politics and activities.

✓ **-Surveillance and control for transmissible diseases;**

Within this program is followed realization of immunization according to the national vaccination calendar, surveillance over main infectious diseases in a view to identify and early diagnose of the danger regarding the start up of plagues and establishing adequate control measures, control over sexually transmitted disease (STI) and surveillance and control for nosocomial infections¹ in sentinel sanitary units.

✓ **-Surveillance and control for HIV/AIDS infection;**

The program has as objectives:

- monitoring for HIV/AIDS infection's evolution;
- reduction of HIV mother-fetus transmission;
- to prolong life thru early track down of HIV/AIDS infection;
- limited transmission thru early track down, inclusion in active surveillance and counselling;
- to introduce surveillance into the second generation during the current monitoring activities for HIV/AIDS infection's evolution. Estimating HIV prevalence in general population and in sub-population at risk.

✓ **Surveillance and control in Tuberculosis;**

The program's objectives:

- providing a rate of detection for the new tuberculosis cases over 70 % controlling the symptomatic and group risks;
- maintaining the stagnation tendency for the growth of tuberculosis areas ascertain in the last years;
- obtaining a therapeutic rate of success in new cases registered with over 82%;
- establishing a national level campaign for information, education and communication;
- evaluate the patient percentage with co-infection HIV/tuberculosis;

✓ **Evaluating health status and risk factors;**

The program's objectives:

- Protecting health and preventing illnesses associated with risk factors from life environment;
- Protecting health and preventing illnesses associated with food risk factors;
- To evaluate health status of the children and youth from collectivities related with life environmental and activities factors;
- Protecting health and preventing illnesses associated with occupational risk.

✓ **Health promoting and education for health;**

This program follows the development of attitudes and behaviors favorable for health thru methods for promoting health and education for health. Identification and early track down of the danger regarding appearance of diseases at nodal ages and to persons with high risk of showing such diseases.

¹ Nosocomial infection is the infection get by patient during at the hospital, for another disease, DMO.ro

✓ **Hematology and transfusion security.**

The program's objectives are to assure maximal transfusion security and attaining blood self-sufficiency and products from blood¹.

5. Education for health

The main factor for promoting health is education for health. Education for health is the informational- communicational component in health promoting. In this way, education for health and health promoting are strongly connected.

The objectives of education for health are:

- positive behavioral influences as base for health;
- developing education for health programs in a participatory way in community, in key places and in target key groups;
- encouragement for individuals, groups and communities to develop positive attitudes toward health – life practices link by health and a high level of self-esteem – which are essential for health improving.

Basically, education for health aim concerns the transmission and assimilation for those information which assure the cognitive base for the decisions regarding health, training some attitudes as base for a behavior in favour of health.

6. Preventing strategies

Preventing strategies address maintaining in a good healthy state during all life, aim to establish some measures necessary to change life style thru elimination of risk factors². Changing life style is the first step, important and compulsory, which allowed establishment of the life status and who involve more actions such as:

1. Quit smoking

Smoking is considered to be the habit of lifestyle who has the bigger impact over health

2. Fighting against sedentary lifestyles

To exercise present obvious benefits for health, decreasing risks for different diseases, improving physical condition, moral, attitude and productivity.

3. Obesity management

In conditions that over half of American population is overweight or obesity, and this situation present obvious risk for health, this type of programs could have maximum impact.

4. Nutritional habits

Moving to nutritional habits who don't endangered person's health status, based on balance and moderate consumption in fat, sweets and salt. Also, consuming of fruits, vegetables and whole grain – proved to be benefic.

5. Stress management

Stress has a big part in heart diseases evolution, asthma, dermatological problems, gastrointestinal problems and others, also influencing social attitude and productivity.

6. Assistance for employee

Programs to support the employee who has problems with alcohol consuming, depression and other psychological problems, will contribute to welfare of employee and

¹ Government Decision no. 1718/2008 regarding approval of national health programs.

² Vlădescu Cristian *Health Services Management*, ed. Expert București. (2002), pp.83

finally, to the organization. Taking in consideration that our country is in the second place regarding debilitating diseases, who will go losing working capacities, after heart diseases, are mental diseases, the benefit of such a program could be considerable. Studies made in other countries show a favourable raport between costs and benefit.

7. Other programs: shots against flu, specific problems for women health

This are the main viable options who deserved to be put in practice, lowering the incidence of intercurrent flu diseases or the women pathology.

8. Education for health

Process for education for health is the most used preventing form of strategy. So we can enumerate the following objectives:

- sustaining the actuality of the concept of prophylaxis and environment;
- proving the benefits and limitations for different preventing strategies;
- describing actions and preventing services al primary level regarding the main health problems.

Conclusions

For achieving the objectives, health programs must be address to a specific population category, who can gain maximum benefit from their results.

Sanitary system should be structured on regionalization principles so that patients to be as closer that can be to the medical services suppliers.

Powerful involvement for the family doctor in promotion of the health improving programs promotion and preventing diseases, so that doctors can be also beneficiary – not only the patients.

Access for all population to medical care at european standards.

Realization of a good communication between doctors and patients to create the necessary trust and obtaining efficiency in health promoting programs.

The reform will have success when the sick person will no longer buy his one medicine when will be on the hospital be and will be proper medicated and attended.

The main direction for action must be prophylaxis, because preventing diseases always cost less than the treatment.

References

1. John J. Hanlon & George E. Pickett, *Public Health: Administration and Practice* (9th ed. 1990)
2. Government Decision no. 1718/2008 regarding approval of national health programs
3. Vlădescu Cristian *Health Services Management*, ed. Expert București. (2002)