



Global Health: No Borders, Just Health Care

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Achieving marked health and improving the quality of life is the area of major concern for the healthcare bodies and workers all over the world. “No man is an island”. We live in a community and are inter-related. So is health. Global community health is an amalgamation of health care services, economies and social conditions of the communities all over the globe in a unison. Health is not only restricted within the four walls of a clinic or a hospital, but involves every individual of a population outside those walls and is community-oriented. It deals with solving health related issues and achieving better health goals, by inter-connecting healthcare systems globally with the main focus at achieving health for all, and not for one!

KEYWORDS: Health, Economies, Social Conditions, Health For All

INTRODUCTION

Global community health deals with the health of community by fostering globalization worldwide. It involves each one of us as an individual and as communities that increasingly interact with each other and help in reducing the boundaries by interconnecting different people, nations and economies. It helps in contributing to health improvement by diffusion of knowledge regarding health, low cost health technology and human rights. It involves various stakeholders, advocates, implementers, policy makers, healthcare providers, charitable organizations, government agencies and all those who are advancing the agenda for Global Health priorities all over the globe.¹

WHAT ACTUALLY IS GLOBAL HEALTH?

According to Koplan et al 2009, Global Health is a field of study, research and practice that places a priority on achieving equity in health for all people worldwide.^{1,2} Basically, Global Health aims at better health outcomes for populations and communities that are vulnerable. Global Health is also stated as a collaborative transnational research and action for promoting the concept of “health for all” which emphasizes on importance to collaborate.³

WHAT IS “HEALTH FOR ALL”

An equal opportunity to be as healthy as possible is necessary for all the people all over the globe. It requires a collective approach along with health and social justice to reach across sectors, communities and

countries. It ensures that all people in the world have access to good quality services of health, when and where needed, without any financial adversity. The obstacles of poverty and discrimination that continue to adversely affect those who are marginalized and unable to access healthcare should be tackled. As funding and policy decisions are made, the affected populations/communities must play a leading role in selecting and developing the solutions so that global health planning and programming decisions are community-led.

KEY PRINCIPLES OF GLOBAL COMMUNITY HEALTH

1. A focus on public good
2. Belief in a Global perspective
3. An approach that is scientific and interdisciplinary
4. Multi-level interventions
5. Comprehensive frameworks for financing and health policies.

IS GLOBAL HEALTH SAME AS PUBLIC HEALTH AND INTERNATIONAL HEALTH?

Although all of these three terms promotes Health and resolve health related problems, however they vary at different aspects. Global Health Community has its main focus on health issues transcending the national boundaries and to achieve health equity among nations worldwide is its greatest priority. It is an interdisciplinary as well as a multidisciplinary body that embraces prevention in population entwined with



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clinical care of individuals.

Whereas international health is concerned, its main focus lies at resolving health issues outside one's own country which clearly means that its area of extent is binational. It prioritizes helping other nations.⁴

While public health operates nationally i.e. it focuses on specific communities or countries. It prioritizes health equity within a nation or community and mainly embraces prevention programs for populations.

HAS GLOBALISATION HELPED IN HEALTH IMPROVEMENT?

Nations, businesses, communities and people worldwide are becoming more connected and interdependent with the help of increased economic integration and communication exchange, cultural diffusion, and travel.^{5,6} Emphasis was made on the social outlines of global health development. It was believed that much of the improvement in global health during the last half of the twentieth century arose from health technologies and knowledge transfers between developed countries and developing countries.⁷ In past 15 years, rise in global attention to health is seen considerably. The main focus in bilateral and multilateral development aid policies is health concerns which resulted in creation of over 100 global public-private partnerships. It is also said that health should be considered as an investment in economic growth rather than a cost.⁸

GLOBAL HEALTH COUNCIL- THE COLLECTIVE VOICE OF GLOBAL HEALTH COMMUNITY

The Global Health Council is a US-based networking organization in Washington DC. It is a non-profit organization.

It is the world's largest membership alliance devoted to advance priorities of global health by connecting governments, advocates, implementers, stakeholders as well as policy makers, all around the world through increased investment, robust policies and the power of the collective voices. According to their website, the Council "assembles stakeholders around key priorities of global health and actively engages decision makers to influence health policy."

It works in three main areas: policy and advocacy, member engagement, and connections and coordination. It amplifies critical messages of global

health by measuring, aligning & encouraging work of members. It is considered to be the focal point for other global health networks worldwide.

The main priorities of GHC are:

- **Multilateral organizations:** Multilateral organizations are global organizations where multiple parties come together towards a common goal. United Nations, overall, is a multilateral organization which includes other organizations like the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the Global Fund and the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunizations. UNICEF helps children and women all over the world to live happy as well as healthy life. For example, they led the work for the Global Action Plan for the prevention and control of Pneumonia.

- **Global health security:** Global health security has an approach that is multidisciplinary, holistic, and is centered on the safety and security globally. Not only national security ought to be the prime most explanation for security decisions but should also include human rights, dignity, equity and development. To benefit all the people around the world, global health securities should also include low and middle-income countries or communities.

ROLE OF GOVERNMENT & POLICY MAKERS IN GLOBAL COMMUNITY HEALTH

Equity in Global health totally depends on the facilitations and aids from government and policy-makers.⁹ They make far-sighted decisions on how to allocate scarce resources for the most impact. Via an effective policy, the officials of global health can also persuade and encourage the crucial healthcare companies to improve access to the products over the globe, including low or middle-income countries or communities.

INVOLVEMENT OF VARIOUS OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders, that are less often included are celebrities whose popularity and influence is used to promote global health goals. For example, to promote safe childbirth and maternal well-being, Model Christy Turlington Burns stated, "Every Mother Counts".

The other two major group of stakeholders who are also less often involved but helps in building the backbone for delivering global health are Private Companies which provide health commodities such as drugs, vaccines, etc. and the other one is Non-Government

Organizations. It is necessary recognize the commendable role that is played by NGOs in executing health programs. The backbone of the healthcare system in developing countries which include India as well is formed by the NGOs. For examples "Save the Children" and "CARE".¹⁰

MAJOR GLOBAL COMMUNITY HEALTH ISSUES DEALT WITH ARE

- i) Emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases
- ii) Antimicrobial resistance
- iii) Eradication of polio
- iv) Diarrhea, measles and pneumonia in young children
- v) Sexually-transmitted infections in young women
- vi) Tuberculosis
- vii) Malaria
- viii) HIV/AIDS
- ix) Parasitic infections such as hookworm
- x) The increasing number of cases of non-communicable diseases (eg. diabetes)

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON GLOBAL COMMUNITY HEALTH

The COVID-19 pandemic clearly makes us understand that no country acting alone can respond effectively to health threats in a globalized world. COVID-19 has overturned healthcare systems and derailed the non-COVID-19 related treatments. It has left a tremendous impact on global health. Bringing many health systems on their knees, this pandemic had a knock-on impact on the diagnosis and the treatment of other diseases due to social distancing and lockdowns.¹¹ It has continued to exacerbate inequities that previously existed between countries, people, and communities. Frontline health workers globally have shouldered the tremendous load of treating a global pandemic, while simultaneously continuing to provide crucial healthcare services.

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the Director-General of the World Health Organization, stated that "The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the importance of data and science to build back more resilient health systems and equitably accelerate towards the shared global health goals".¹² Also this pandemic period paced up the need of sharing knowledge globally through scientific researches.

DENTISTRY AND GLOBAL COMMUNITY HEALTH

Outcomes of different oral conditions varies enormously in different populations or communities

worldwide. Many low-income, rural, and minority communities still struggle to access dental care.¹³ It is the absolute necessity to reduce the differences between dental research and global health so that oral health gets recognized as a health priority. The indulgence of multi-functional dental health organizations, for example World Dental Federation, the International Association for Dental Research is pivotal to promote dental health globally. If there will be a reduction in the number of untreated dental cases then it will eventually indicate major success in achieving goals of global health.^{13,14} Health services should continue to promote and improve the standard of surveys of oral health that will ensure the timely, accurate, relevant and latest data is compiled and analyzed. A rigid evaluation of substantiation for equitability in averting and handling of dental conditions must be carried out by oral health researcher. Therefore, dental health care should become a more cost-efficient approach in delivering dental care to people.

CONCLUSION

Global health considers the entire human population as a single global community. Hence, it is clear that Health can be improved by preventing, detecting, and responding to public health events worldwide. We all as an individual and as a community must contribute and commit to the goals and objectives of global health, no matter how small the contribution. Therefore, it is our duty too to take initiative in prioritising global community health goals.

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