Better Health in Action

Impact of Health Inequity in Our Communities and World

Takeda | Discovery Education

Contents

BACKGROUND

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health inequity as "systematic differences in the health status of different population groups."[1] These avoidable and unfair differences find their roots in the social determinants of health (SDOH), a complex situation considering the circumstances into which a person is born and lives.[2] The SDOH include economic stability, healthcare access and quality, environment, education access and quality, and social support. The consequences of health inequity can be devastating on communities, populations, and nations. The excessive cost of resulting diseases forces over 1 million people into poverty every year.[3] Life expectancy can vary up to 40 years from one country to another, or even one part of a city to another, and 85% of all premature deaths globally occur in low-income countries.[4] Discover more about health equity and the social determinants of health by visiting betterhealthinaction.com/health-equity.
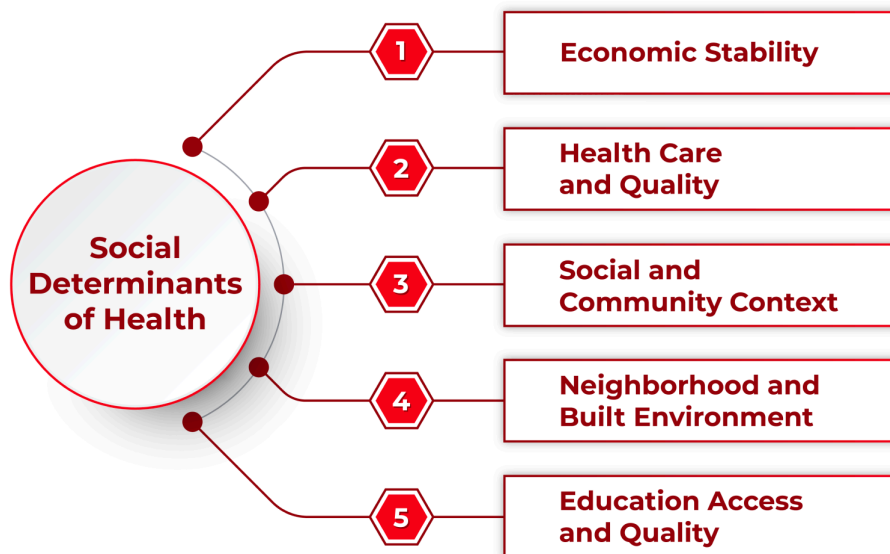
Social Determinants of Health: non-medical factors that influence health outcomes.[1]

MODULE SUMMARY

Do all people have the same access to opportunities in order to achieve health and wellness? Are we all able to be equitably healthy? In this self-paced module, students will learn about health equity, the SDOH, and the impact the world around them has on the health of its citizens. Students will discover that where people are born, grow, live, work, and play all contribute to their health. Students will consider how they can address the social determinants of health within their own communities.

1 https://www.who.int/news-room/facts-in-pictures/detail/health-inequities-and-their-causes
2 https://catalyst.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/CAT.17.0312
3 https://www.path.org/articles/hidden-problem-drives-100-million-people-poverty/
4 https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/themes/topics/sdg-target-3_4-noncommunicable-diseases-and-mental-health

USING THE SELF-PACED MODULE

This section provides strategies for incorporating the self-paced module into instruction and screen-by-screen suggestions for facilitating discussion before, during, and after each module.

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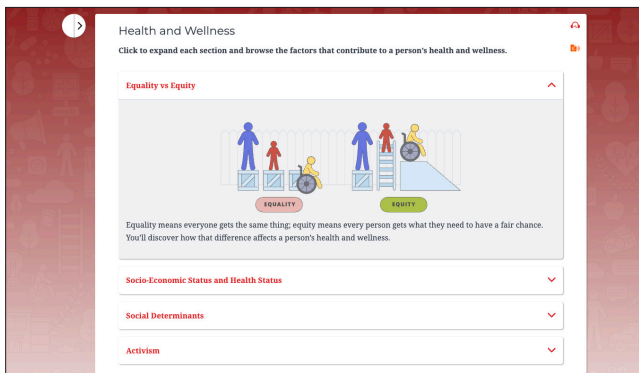
Overview

There are many more circumstances that contribute to whether or not a person can be healthy beyond the condition of their body and mind. In this module, you will explore the many factors that contribute to a person's health and wellness.

Key Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Define health equity.
- Identify social determinants of health.
- Consider actionable steps they can take within their own community to increase equity in health and wellness.

Setting the Stage

Engage students before the module with one or more of the following questions:

- Do you live close to a hospital? How do you define "close?"
- Where does your family shop for groceries?
- Do you have a reliable place to go when you get sick? Do other people in your community?
- Do you think it's important that everyone gets the same access to healthcare? What about education? Explain.
- Is it possible for students like you to cause change that can affect your entire community? How?

Screen-by-Screen Educator Tips

- **Prepare**

  - **Health and Wellness:** The module begins with students exploring the factors that contribute to people's health and wellness. Can they think of an example that highlights the difference between equality and equity?

  - **Your Beliefs About Health and Wellness:** Students are asked to think about their own beliefs about health and wellness—take an informal poll by raised hands about who feels always, sometimes, and never.

  - **Show What You Know:** The pre-test consists of three questions. Students have

one opportunity to answer each question correctly. Feedback is provided for both correct and incorrect answers. If using the module in a classroom setting, consider having students vote on answers or call on different students for each question. The correct answer is visible once an answer is submitted.

- ○ **What Do You Think?:** Students are asked to rank how strongly they agree or disagree with the following statements: "I am confident in my understanding of social determinants and their effect on a person's overall health," and "I am motivated to take action to increase health equity in my community."
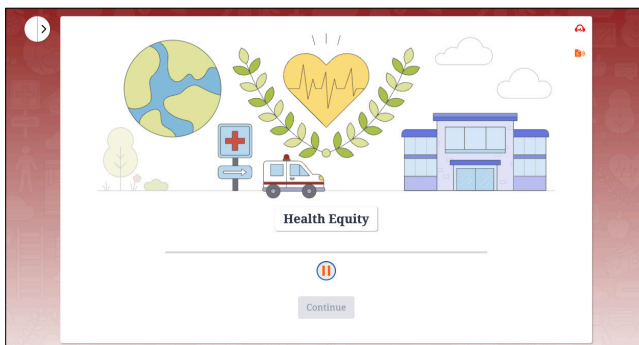
- **Learn**
  - ○ **Health Equity:** Students will view a slideshow explaining the characteristics of health equity and the consequences of inequity. Have students write a quick journal about whether they believe their community is one of health equity.
  - ○ **Status of Health and Wellness:** Students will click through slides to learn about the importance of equitable access to quality healthcare. Ask volunteers to share the

statistic that was most notable to them.

- ○ **Social Determinants of Health:** Students will swipe through cards that explain each of the social and economic conditions that can affect people's health and wellness status. Challenge students to rank each characteristic from most important to least important or from most problematic to least problematic for their own community.

- ○ **Dr. Charlotte Owens:** Students will click to view an embedded video featuring Dr. Charlotte Owens, the Vice President and Head of the Center for Health Equity and Patient Affairs at Takeda. Have students compile a list individually or as a class of the elements Dr. Owens flagged on how to improve health equity.

- ○ **My Community:** Students will answer three questions prompting them to think about the state of health equity in their own community. Based on their responses, do they feel their community is on the road to health equity or does it have some work to do? Consider having students add to their previous quick journal entries.

- ○ **You Can Change Your Community!:** Considering their own communities, students will rank five health equity issues from most important to least important and receive topics to research or actions to take in response. Ask volunteers to share one action they will take as a result of what they have learned.

- **Wrap Up**
  - ○ **Health Equity in Your Community:** The module ends by summarizing the key takeaways about health equity. Take this time to answer any remaining questions

students might have.

○ **Now, What Do You Think?:** Students are asked to rank how strongly they agree or disagree with the following statements: "I am confident in my understanding of social determinants and their effect on a person's overall health," and "I am motivated to take action to increase health equity in my community." Did more students agree with the statements after completing the module than before? If students still disagree at the end, ask them what they still need to know in order to agree with the statements.
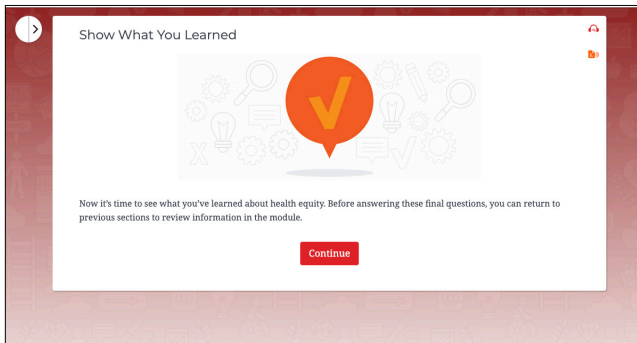
• **Challenge**

○ There are five post-test questions for this module. Students are encouraged to review the information in each section, if needed, before beginning the post-test.

○ Students will encounter a variety of question types including fill-in-the-blank, multiple response, and multiple choice.

○ For each question, students have two opportunities to answer correctly. Full credit is given for correct answers on the first try. The total number of available points in this module's post-test is 5. If students answer

incorrectly, they are given an opportunity to try again or skip and continue to the next question. No additional points are given to students who either do not retry the question or retry the question and still answer incorrectly. Partial credit is given for students who correctly answer a portion of a multi-part question or who give the correct answer on a second try.

EXTENDING THE MODULE

Once students complete the module, consider one or more of these follow-up activities:

• Introduce students to the SMART (specific; measurable; attainable; realistic; time-bound) goal-setting method. Encourage them to set a SMART goal for increasing health equity in their community.

• Challenge students to conduct an "equity survey" of friends, family, or community members. They can use questions and information from the module to build their survey and then analyze their results to compose a list of action items needed to make their community more equitable.

• Guide students in researching a current health equity effort in their community or an issue that could benefit from action. Coordinate a letter-writing campaign in which students advocate for more support in these areas, citing their research.

• Utilize one of the suggestions provided as feedback on the "You Can Change Your Community!" slide as the foundation for a class service-learning project.

○ Research companies that offer free home

internet to students or low-income families. Are there programs at the library or community center that teach people how to use the internet? If not, could you offer to help neighbors learn?

○ Consider writing a letter to city officials or speaking at a town hall meeting about the need for clean and safe green spaces and parks. Do your research and come ready with suggestions!

- Encourage your family to buy local goods and shop at farmers markets. Don't have access to a farmers market? Spearhead an initiative to bring one to your community—especially one that can accept food assistance benefits!

- Visit betterhealthinaction.com for additional resources and activities to empower the next generation of health equity champions.

STANDARDS CORRELATION

The following standards from the CDC Healthy Schools Standards are addressed in this self-paced module:

- 1.8.3 Analyze how the environment affects personal health.

- 1.8.6 Explain how appropriate health care can promote personal health.

- 1.8.7 Describe the benefits of and barriers to practicing healthy behaviors.

- 2.8.2 Describe the influence of culture on health beliefs, practices, and behaviors.

- 2.8.10 Explain how school and public health policies can influence health promotion and disease prevention.

- 3.8.3 Determine the accessibility of products that enhance health.

- 8.8.1 State a health-enhancing position on a topic and support it with accurate information.

- 8.8.2 Demonstrate how to influence and support others to make positive health choices.

- 8.8.3 Work cooperatively to advocate for healthy individuals, families, and schools.

- 8.8.4 Identify ways in which health messages and communication techniques can be altered for different audiences.

KEY TERMS

Economic Stability

when people have the resources essential to a healthy life, including stable income, affordable housing, reliable transportation, and childcare

Equality

everyone is given the same resources and opportunities no matter their circumstances

Equity

each person gets what they need to have a fair chance

Health Inequity

when unfair or avoidable health differences exist based on geography, socio-economic status, or access to resources

Environment

the place in which a person lives, both in terms of man-made elements and natural elements

Social Determinants

the social and economic conditions that affect a person's health and wellness status

Social Support

Physical, psychological, social, and economic assistance provided to a person by family, friends, and community members to help cope with stress, illness, and hardship

Socio-Economic Status

a person's social standing or class, typically measured through social and economic elements like education, income, and occupation