Advancing Health Equity and Optimal Health for All
There is Health in All Policies

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Alfred Nobel, granted first patent for the preparation of nitroglycerin on October 14, 1863.

“One can state, without exaggeration, that the observation of and the search for similarities and differences are the basis of all human knowledge.”
Oh, where have you been, my blue-eyed son?
And where have you been my darling young one?
I've stumbled on the side of twelve misty mountains
I've walked and I've crawled on six crooked highways
I've stepped in the middle of seven sad forests
I've been out in front of a dozen dead oceans
I've been ten thousand miles in the mouth of a graveyard
And it's a hard, it's a hard, it's a hard, and it's a hard
It's a hard rain's a-gonna fall.
Wind and Water and Stone

The water hollowed the stone, 
the wind dispersed the water, 
the stone stopped the wind. 
Water and wind and stone.

The wind sculpted the stone, 
the stone is a cup of water, 
The water runs off and is wind. 
Stone and wind and water.

The wind sings in its turnings, 
the water murmurs as it goes, 
the motionless stone is quiet. 
Wind and water and stone.

One is the other and is neither: 
among their empty names 
they pass and disappear, 
water and stone and wind.
Martin Luther King Jr awarded the Nobel Peace Prize on October 14, 1964

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”

MLK, Jr, Letter from Birmingham Jail, April 16, 1963

Wind and Water and Stone
The opportunity to be healthy is not equally available everywhere or for everyone.
Minnesota is a healthy state

- Healthcare system: #1
- Health of Seniors: #1
- Life expectancy: #2
- Well-being index: #3
- Infant mortality: #4
- Life expectancy after 65: #6

State Health Ranking – MN #4
MN – Best Place to Retire
Healthiest Cities Rank – Minneapolis #1
Minnesota!
Where the women are strong,
The men are good looking,
And all our health statistics
are above average –
Unless you are
a person of color or
an American Indian.
Advancing health and health equity is not about averages. It’s about creating opportunities for everyone to be healthy.
USA White and Black
IMR: 1980-2011

10.9
White:

11.42
Black

NCHS
Disparities in Birth Outcomes are the tip of the health disparities iceberg
Health Equity and Water

• Fewer protections for private wells
• Higher costs for smaller public water systems
• Limited capacity to support a community water supply
• “Downstream” contaminants introduced by others
• Reliance on consumption of contaminated fish
• Limited access to lakes and rivers for recreation
"What Sets the Goals of Public Health?"
Sir Geoffrey Vickers

“The landmarks of political, economic and social history are the moments when some condition passed from the category of the given into the category of the intolerable. I believe that the history of public health might well be written as a record of successive re-definings of the unacceptable.”
Why Should People Be Concerned About Equity?

It’s a math problem

It’s a social justice problem...
Health Equity is the public manifestation of social justice and social justice the core of public health

- “The philosophy behind science is to discover truth.
- The philosophy behind medicine is to use that truth for the benefit of your patient.
- The philosophy behind public health is social justice.”

“an inescapable network of mutuality...
Injustice anywhere…”


National Center for Health Statistics, Health United States, 2009 (updated)
...is a threat to justice everywhere.”

Infant Mortality Rates U.S. and OECD Countries 1960-2010

Rank of US Infant Mortality 1960 - 12

Rank of US Infant Mortality 2015 - 38

Source: http://stats.oecd.org, accessed 6-10-16
“an inescapable network of mutuality… Injustice anywhere...”

Life Expectancy, by race: United States, 1970 - 2010

…is a threat to justice everywhere.”

Life Expectancy at Birth US and OECD Countries by Gender

Disparities Affect the Health of Everyone
Top Decile Income Share in the United States, 1917-2007
Growing income disparity

In 2007, top decile includes all U.S. families with annual income above $109,600.

Average Health Care Spending per Capita, 1970-2009
(Adjusted for differences in cost of living)

Source: OECD Health Data 2011 (June 2011)
Disparities in health are the tip of the societal disparities iceberg.

- Social exclusion
- Unemployment
- Racism
- Poverty
- School suspensions
- Crime
- Incarceration
- Bad schools
- Environmental contamination
- Immobility
- Segregation
- Lack of hope
- Disruptions in families
- Crime
- Lack of wealth
- Suicide
- Unemployment
- Redlining
- Poor housing
- Food deserts
- Liquor stores
- Homicide
- Injuries
- Substance use
- Violent neighborhoods
- Drug abuse
- Blight
- Immobility
- Contamination
How did this happen?

**Predominant U.S. Worldview**

- Decreased investment in the “commons” and the disadvantaged
- Increased polarization
- Reliance on competition
- Decreased cooperation
- Over investment in biomedical model

**Boot Straps Individualism**

- Virtue of Work

**Free Market Solutions**

- Small Government

**Might Makes Right**

- Education is for job training

**Reliance on technology/specialization**

- Structural Discrimination is a thing of the Past
In OECD, for every $1 spent on health care, about $2 is spent on social services.

In the U.S., for every $1 spent on health care, about 55 cents is spent on social services.
“Public health is what we, as a society, do collectively to assure the conditions in which (all) people can be healthy.”

The Future of Public Health
Institute of Medicine, 1988
Living Conditions Impact Health

Social Determinants of Health

The conditions and circumstances in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age. These circumstances are shaped by a set of forces beyond the control of the individual: economics and the distribution of money, power, social policies, and politics at the global, national, state, and local levels.
Changing the Conditions that Affect Health Requires the Capacity to Act

Some populations have a more difficult time than others in impacting living conditions.

Public health has few skills in fostering the capacity to act.
Structure work to achieve our overall aim: Create/Strengthen “Capacity to Act”

Organize the:

- **Narrative**: Align the narrative to build public understanding and public will.
- **Resources**: Identify/shift the resources-infrastructure-the way systems and processes are structured.
- **People**: Directly impact decision makers, develop relationships, align interests.
Advancing Health Equity and Optimal Health for All

Triple Aim of Health Equity

- Implement Health in All Policies
  - Implement a Health in All Policies Approach With Health Equity as the Goal

- Social Cohesion
  - Expand Our Understanding of What Creates Health

- Strengthen Community Capacity
  - Strengthen the Capacity of Communities to Create Their Own Healthy Future

- Expand Understanding of Health
Expand the Understanding of What Creates Health

**Necessary conditions for health (WHO)**
- Peace
- Shelter
- Education
- Food
- Income
- Stable eco-system
- Sustainable resources
- Mobility
- Health Care
- Social justice and equity

**Determinants of Health**

- Genes and Biology: 10%
- Physical Environment: 10%
- Clinical Care: 10%
- Health Behaviors: 30%
- Social and Economic Factors: 40%


Communities of Opportunity

- Social/economic inclusion
- Thriving small businesses and entrepreneurs
- Financial institutions
- Good transportation options and infrastructure
- Home ownership
- Better performing schools
- Sufficient healthy housing
- Grocery stores
- IT connectivity
- Strong local governance
- Parks & trails

Good Health Status

Contributes to health disparities:
- Diabetes
- Cancer
- Asthma
- Obesity
- Injury

Low-Opportunity Communities

- Social/economic exclusion
- Few small businesses
- Payday lenders
- Few transportation options
- Rental housing/foreclosure
- Poor performing schools
- Poor and limited housing stock
- Increased pollution and contaminated drinking water
- Fast food restaurants
- Limited IT connections
- Weak local governance
- Unsafe/limited parks
Ehlinger’s beliefs about the contributions to health determinants

Determinants are created & enhanced mostly by policies and systems that impact the physical and social environment.

- Genes and Biology: 10%
- Physical Environment: 10%
- Clinical Care: 10%
- Health Behaviors: 10%
- Social and Economic Factors: 60%
And The Real Narrative of What Creates Health Inequities?

- Disparities are not just because of lack of access to health care or to poor individual choices.

- **Disparities are mostly the result of policy decisions that systematically disadvantage some populations over others.**
  - Especially, populations of color and American Indians, GLBT, immigrants, and refugees
  - Structural Racism
Alternative Worldview for what creates health

- Interdependence
- Social Cohesion
- Virtue of Work

Necessary Government

- Increased investment in the “commons” and the disadvantaged
- Decreased polarization
- Increased cooperation
- Reliance on collaboration
- Balanced investment in care and prevention

Social Responsibility

Cooperation Collective Action

Education is for enlightenment

Need for Generalists

Equity is the challenge of the present
Implement Health in All Policies Approach with Health Equity as a Goal

Policy and System Changes Related to Social Determinants of Health (selected)

- Minimum Wage
- Paid Leave
- Diabetes and Income
- Incarceration and health
- Ban the Box
- Transportation Policy
- Broadband connectivity
- E-Health Policies
- Buffer strips – Ag policy
- Marriage Equity
- Payday Lending
- Water quality
Minnesota State Agency Roles in Groundwater

**Quality**
- **MDA**
  - Pesticides
  - Fertilizer

- **MDH**
  - Public water supply
  - Well construction
  - Health risk assessment

- **MPCA**
  - Chemical releases
  - Industrial pollutants

**Quantity**
- **DNR**
  - Water supply/availability
  - Natural resource/ecosystem functions

Diagram showing the layers of groundwater systems including water table, water table aquifer, confining layer, buried aquifer, confining layer, and bedrock aquifer.
“...the community in the fullest sense is the smallest unit of health...to speak of the health of an isolated individual is a contradiction in terms.”

Wendell Berry in Health is Membership

Health is Community
Strengthen the Capacity of Communities to Create Their Own Healthy Future

Healthy Public Policy & Public Work

Medical and Public Health Policy

Traditional Public Health
Primary Prevention

Primary Care
Secondary Prevention

Specialty Care
Tertiary Prevention

Safer, Healthier Population

Vulnerable Population

Afflicted without Complications

Afflicted with Complications

Becoming no longer vulnerable

Becoming vulnerable

Becoming afflicted

Developing complications

Dying from Complications

DEMOCRATIC SELF-GOVERNANCE

MANAGEMENT OF RISKS & DISEASES

World of Transforming...
- Deprivation
- Dependency
- Violence
- Disconnection
- Environmental decay
- Stress
- Insecurity
- Etc...

By Strengthening...
- Democracy
- Mutual accountability
- Leaders and institutions
- Plurality
- Freedom
- Foresight and precaution
- The meaning of work
- Etc...

World of Providing...
- Health education
- Screening tests
- Disease management
- Pharmaceuticals
- Clinical services
- Physical and financial access
- Etc...

Strengthen the Capacity of Communities to Create Their Own Healthy Future

Asking the Right Questions Can Advance Health Equity

**Expand Understanding**
- What values underlie decision-making process?
- What is assumed to be true about the world and the role of the institution in the world?

**Health in All Policies**
- What are the health and equity implications of the policy/program?
- Who is benefiting and who is left out?

**Support Community Capacity**
- Who is at the decision-making table, and who is not?
- Who is being held accountable and to whom?
Triple Aim of Health Equity in Action

Themes
- Capitalize on the opportunity to influence health in early childhood
- Assure that the opportunity to be healthy is available everywhere and for everyone
- Strengthen communities to create their own healthy futures

Indicators
- Prenatal care
- Breastfeeding
- Food security
- On-time high school completion
- Per capita income
- Sense of safety
- Small business development
- Home ownership
- Incarceration justice

Outcomes
- Improved lifetime health
- Reduced health disparities
- More employment success
- Healthier relationships
- Stable, more cohesive communities
- Stronger, more stable families
- Better education outcomes

Social Determinants

Vision
- All people in Minnesota enjoy healthy lives and healthy communities
Triple Aim of Health Equity in Action
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ECOS President Martha Rudolph after signing an MOA on public health and environmental collaboration with ASTHO President Edward Ehlinger and U.S. EPA Acting Deputy Administrator Stan Meiburg
Asking the Right Questions Is a Path to Action for Change

- What would it look like if equity was the starting point for decision-making?
- Our work would be different.
Our Work Would be to Advance Health Equity and Optimal Health for All By:

- Implement Health in All Policies
- Strengthen Community Capacity
- Expand Understanding of Health
- Social Cohesion
Alfred Nobel, granted first patent for the preparation of nitroglycerin on October 14, 1863.

- “Good wishes alone will not ensure peace.”
- “Justice is to be found only in imagination.”
Can You Imagine Social Justice in Your Work?

Imagination is Essential

In Advancing Health Equity and Optimal Health for All

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