

MODULE SPECIFICATION

KEY FACTS

Module name	Health and Society
Module code	HPM002
School	Health Sciences
Department or equivalent	Division of Health Services Research and Management
UK credits	15
ECTS	7.5
Level	7

MODULE SUMMARY

Module outline and aims

What do we mean by 'health' and 'illness'? Why do some people in society enjoy better health than others, and why are such disparities growing? Does economic growth lead to greater well-being?

The health agenda worldwide has increasingly been shaped by recognition of the crucial importance of social factors in determining health and illness. Wide disparities in health - reflecting divisions in social class, wealth, geography, gender, racial or ethnic background - persist within and between countries, and are growing in many parts of the world. Public policies have often focused on changing the behaviour and lifestyles of individuals, which have sometimes resulted in exacerbating these problems.

This module aims to provide you with the evidence, concepts and theories required to develop a critical understanding of the ideologically contested nature of health and illness; the wide range of social factors that influence individual and population health; the causes and extent of inequalities in health status within and between different social groups; the impact of globalisation; and the effectiveness of public policy responses, at both the national and international level, designed to tackle these complex and sometimes 'wicked' problems, and to improve population health.

Reflecting the breadth of these issues, the module adopts a multi-disciplinary approach, encompassing insights from sociology, geography, anthropology, economics and politics.

Content outline

Topics covered in this module will include:

- What is meant by 'health' and 'illness'? Competing concepts and definitions.
- How illness, health and healthcare are perceived and experienced by different societies and by different groups within a society.
- The social determinants of health, such as wealth and poverty, social class, geography and place, gender, race and ethnicity.
- The impact of social factors and social change across the life course (including ageing and health, mental health and wellbeing).
- Inequalities in health and access to healthcare: historical and current trends

within and between societies; how they arise and affect different groups within societies; the evidence base, theoretical explanations and approaches; the effectiveness of public policies designed to tackle them and improve population health.

- The impact of globalisation on health and health care, including the growing movement of services, health professionals and patients across national borders.
- The relationships between health policy, health status, nutrition, the food industry and the environment.
- Future prospects for health and mortality across the world in the light of demographic, social and technological change.

WHAT WILL I BE EXPECTED TO ACHIEVE?

On successful completion of this module, you will be expected to be able to:

Knowledge and understanding:

- Demonstrate a critical appreciation of the problems of defining and conceptualising health and illness, and the implications of such problems
- Be aware of how illness, health and healthcare are perceived and experienced by different societies and groups.
- Show a critical awareness of the multiple social, economic and environmental influences on individual and population health and illness across the life course, how they affect different groups within society, and the key contemporary debates regarding these issues.
- Demonstrate critical understanding of the trends in and extent of inequalities in health and access to healthcare both within and between countries, the evidence base relating to these issues and the main theoretical frameworks and approaches that have been used to explain and tackle them.
- Show critical appreciation of the impact of public policy on the social determinants of health and the range of policy responses designed to reduce health inequalities and improve population health.

Skills:

- Conduct electronic and library searches in order to identify relevant literature and evidence from a range of sources, and to critically appraise and synthesise it.
- Critically apply appropriate theories, concepts and evidence to the analysis of the issues covered in the module.
- Present the results of your research and analysis clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing.
- Engage critically and independently in debates related to the issues covered in the module.
- Work effectively and collaboratively within multi-professional groups.

Values and attitudes:

- Show appreciation of the range and complexity of the factors influencing the health and illness of individuals and societies, and of the ideological and ethical dimension of debates within these areas.
- Show respect and tolerance for other participants.
- Correctly reference the work of others and adhere to University regulations regarding plagiarism and academic misconduct.

HOW WILL I LEARN?

Teaching and learning will take place via a mix of lectures, group activities and discussions which allow you to examine the issues in more detail, providing both teacher and peer led input, promoting discussion and developing communication and group working skills.

Teaching sessions will take place over four days (typically 10am to 5pm), and are supplemented by self-directed study which allows you both to gain a deeper understanding of the subject generally, and to pursue topics which are of particular interest to you in greater detail.

Teaching and learning are facilitated by Moodle, the University's online Virtual Learning Environment.

Teaching pattern:

Teaching component	Teaching type	Contact hours (scheduled)	Self-directed study hours (independent)	Placement hours	Total student learning hours
Lectures, group work, class exercises and discussions	Lecture	24	126	0	150
Totals:		24	126	0	150

WHAT TYPES OF ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK CAN I EXPECT?

Assessments

You will write an essay of 4,000 words relating to a topic or topics covered in the module.

Assessment pattern:

Assessment component	Assessment type	Weighting	Minimum qualifying mark	Pass/Fail?
Essay	Written assignment	100%	50%	No

Assessment criteria

Assessment Criteria and Grade-Related Criteria for module assessments will be made available prior to an assessment taking place. More information will be available from the module leader.

Feedback on assessment

Lecturers and/or the module leader will be available to provide formative feedback and advice on the written assignment prior to submission. Following the assessment marks and feedback will be provided in line with the Assessment Regulations and Policy, normally within 4 weeks of the submission deadline. Markers will be available to answer queries about the marks and feedback if these are not clear. A selection of all assessments will be internally moderated and sent to the external examiner. All initial marks will be therefore provisional, pending external examiner approval and ratification by the Assessment Board.

Assessment Regulations

The Pass mark for the module is 50%. The Programme Specification contains information on what happens if you fail an assessment component or the module, but in the first instance you should contact the module leader.

INDICATIVE READING LIST

Aston, V. & Coffey, M. (2011). 'Recovery: what mental health nurses and service users say about the concept of recovery'. *Journal of psychiatric and mental health nursing*, 19(3), pp. 257-263.

Bartley, M. (2003). *Health Inequality: An Introduction to Theories, Concepts and Methods*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Economist Intelligence Unit (2012). *A new vision for old age: Rethinking health policy for Europe's ageing society*. At: <http://www.managementthinking.eiu.com/new-vision-old-age.html>.

Friedli, L. (2009). *Mental Health, Resilience and Inequalities*. WHO Regional Office for Europe. Available at: http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0012/100821/E92227.pdf.

Graham, H. (2009). (ed.) *Understanding Health Inequalities*. 2nd Edition. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Graham, H. (2007). *Unequal Lives: Health and Socioeconomic Inequalities*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Lang T, Barling D. (2013). 'Nutrition and sustainability: an emerging food policy discourse.' *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society* 72(1):1-12.

Macdiarmid J.I. et al. (2012). 'Sustainable diets for the future: can we contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by eating a healthy diet?' *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 96(3):632-639.

Marmot, M. (2004). 'Status syndrome'. *Significance*, 1(4), pp. 150-154.

Marmot, M. et al. (2010). *Fair Society, Healthy Lives* (The Marmot Review). Available at <http://www.instituteofhealthequity.org>.

Marmot, M. & Wilkinson, R. (eds.) (2005). *Social Determinants of Health*. 2nd Edition. Oxford University Press.

McGillivray, M. (2010). *Health Inequality and Development*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Nettleton, S. (2006). *The Sociology of Health and Illness*. 2nd Edition. Polity Press.

Pickett, K. & Wilkinson, R. (2010). 'Inequality: an under acknowledged source of mental illness and distress. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 197: 426-428.

Rayner, G. & Lang, T. (2012). *Ecological Public Health: Reshaping the Conditions for Good Health*. London: Earthscan/Routledge.

White, K. (2008). *An Introduction to the Sociology of the Health and Illness*. 2nd Edition. Sage.

Wilkinson, R. & Pickett, K. (2010). *The Spirit Level: Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better*. London: Penguin.

World Health Organization. (2008). *Closing the gap in a generation: Health equity through action on the social determinants of health*. Geneva: WHO. Available at http://www.who.int/social_determinants/thecommission/finalreport/en/index.html

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For use from: 2014-15

Appendix:

CODES

HESA Code	Description	Price Group
B	Subjects allied to medicine	

JACS Code	Description	Percentage (%)
L431	Health policy	50
L310	Applied sociology	50