

MODULE SPECIFICATION

KEY FACTS

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| Module name | Social Determinants of Health |
| Module code | PHM004 |
| School | School Health Sciences |
| Department or equivalent | Health Services Research and Management Division |
| UK credits | 15 |
| ECTS | 7.5 |
| Level | 7 |

MODULE SUMMARY

Module outline and aims

Health inequalities are reliably observed within and between countries. Understanding the processes through which the social environment influences health outcomes has become an important question across the medical and social science fields. Increasing attention on health inequalities by researchers and politicians over recent years requires a new generation of health professionals who can critically assess scientific findings and translate them into policy and practice.

The SDH module provides you with a strong, interdisciplinary foundation in social theory, and the methodological instruments needed for individuals interested in making an impact on the way people are born, live, grow, work, and age (including the healthcare system). The focus of this module is to expose, explore and examine the core theories of social stratification, inequalities, inequities and social justice; the social patterning of disease and mortality; and the social and biological factors in the aetiology of health outcomes as well as the ways in which these mechanisms can operate across the life-course. In so doing, the SDH module will enable you visualize the ways in which seemingly everyday aspects of life are inequitably distributed, shaped by and reproduce socio-economic pathways, thereby contributing to marked health disparities with fundamental bearing on health.

Content outline

Topics you will cover on this module include:

- Determinants of Health, Health Equity, Inequalities and Inequities & Assessment of health inequalities including use of social deprivation indices, and concentration index;
- Explanatory perspectives and integrated models explaining socio-economic inequalities in health and the social determinants of health;
- Socio-economic Position, Social Gradient and Health;
- Social Cohesion, Social Capital, Social Integration, Social Networks, Social Support and Health.
- Social determinants of health behaviours and health behaviour change.
- Multilevel influences (e.g. neighbourhood and place) on health.
- Gender as a social determinant of Health.
- Ethnicity, Race, Discrimination, and Stigma as social determinants of Health.
- Cultural/ behavioural, materialist/structuralist and life-course perspectives.
- Strategies, Interventions and Policies to reduce socio-economic inequalities in health.

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 understanding of how health varies systematically according to social, economic and political factors, and of the wealth-health relationship, poverty/material disadvantage/deprivation-health relationship;
- Demonstrate critical understanding of the relationships between individual, interpersonal, social, structural, cultural and biological factors as they impact the aetiology and management of illness;
- Demonstrate critical understanding of how social context, social position and social stratification contribute to inequities in health, and how appropriate policies could tackle societal health gaps;
- Demonstrate critical understanding of the potential mechanisms through which social factors (e.g. income inequality and adverse childhood experiences) can influence individual health across the life-course and shape population patterns of morbidity and mortality);
- Demonstrate critical understanding of evidence-based interventions for reducing social inequalities in health.

Skills:

- Apply and critically discuss basic terms, concepts and measurements related to population health, and health inequalities;
- Independently and critically apply major theoretical perspectives to the explanation of social determinants of health;
- Critically evaluate evidence for social determinants of health and identify key gaps in knowledge;

Values and attitudes:

- Demonstrate critical understanding of key social determinants of health and to understand their relevance in the national and global contexts.
- Demonstrate and apply an awareness of the ethical issues underlying global health inequalities.

HOW WILL I LEARN?

Teaching and learning will take place through a combination of interactive lectures, group work and practical exercises. This will enable 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 ten half-days, and are supplemented by self-directed study which enable you to gain a deeper overall understanding of the subject as well as 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.

A formative assessment comprising small group presentations will encourage engagement with ideas and evidence in a group context that can subsequently be developed in the

individual module assessment (see below).

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 | 30 | 120 | 0 | 150 |
| Totals: | | 30 | 120 | 0 | 150 |

WHAT TYPES OF ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK CAN I EXPECT?

Assessments

For the assessment you will conduct and write-up a systematic review of (a maximum of) 2,500 words that evaluates the impact or potential impact of selected interventions on population level health inequalities. You will draw evidence-based recommendations on the basis of your review.

Assessment pattern:

| Assessment component | Assessment type | Weighting | Minimum qualifying mark | Pass/Fail? |
|----------------------|--------------------|-----------|-------------------------|------------|
| Written 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 prior to submission of the written assignment. Formative feedback will take two forms: (i.) there will be small-group presentations delivered to the same brief as the final assignment (see above) on a specific topic of your own choice with verbal feedback provided immediately afterwards, (ii.) you will have the opportunity to submit a document (maximum one side of A4 with standard margins; Times New Roman; font 12; double-spaced) for written feedback from the Module leader.

Following the final assessment, marks and feedback will be provided in line with the Assessment Regulations and Policy, normally within 3 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 therefore be assumed as being 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

Adler N.E., Boyce T., Chesney M.A., Cohen S., Folkman S., Kohn R.L. & Syme S.L. (1994). Socioeconomic status and health: The challenge of the gradient. *American Psychologist*, 49(1): 15-24.

Diez Roux A.V. (2001). Investigating neighbourhood and area effects on health. *American Journal of Public Health*. 91(11): 1783-1789

Kawachi I. & Berkman L. (2000). Social cohesion, social capital, and health. In L.F. Berkman and I. Kawachi (eds), *Social Epidemiology*, pp 174-90. Oxford University Press: New York.

Marmot, M. & Wilkinson, R.G. (eds) (2006). *Social Determinants of Health*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Schulz A. & Northridge M.E. (2004). Social Determinants of Health: Implications for Environmental Health Promotion. *Health Education & Behavior*. 31(4): 455-471.

Wilkinson R.G. & Pickett K.E. (2009). *The Spirit Level: Why greater equality makes societies stronger*. New York: Bloomsbury.

Wingood GM & Diclemente R.J. (2005). Application of the theory of gender and power to examine HIV-related exposures, risk factors, and effective interventions for women. *Health Education and Behavior*. 27(5): 539-565.

World Health Organization (WHO) Commission on Social Determinants of Health (2008). *Closing the Gap in a Generation: Health Equity Through Action on the Social Determinants of Health*. http://www.who.int/social_determinants/thecommission/finalreport/en/

Version: 3.0

Version date: September 2017 For

Use From: 2017-18

Appendix:

CODES

| HESA Code | Description | Price Group |
|------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|
| 105 | Health and community studies | C2 |

| JACS Code | Description | Percentage (%) |
|------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| L728 | Human Demography | 100 |