

THE CONCEPT OF HEALTH

Health: The concept health may mean different things for different people. Health may simply mean the absence of disease or it may mean the soundness of body.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defined health as “ A state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

The main problem with this definition, is the lack of agreement on the meaning of the term” complete” which remained difficult to quantify but encouraged almost all countries to work towards the improvement of the health of their people.

A more practical definition of health may be as follows: Health is a state of successful adaptation of the body to stresses and stimuli to which it is subjected.

The successful adaptation may be very optimal and the attributes of optimal health are:

1. Anatomical integrity to ensure the physical aspect of health.
2. Ability to do normal duties at personal, family and community level.
3. Ability to deal with stress whether this stress is physical, mental or social.
4. Feeling of well being. This is the mental or psychological dimension of health.
5. Freedom from disease and premature death.
6. Spiritual and moral stability.

Lay health

Whilst health can be defined either as an ideal state or the absence of disease (and disease is what doctors describe), illness is the subjective experience of ‘feeling’ unwell

Introduction to nursing

Nursing as a profession is, and will continue to be, responsive to and influenced by the society it serves.

Thus, the major activities occurring within the nursing field are also a reflection of what is happening in the society as a whole.

Nursing

Nursing is a profession focused on assisting individuals, families, and communities in attaining, maintaining, and recovering optimal health and functioning.

A sociological approach to health care shifts the focus from sick individuals to wider social issues: Therefore an understanding of sociology enables health care workers to:

- Critically evaluate the differing ways that the social world may shape the experience of health and illness
- Understand the broader social forces that affect individuals
- Consider how :a health care arrangements impact on the individual's experience of health and illness.

Health work occurs in a complex and changing environment. Such changes can be partly attributed to pattern of disease, where long-term chronic illnesses predominate, and partly to variation in the illness experience of different groups in the population.