PUBLIC HEALTH AND THE PREVENTION OF WAR

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Primary Prevention: decrease the risk of illness

Secondary: early detection & preventing progression

Tertiary: prevent relapse & management care

Disease/Injury/Death
Prevention Spectrum & War

- **Secondary Prevention**
  - Measuring injury, disease, mortality
  - Treating victims in a war zone
  - Observers of human rights
  - Conflict resolution

- **Tertiary Prevention**
  - Treatment of physical and psychological trauma
  - Rebuilding infrastructure
  - Reconciliation
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

“The role of physicians and other health professionals in the preservation and promotion of peace is the most significant factor for the attainment of health for all”
Public Health Code of Ethics

“Public health should address principally the fundamental causes of disease and requirements for health, aiming to prevent adverse health outcomes.”

Emphasis added
Scenario Choice Pairs

• Is one of the actions more compassionate?

• Which action is preventive?
Bringing factions together during war to coordinate health programs

Teaching Peaceful Conflict Resolution
Stop military recruitment of youth in schools

Providing Health Services for War Refugees
Reform Laws on Corporate Election Campaign Contributions and Lobbying

Providing Health Services for Veterans & Their Families
Rebuilding Health Services Infrastructure

Peaceful Conflict Resolution
Assessing & Ameliorating War’s Environmental Effects

Eliminate Nuclear Weapons
Reallocating the Military Budget

Treating Victims of War
American Public Health Association Policies

• 1969-2014:
  • 34 policies opposing specific wars, specific weapons, recruitment in schools, and the effects of militarism.

• 1985 Militarism
  • Recommended curriculum & education methods

• 2009 PH Role in Prevention of War
  • Recommended training to address structural causes
World Federation of Public Health Associations

- 2011 Resolution

- Public health professionals become **advocates** for:
  - Initiatives to **address structural causes of war**
  - Ratification of treaties and protocols
  - Legislation related to arms trade
Proposed Public Health Curriculum for the Prevention of War

4 domains
- Militarism
- International Peace Work
- Peace Advocacy
- Peace Research

60 competencies

Example Competencies

• **Militarism**
  - Define militarism and discuss its manifestations in society

• **International Peace Work**
  - List international treaties, conventions, and laws designed to reduce war, and to protect civilians, human rights, and social justice
• Peace Advocacy
  • Discuss situations when civil disobedience has been used in the prevention of war, when it might be appropriate, its risks and potential benefits, and what advance planning is required.

• Peace Research
  • Identify existing data sources and methods of primary data collection to conduct research on the relationship between militarism and health.
Additional Resources

• See Appendix A.
  • Wiist, et al. AJPH, 104(6) e34-e47.

• Public Health and Social Justice: War and Peace
  • http://phsj.org/war-and-peace/

• Faculty resources for teaching war and public health
  https://catalyst.uw.edu/workspace/hagopian/45591/
This is the field where the battle did not happen, where the unknown soldier did not die

Where no monument stands

No people killed—or were killed---on this ground
Hallowed by neglect and an air so tame
That people celebrate it by forgetting its name.

Selection from

At the Un-National Monument Along the Canadian Border
by
William Stafford

Poet Laureate
World War II Conscientious Objector

References Cited

