

Health promotion based on the five action areas of the Ottawa Charter

What actions are needed to address Australia's health priorities?

Students learn about:

- health promotion based on the five action areas of the Ottawa Charter
 - levels of responsibility for health promotion
 - the benefits of partnerships in health promotion, eg government sector, non-government agencies and the local community
 - how health promotion based on the Ottawa Charter promotes social justice
 - the Ottawa Charter in action

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Students learn to:

- argue the benefits of health promotion based on:
 - individuals, communities and governments working in partnership
 - the five action areas of the Ottawa Charter
- investigate the principles of social justice and the responsibilities of individuals, communities and governments under the action areas of the Ottawa Charter
- critically analyse the importance of the five action areas of the Ottawa Charter through a study of TWO health promotion initiatives related to Australia's health priorities

- What are the 5 action areas of the Ottawa Charter?

Building Healthy Public Policy

Combines diverse but complementary approaches,
including legislation, fiscal measures, taxation
and organisation change.

Creating Supportive Environments

The protection of the natural and built environments, and the conservation of natural resources must be addressed in any health promotion strategy.

Strengthening Community Action.

Draws on existing human and material resources to enhance self-help and social support, and to develop flexible systems for strengthening public participation in, and direction of, health matters.

This requires full and continuous access to information and learning opportunities for health, as well as funding support.

Developing Personal Skills

enabling people to learn (throughout life) to prepare themselves for all of its stages and to cope with chronic illness and injuries is essential. This has to be facilitated in school, home, work and community settings.

Reorienting Health Services

- The role of the health sector must move increasingly in a health promotion direction, beyond its responsibility for providing clinical and curative services.
- requires stronger attention to health research, as well as changes in professional education and training.



- There have been many changes over the past couple of decades to the way health promotion is approached.
- The Ottawa charter was the product of the first international conference on Health Promotion, which was held in Ottawa, Canada in 1986.

- The charter clearly identified that in order for good health to be achieved some prerequisites existed including: peace, a stable ecosystem, social justice and equity and resources such as education and income.
- It identified the necessity for an inter-sectoral approach to health promotion and called for support from International Organisations in setting up strategies and programs for health promotion.

- The five action areas of the Ottawa Charter are:
 1. Developing personal skills
 2. Creating supportive environment
 3. Strengthening community action
 4. Reorienting health services
 5. Building healthy public policy

Levels of responsibility for health promotion

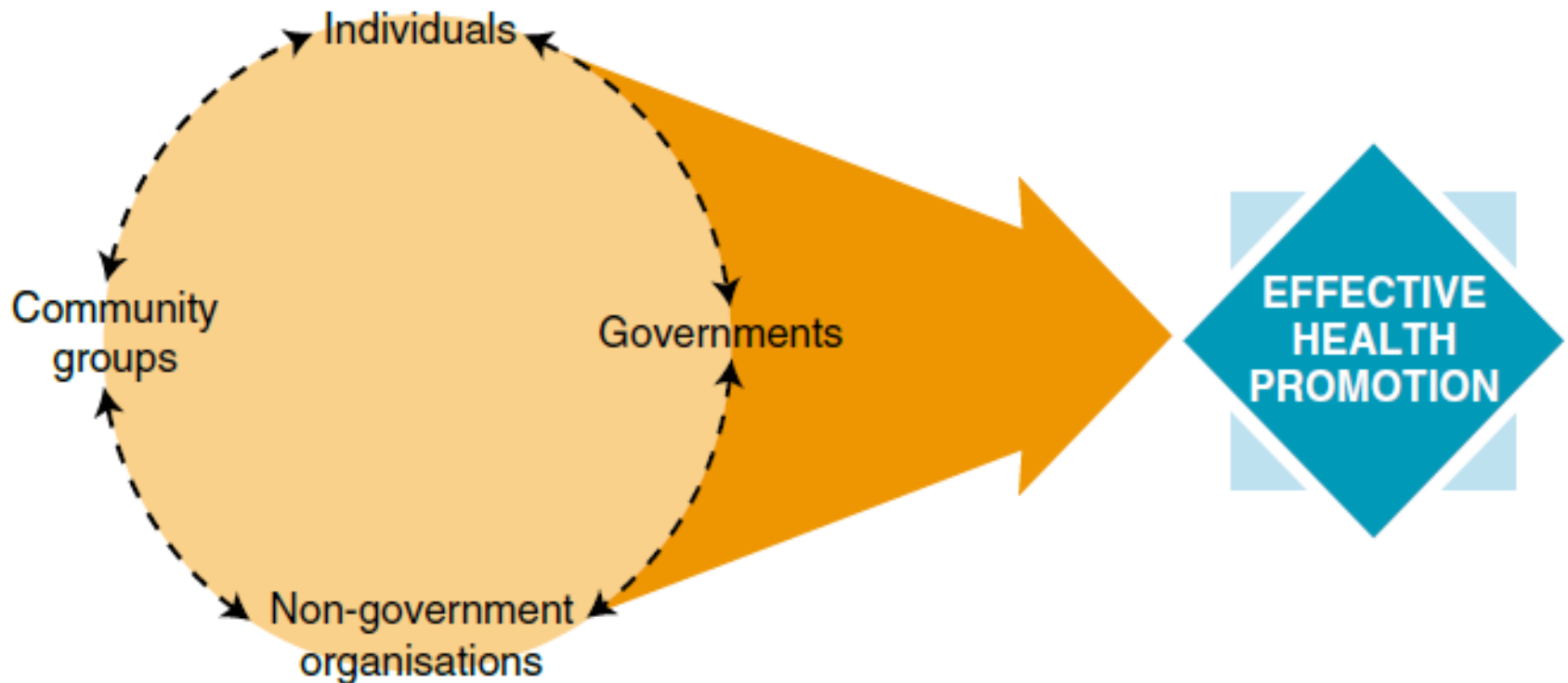


Figure 4.1: Health promotion achieves more positive results if all levels participate and cooperate in the program or strategy.

Levels of responsibility for health promotion (cont)

- Responsibility for health lies with all people, and this is very clearly illustrated in the action areas of the Ottawa Charter.
- The five action areas of the Ottawa Charter advocate health promotion that engages individuals, communities and governments.
- The function of health promotion is to empower individuals to take control of their health.

Levels of responsibility for health promotion (cont)

National Governments

- Development of national public health policy.
- Ongoing planning, monitoring, research and evaluation of public health activities.
- Provide support for health initiatives in other states and provide some support through funding.
- Partner with NGOs, State and Territory Governments and International organisations in the development of policies and strategies to promote health and prevent chronic disease.

Levels of responsibility for health promotion (cont)

The State and Territory governments

- Identify state wide public health issues through epidemiological measures.
- Develop and monitor strategies to address key health issues.
- Develop policies related to communicable diseases, environmental health, immunisation, food, workplace safety, water quality, drugs and emergency management.
- Develop and monitor preventive and early detection programs such as cancer screening.
- Support population health literacy and health promoting behaviour.
- Collaborate with all other government and non-government public health sectors and relevant authorities, to address public health issues.

Levels of responsibility for health promotion (cont)

Local governments

- Maintain roads and local infrastructure
- Recreational development and town planning that encourages a healthy lifestyle
- Monitoring food safety, immunisation, and sanitation and water quality.
- Manage community services.
- Address specific health needs of the community through collaboration with Medicare locals.

The benefits of partnerships in health promotion, eg government sector, non-government agencies and the local community

- Health promotion campaigns and strategies are much more likely to produce positive results if an integrated and comprehensive (thorough) approach is used to address issues.
- This is very clearly reflected in the 5 action areas of the Ottawa charter and an idea that has been reinforced by all subsequent global health conferences and charters from the WHO.

The benefits of partnerships in health promotion, eg government sector, non-government agencies and the local community (cont)

If every area of the Ottawa Charter is well represented through a variety of strategies, then:

- the risk of people or populations adopting poor health behaviours in the first place is vastly reduced
- those people already engaged in poor health behaviours are encouraged to reduce or eliminate these actions, which will result in improvements in their health and a decreased burden on the health-care system.

What are the benefits of health promotion based upon individuals, communities and governments working in partnership?

- The benefits of health partnerships come from the fact that they represent a focused and common approach to health issues. If individuals, communities and governments can work together to develop the framework and approach, then the ownership belongs to all and is more likely to succeed. It also ensures that all of the costs and resources are shared, which means that there is less waste and greater opportunity to ensure that the concept is resourced thoroughly.

Read 'Recapturing the active Australian' p116 Outcomes

- Answer the Empowering Change questions on p117 in Outcomes text once you have read the article.
1. Identify reasons why some people fail to take control of their own health.
 2. Why is disease prevention seen as a 'government dream' and a 'defence' for the future?
 3. Describe some approaches to health promotion that might empower individuals to become more physically active and generally improve their health behaviours.
 4. What might be the impact of health promotion campaigns that 'recapture the active Australian'?

Some answers...

Page 117 Outcomes Empowering change

1. Some people fail to take control of their own health because they may have poor literacy, numeracy, form-filling or problem-solving skills. In addition, they may not be able to see the benefits of any lifestyle changes in the near future.
2. Disease prevention is seen as important, as two-thirds of chronic diseases could be improved by simple changes to food and exercise habits and drug use. This would improve the health of the nation, thereby reducing the cost of illnesses for the government and improving workforce participation.
3. Approaches to health promotion that might empower individuals to become more physically active, and improve their health behaviours, include:
 - sending health messages that focus on the benefits to individuals in the short term. Promotion of physical activity, for example, should concentrate on pleasure and social opportunity, such as meeting new people and developing new friendships.
 - leading by example; for instance, if a mass of people begin cycling to work, it is likely others will join them.
4. Health promotion campaigns that recapture the active Australian would encourage more people to be physically active, thus leading to:
 - a reduction in the number of people with obesity
 - a reduction in the incidence of lifestyle diseases, such as heart disease and diabetes
 - fewer mental health problems, due to an increase in social networks, self-esteem and self-confidence
 - less financial burden on the government and demands on the hospital system to treat people with lifestyle diseases and illnesses.