

## An Examination of Fundamental Ideas and Theories in the Public Health Model and Its Development Over Time

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### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history

Received May 25, 2025

Revised June 02, 2025

Accepted July 14, 2025

#### Keywords

Public Health;

Basic Concepts;

Disease Treatment;

Health Policies

### ABSTRACT

A crucial field that has advanced significantly over time is public health. Its theoretical underpinnings and concepts have developed from narrow concerns about illness treatment to a holistic strategy centered on community-level prevention and health promotion. The goal of this study is to present a thorough theoretical analysis of the public health paradigm, following its development from its classical origins to modern integrated models and examining the fundamental ideas and theories that shaped it. Using a theoretical analytical method, the study documented theoretical and intellectual advancements in the field by evaluating pertinent literature and references. The findings demonstrated how changes in health policies have affected the evolution of the notion of public health, emphasizing the shift from curative to integrated preventive models that take into account social, economic, and environmental aspects. The findings also showed how many ideas, including ecological, sociological, and vaccination theories, have influenced the creation of more potent health instruments and regulations. The study concludes by highlighting how crucial it is to comprehend how public health concepts and theories have evolved in order to support more comprehensive and successful future health policies, particularly in light of emerging issues and the realization that there are several elements influencing community health.

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## 1. Introduction

Given the continuous global shifts in health and health theories, it is crucial to examine how the idea of public health has evolved. Public health is more than just treating illnesses or lowering their prevalence; it also involves comprehending the comprehensive elements that affect a society's overall health [1]. This necessitates examining how the ideas and theoretical frameworks that have formed the field's foundations have changed throughout time [2]. Knowing how the idea of public health has changed throughout time helps to explain changes in health policy and facilitates the creation of more flexible and integrated approaches to current and upcoming health issues [3].

Concepts of public health have changed significantly over time, evolving from a single idea that only dealt with medical issues to a more comprehensive idea that also took into account social and environmental factors, and finally to contemporary models that view health as a dynamic, multifaceted system [4]. Theoretical research that links the development of basic ideas and theories,

explains the shift from conventional to modern models, and focuses on how these changes affect current health trends and policies is still lacking, nevertheless [5].

Therefore, the significance of the current study lies in its attempt to trace the fundamental ideas and theories that have shaped this subject in order to provide a thorough theoretical analysis that reflects the development of the concept of public health over time. This will offer a theoretical and philosophical viewpoint that will aid scholars and decision-makers in better comprehending the inception and evolution of public health models and how they affect health policies. It will also draw attention to the difficulties and barriers that theoretical shifts place on the use of these models.

## 2. The Definitions and History of the Concept of Public Health

Early definitions of health were limited to the absence of disease and a state of bodily well-being. Since the dominant perspective focused on treating disorders after they had already happened, it was frequently linked to the ideas of curative medical care. But as scientific ideas advanced, perspectives started to change in favor of a more comprehensive knowledge of the variables influencing health. New ideas about prevention surfaced, and diagnosis and treatment were no longer the only guiding principles. In order to slow the spread of illness and enhance the standard of living for both individuals and communities, the emphasis switched to preventative measures [6].

Broader ideas started to appear in the eighteenth century. The idea that health is a condition of balance rather than only the absence of sickness emerged during this time, with a focus on the social and environmental determinants of individual and collective health. These ideas were reinforced by the founding of the first medical facilities devoted to immunization and prevention, as well as by field research and studies like John Snow's that helped to understand the causes and transmission of disease. The emergence of ideas like "health as a dynamic system" and "health as a source of well-being" is a crucial aspect of this stage. Health has evolved into a multifaceted notion that encompasses medical, social, environmental, and economic issues [7].

Public health concepts saw significant changes at the start of the twentieth century as a result of scientific and technical advancements. Models that embraced the ideas of primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention replaced theories that sought to treat illness. The goals of the classical approach centered on preventing the spread of illness by means of early detection and treatment and vaccination. Additionally, plans to reduce pollutants and enhance living circumstances were created. However, as researchers started to connect social and environmental determinants to societal health, they developed the idea of health policies that address social factors as key determinants of health, expanding our understanding of health to include more comprehensive models [8].

Regarding contemporary integrated models, a variety of hypotheses that take this change into account have surfaced. Creating a connection between the environment and health has been a major emphasis of this work. Theories that connect an individual's surroundings, like environmental models, have been incorporated into both literature and practice. Because of this, health policies have undergone significant changes. Today, their main goals are to protect and promote health for both individuals and communities through all-encompassing strategies that incorporate social interventions, environmental changes, health awareness, and other concepts that are now fundamental to contemporary theories [9].

Furthermore, theories that examined health and hygiene in relation to larger societal structures helped to provide a comprehensive understanding of the idea of health. By relying on the joint efforts of all sectors, this integrated approach to community health enabled local communities to take part in the formulation of health policy. These theories emphasized that health is not just a

medical objective but rather an interactive element within a complex system of factors. They also included conceptual frameworks that connected scientific knowledge to societal interaction and gave considerable weight to the social and economic determinants of individual health [10].

It is important to realize that the idea of public health has changed over time to encompass theories and concepts that acknowledge multidimensionality. These ideas have also functioned as organizing and directing frameworks for adaptable and all-encompassing principles and policies that adapt to changing social norms by revising their approaches in light of new scientific findings. In order to ensure sustainable and comprehensive public health that meets the needs of all segments of society, all of these developments show that society's health is a dynamic system that requires constant development and adaptation to new challenges, the implementation of evidence-based policies, the improvement of social and environmental conditions, and the raising of collective awareness [11].

### 3. Public Health Model Historical Stages

One of the most crucial frameworks for showing how health theory and practice have changed over time is the public health model's historical stage. Based on the changes in science, society, and politics that have impacted health-related ideas and beliefs, it can be broken down into phases. With an emphasis on the theoretical and practical developments that have taken place in public health models from their inception to their current, integrated models, we shall describe these phases in depth here in an analytical style appropriate for the academic setting [12].

#### 3.1. Early Systems and the Classical Era

The public health model's initial phase, which spanned the late 19th and early 20th centuries, served as its foundation. By enhancing fundamental health factors including space, cleanliness, access to clean water, and sanitation, it aimed mainly to eradicate infectious diseases and epidemics. Because environmental factors were thought to be the most important determinant of human health during this time, and because interventions aimed at improving the environment could significantly lower the incidence of disease, prevalent theories relied on the idea of prevention after the onset of disease [13].

Early health systems were implemented during this time, depending on the state's endeavors to supply essential medical care. As scientific informatics advanced, the idea of using vaccine and immunization to prevent disease started to take shape. These methods helped lower the prevalence of severe illnesses. A new knowledge that connects environmental and societal variables was established by the emergence of the first theoretical frameworks that linked health and the environment [14].

#### 3.2. The Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Prevention Models and the Epidemiological Stage

The idea that diseases were no longer just caused by infections and epidemics but also by lifestyle choices and societal shifts became clear during the second stage of the development of public health models, which started in the middle of the 20th century. Primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention are the three main tiers of prevention models that arose in reaction to these changes [15].

- By means of community and legislative initiatives, such as health education, environmental sanitation, lifestyle modifications, and the creation of social policies that lower risk factors, primary prevention aims to lower risks prior to the beginning of disease.

- Secondary prevention, which includes early patient screening and treatment, attempts to identify and treat illnesses before they deteriorate, lessening their effects on both the individual and society.

- Through rehabilitation programs and social assistance, tertiary prevention aims to improve quality of life and decrease disability by decreasing illness consequences and rehabilitating patients.

During this time, theories that connected lifestyle, genetic, and environmental influences also emerged, and public health and hygiene concepts were important parts of health policies. As a result, scientists' and politicians' perspectives on the relationship between illness and the environment changed.

### 3.3. Shift to Integrated and Modern Models

The last stage is the shift to contemporary, multifaceted models that hold that health is a state of dynamic balance between an individual and their surroundings, with environmental, social, economic, and cultural factors all playing a part in a way that is interconnected. This development marks a qualitative change from the conventional perspective, which relies on post-event therapy and intervention, to a proactive strategy that aims to empower communities by promoting health through all-encompassing, well-informed tactics.

In light of this, ideas like community health and comprehensive health have surfaced, highlighting the significance of social and economic factors. Sectoral integration and the incorporation of socioeconomic and demographic factors into health planning and intervention are the new policies. Modern theoretical frameworks that connect environmental, social, and psychological elements have emerged, building on earlier theories. They contend that a holistic approach is necessary for health, with the various dimensions interacting dynamically [16].

## 4. Fundamental Ideas and Theories in Public Health

The theoretical underpinnings that shape the development of concepts and applications in the health sector are public health theories and concepts. Examining these theories allows us to observe how the social and scientific understanding of health has changed over time, as well as how the models that have served as the foundation for numerous health policies have developed. The most significant of these theories and ideas will be covered in detail here, along with their significance and functions in forming different public health models.

### 4.1. Theory of Vaccination and Immunization

One of the most notable scientific discoveries that has directly aided in slowing the spread of infectious illnesses and providing a solid basis for the public health prevention approach is the notion of immunization and vaccination. The development of vaccines against fatal illnesses like smallpox, which have been successful in boosting herd immunity, lowering infection rates, and eventually eradicating numerous endemic diseases in different areas, is where this hypothesis got its start.

This approach is predicated on the idea that prevention starts with society as a whole being protected through mass vaccination, which builds an immunological barrier that stops the spread of disease. Conceptually, it embodies the third prevention principle, which emphasizes intervention prior to the onset of disease. It is the cornerstone of many contemporary public health initiatives that place a high priority on immunization tactics, particularly when battling infectious illnesses and epidemics [17].

### 4.2. Social and Environmental Models

With the development of models that explain the connection between the environment, illnesses, and health problems, our understanding of how environmental and social factors affect human health has grown in recent decades. This idea shows how social elements including money,

education, employment, and social ties are crucial in determining public health while addressing the effects of living conditions, hygiene, pollution, and environmental safety.

The idea of health as a straightforward individual condition has been given priority in these models, despite research showing that complex interactions between people and their surroundings influence health. As a result, new approaches to enhancing community health have emerged that rely on social and environmental interventions. Therefore, in order to prevent diseases before they arise and to support sustainable development and healthy communities, governments have started to concentrate on enhancing social and environmental circumstances [18].

### **4.3. Community Frameworks and Network Theory**

In the past, community frameworks and network theory have helped to rethink health as a multifaceted, systemic idea that links many social levels and sectors. Its foundation is the idea that social network connections and interactions, institutional interactions, and societal resources all have an impact on people's and groups' health status, both directly and indirectly.

This theory is founded on the idea that strengthening social networks, energizing community frameworks, and increasing public participation—all of which help to create a supportive and enabling environment for health promotion—are more effective ways to improve health than relying only on individual actions. As a result, in order to guarantee the durability of health gains, health policies have changed to emphasize the role of society in the preventive model through education and decision-making involvement [19].

### **4.4. Views of Health as a Multifaceted, Changing System**

One of the most sophisticated ideas in public health science is the idea that health is a dynamic system. Health is now a complex, multifaceted system that integrates physiological, psychological, social, environmental, economic, and cultural elements rather than just being the absence of sickness.

This idea is predicated on the idea that any alteration to one aspect of the system has an impact on the general state of health, and that sophisticated mathematical and analytical models are necessary to comprehend this intricate link. In addition to encouraging the creation of evaluation instruments and predictive models that take into account the complexity of social and health systems, this paradigm fosters a complete perspective by emphasizing multisectoral and integrated treatments. This paradigm allows for a thorough analysis of health occurrences and the development of more adaptable and responsive strategies [20].

## **5. Health Policy Development in Response to Emerging Paradigms**

Significant and sequential changes in health policy have occurred throughout history, reflecting shifting perspectives on the nature of health and the role that the environment and society play in fostering it. awareness how the health sector has changed to adapt to social and scientific advancements and how this has resulted in the adoption of more integrated and successful strategies requires an awareness of how health policies have responded to contemporary models and ideas.

### **5.1. Conventional Regulations and Preventive Strategies**

The classical model, which focused on direct therapeutic treatments that were more individual than societal in nature, or the idea of treating disease after it happened, was the main emphasis of health policies in the early 20th century. In this setting, health models that were predicated on the idea that disease might be decreased or avoided by direct control and prevention measures gave rise to preventive policies. In order to tackle infectious diseases like smallpox, cholera, and malaria, the most important instruments at the time were immunizations, health campaigns, and public hygiene.



In order to prevent the spread of disease, policies mostly concentrated on restrictive health measures, such as required vaccinations, better living circumstances, clean water, and hygienic housing. These policies, which prioritized prevention through direct preventative actions, were founded on the idea that health is a national and individual responsibility. The incidence of infectious diseases has decreased as a direct result of these policies [21].

## 5.2. Shift to Integrated and Modern Models

A significant change in health policies resulted from a more holistic perspective of health that took into consideration social and environmental factors as scientific understanding grew. Using multifaceted principles, a wave of contemporary models arose, highlighting the idea that health is a condition of integrated well-being that is influenced by social, economic, and political aspects rather than only the absence of sickness [22].

Policies that promoted health in a wide sense, including awareness campaigns, social programs, economic policies, and community health building projects, came into being in this setting. Because they aim to intervene at multiple levels and are more adaptable and all-encompassing, these policies might be referred to as integrative policies. They include basic healthcare as well as improvements to the environment, housing, education, and working circumstances.

The "health through society" approach, which centers action on society as a whole and depends on community involvement in policy design and execution, is what distinguishes policies based on contemporary models. As policies based on scientific facts have been more rationalized and codified, there has also been a notable rise in the use of health policy evaluation and development models based on social and environmental data [23].

## 5.3. Contemporary Regulations and the Emphasis on Social Intervention and Health Promotion

Medical therapies and social variables are increasingly being integrated into modern health strategies. This demonstrates an awareness that socioeconomic elements, including poverty, education, and the environment, have a direct influence on people's health. As a result, policies now embrace preventative and promotive methods through a variety of measures targeted at enhancing living conditions rather than just offering curative health services. Coordination across different sectors and widespread community participation are necessary for this [24].

Furthermore, contemporary theories have been used to create evidence-based planning and policy-making models that employ statistics and big data to inform choices, assess the success of initiatives, and pinpoint the needs of marginalized communities.

Because of this development, there has been a noticeable shift in health policies toward the use of "participatory policies," which guarantee individual and community involvement in the decision-making process, boosting the likelihood of sustainability and improving the efficacy of interventions. Programs for healthy communities, which emphasize community health education and social empowerment, are examples of this [25].

## 5.4. Difficulties and Shifts in the Implementation of Contemporary Policies

Even though health policy models have evolved and changed significantly, there are still many obstacles to overcome before they can be put into reality. These include insufficient finance, a lack of skilled workers, opposition to reform, and differences in institutional capabilities among nations, particularly in resource-poor areas.

Current policies also call for ongoing infrastructure upgrades and the improvement of pertinent stakeholders' scientific capacities. It might be difficult to adapt new models to local settings because they often call for consideration of cultural and social contexts.

Health equity concerns also surface among these issues, and policies must strike a balance between ensuring universal access to health care, minimizing social inequalities, and tackling global issues that affect public health, such as chronic illnesses, epidemics, and climate change [26].

### **5.5. Health Policy's Future and Trends in Response to Contemporary Models**

In order to improve the quality, efficiency, and accessibility of health services—particularly in distant and vulnerable areas—future health policies are progressively shifting toward models that invest more in digital technologies and artificial intelligence [27].

Additionally, there is a rising movement to adopt more resilient and sustainable health models that can adjust to global crises and health emergencies, as well as to fortify international collaborations. This means bolstering the framework for health policy that recognizes the relationship between sustainable development and health, providing solutions that are both global and locally relevant.

With a focus on a preventive, community-based approach that promotes health equity, diversifies and integrates strategies based on a deeper understanding of health factors, and contributes to better health outcomes and more sustainable and effective health systems, the evolution of health policies thus shows a continuous response to new paradigms [28].

## **6. Results and Discussion**

The theoretical analysis showed that the evolution of the idea of public health is a dynamic process that mirrors the social and scientific shifts society has experienced throughout time. A number of significant conclusions that help to better understand the evolution of this subject and direct future health policies can be reached by examining the fundamental ideas and theories.

First, it became clear that the idea of public health has evolved over time, moving from traditional models that emphasized preventing infectious diseases and attaining health through a limited number of preventive measures to contemporary models that take a more comprehensive, wide-ranging approach that takes into account social, economic, and environmental factors. This shift reflects a growing understanding that health is a sustainable condition of general well-being rather than just the absence of sickness, which necessitates the development of integrated strategies and policies aimed at promoting health in all pertinent domains.

Second, the research's theories and concepts showed how scientific thinking has changed from considering vaccination and inoculation as the main theories for disease control to environmental and social models that acknowledge the influence of non-medical factors on people's and communities' health. For instance, ecological theory and social models have demonstrated that lifestyles, economic circumstances, and the surrounding environment are crucial factors in comprehending and creating health policy. This highlights the significance of intersectoral partnerships in advancing public health [29].

Third, it can be argued that a greater awareness of the significance of social and environmental interventions in promoting comprehensive health is reflected in the change in health policies from traditional approaches centered on disease treatment to modern models centered on prevention and health promotion. In line with contemporary views that see health as an integrated and dynamically changing system, this has led to the adoption of initiatives like awareness campaigns, community interventions, and bettering socioeconomic conditions.

Ultimately, theoretical analysis makes it evident that knowing how public health concepts and theories have evolved over time is essential to better health policy formulation. This knowledge gives decision-makers the flexibility and depth they need to create more integrated and long-lasting programs. To stay up with scientific and social advancements and comprehend the effects of global

shifts like climate change and environmental degradation on community health, theoretical study must also continue [30].

To sum up, this analysis shows that the development of the idea of public health is a continuous process that necessitates ongoing attention to both theoretical and practical changes. In order to achieve sustainable and effective health solutions, theoretical research and applied practices must interact. The study's conclusions are a crucial resource for fostering a more thorough comprehension of these advancements, which may open the door to bettering health policy both conceptually and practically to better meet contemporary social demands and shifting realities.

## 7. Conclusion

According to the research, the development of the idea of public health is a dynamic and interrelated process that mirrors the social, political, and scientific shifts that society has undergone over time. The results demonstrate how a more thorough and in-depth understanding of the elements of health is reflected in the shift from disease treatment-focused models to comprehensive, preventive models. In order to promote the general well-being of societies, health policies are now founded on ideas that integrate environmental, social, and economic factors.

This research is really valuable from a scientific standpoint. It offers a cogent theoretical framework that makes it possible to comprehend the various intellectual frameworks that have developed over time and helps to fortify future plans for creating health policies based on the application of cutting-edge ideas and theories that are appropriate for the difficulties of the present day. The study also emphasizes the value of ongoing theoretical research in updating knowledge and directing health policies to meet the swift changes brought about by social and technical forces.

Given this, the study's conclusions highlight the necessity of developing health policies through a multifaceted and all-encompassing approach, which is becoming more and more crucial as we gain a deeper comprehension of the intricate connections among the different elements that affect human health. The creation of more sustainable and successful treatments that meet community needs and align with social and cultural norms is made possible by the interplay of environmental, social, and economic factors as well as theoretical advancements in the field of public health.

In conclusion, this study serves as a vital resource for improving comprehension of the conceptual frameworks that can influence future health policies in addition to offering a thorough assessment and analysis of the evolution and history of the idea of public health. The fundamental necessity of preserving the relationship between theory and practice in the field of public health is reflected in its encouragement of the revival of theoretical research as a crucial component in raising the caliber of health visions and strategies.

**Author Contribution:** All authors contributed equally to the main contributor to this paper. All authors read and approved the final paper.

**Funding:** "This research received no external funding"

**Conflicts of Interest:** "The authors declare no conflict of interest."

## 8. References

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