

Strengthening health promotion practice

Stephan Van Den Broucke

S Van Den Broucke^{1,2}

¹Université Catholique de Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium

²Scientific Affairs, IUHPE, Montréal, Canada

Contact: Stephan.vandenbroucke@uclouvain.be

Health services in most developed countries were developed to meet the needs of a demand-led health care, and focus mostly on treatment, cure and care. This system is challenged by the growing burden of non-communicable diseases, increased multi-morbidity, newly emerging communicable diseases, and increasing anti-microbial resistance. At the same time, widening health inequalities pose an additional threat to health systems that do not give enough attention to the factors that produce health. To address these challenges, it is necessary to reorient health services towards more preventive, people-centred and community-based approaches, with a more prominent role for health promotion, integrated within the wider health system. This shift of focus requires the strengthening of health workforce capacities to effectively implement health promotion. Whereas a competent health workforce has always been considered a key condition for the delivery of effective health services, the nature of the necessary 'competencies' is being redefined in the light of the current changes of the health system. Within the diversifying primary care and public health workforce, new skills and tasks must be added to existing professional roles, new professional profiles emerge, and collaborations between professions become more important.

This presentation will consider the place of health promotion workforce development within the broader context of public health and health promotion capacity building systems targeting a diversifying primary care and public health workforce. Drawing on recent reviews it will provide an overview of existing capacity development systems in primary and secondary prevention and health promotion, and consider possibilities for integration and implementation of capacity systems within and across disciplinary boundaries.