

Public health and nutrition.

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Editorial

Public Health Nutrition is a multidisciplinary subject that combines Public Health with the science of Nutrition, and aimed to address lifestyle and nutrition-related challenges by promoting nutrition for health and well-being. In today's commercialized society the food we consume are cultivated in nutrition-mineral deficient soil with fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides; preserved with chemicals to increase self-life and are artificially coloured or flavoured. While dairy foods are derived from the animals reared with antibiotics, hormones, and artificial feed. Moreover, our cooking methods destroy most vitamins, minerals, and enzymes; while selection of food is based on taste and convenience. Furthermore, foods transported from long distance are picked up before they ripen, stored with preservatives and shipped with depleted vitamins. Today's busy life in vastly polluted air, water and space creates profound stress to weaken our immunity. Thus, our body failed to get adequate fuel and proper nutrients as we are unaware of our body's need and supply. So in every meal there is a nutrition gap, which widens up with age, lifestyle and diet; and even alters our biochemical pathways, resulting in deficiency symptoms that impact our lifestyle.

- On the other hand, the shortfalls in public health nutrition in developing and underdeveloped countries is due to:
- lack of evidence-based policies
- skilled human resources
- limited nutritional surveillance data
- focus on curative measures for even nutrition-related health problems
- Limited operational research on the effectiveness of population-based interventions.

Those issues are compounded by one-on-one or individual consultations and practice of Dieticians in Clinics and Hospitals but not on community level. Moreover, despite the abundance of public health professionals and nutritionists/dieticians in many areas, their discipline-based practice undermines impact

on public health, whereas the situation analysis demands such professionals who blend the 'skills with qualifications' of public health and nutritional sciences. It is true that by recruiting trained and graduate Public health professional and empowering public health nutritionists is more beneficial for community, as those professionals are well-equipped with up-to-date knowledge and applied skills in specialty areas like research, policy, program planning, health promotion, education, monitoring and evaluation.

We need the dedicated and committed public health professional to assist communities at large in developing and implementing evidence-based nutrition programs as well as interventions at local, national, and regional levels. Today we need human resources to develop, implement, evaluate and tackle the disease burden. Academic institutions need to provide evidence-based knowledge required for the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of such programs; while research findings need to inform policy makers for action. To cater these universities need to develop curricula on public health nutrition; while capacity building should foster accountability. Continuous monitoring and reporting of updated data can help to follow-up and ensure the implementation of every step in the program. Nutritional surveillance systems are fundamental for monitoring nutrition interventions and assessing nutritional status, food availability and consumption, along with the physical activity patterns of populations. The impact of programs and policies aimed at reducing the burden of food- and nutrition-related diseases should be constantly assessed and evaluated through accountability. Public health nutrition is largely neglected in many countries and communities due to lack of skilled human resources and proper policies to address diet-related problems. Thus, there is an urgent need to address the issues of nutrition-related disorders, malnutrition and life-style diseases through targeted evidence based nutrition policies and preventive programs. To cater this need the proficient and motivated, qualified and skilled public health nutritionists are essential along with a commitment for effective and long-term capacity building, where the Journal of Public Health and Nutrition can create a global impact for future solutions and initiatives.

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