

Divided into four parts, the book provides critical coverage of theories of health promotion, strategies and methods utilised in promoting health, multiple settings approaches and implementation issues including assessment, planning and evaluation. The third edition updates each section to reflect developments in health promotion since the last revision in 2000.

The text in this book flows smoothly and is well illustrated with figures, charts and diagrams. While many of the health system references and political comments in the book are British, international readers will be pleased to note the wealth of international examples used to illustrate application of the principles covered in the book. Australian readers will be particularly pleased with the number of illustrative examples from our continent.

A most attractive feature of the writing is the frank and direct commentary on the limitations associated with some health promotion methods and problems that are common in health promotion practice. These caveats are critical to the development of a realistic picture of the need for multiple strategies and strong evaluation to effectively promote health. They reflect the complexities associated with health promotion as a discipline and will better prepare readers to think both analytically and constructively as they make their way in the field.

For example, the section on community development and health promotion provides a brief but useful history and background that does not shy away from commentary on the political realities of using the approach. This is an important lesson for earnest beginners. It continues with a discussion of principles underpinning community development and examples of activities common to the approach. The refreshing chart of advantages and disadvantages to community development provides a critical list that should be carefully considered when utilising this approach. The conclusion of this chapter directly addresses the difficulties that many governmental agencies have with community development. At the same time, the authors support broader outlooks from these agencies and an increased willingness to engage with community development.

It is this honest and balanced approach that will help readers to understand how pragmatic health promotion workers have to be and how frequently the focus of their work is influenced by factors and players that are beyond their control. Providing this information can lead to workers more critically analysing the context in which they work and developing strategies to influence the strategic directions of their work and the approaches they take. Effective health promotion often requires workers to direct their focus both internally within

their organisations as well as externally to clients, patients or community members.

A common flaw in books that attempt to provide coverage of a broad range of elements of a discipline is an unfortunate lack of depth on any particular issue. This book attempts to counter that flaw with relevant examples, stimulating discussion points and activities that encourage readers to independently dig deeper into issues of interest. These, combined with suggested further readings and relevant references, assist the reader to direct their own learning according to their individual needs.

If we believe that 'Health Promotion is Everybody's Business' then this book will clearly help more people to understand the fundamentals of that business and to see their particular place in doing it. This book is recommended for workers in health, education and social welfare who engage in health promotion as part of their duties. It is particularly recommended for those new to the field of health promotion and those studying the basics of the discipline. Readers with a good understanding of the basics of health promotion practice may find this a useful reference or may be drawn to the authors' companion text, *Public Health and Health Promotion, Developing Practice* from the same publishers.

Population Health, Communities and Health Promotion

Edited by Sansnee Jirojwong, Pranee Liamputtong. Published by Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 2008. Paperback 344 pages plus index. ISBN 9780195560558. RRP \$69.95

Reviewed by Craig Fry, Murdoch Childrens Research Institute and University of Melbourne

There are many books that have been written on the topics of population health, health promotion and community health. Sansnee Jirojwong and Pranee Liamputtong add to this growing library of resources with their highly readable and accessible text, the back cover of which proclaims to be the first such book to cover these topics together.

Edited books, particularly in a field such as public health where there exist diverse cultures, perspectives and practices, can sometimes suffer from lack of clarity and cohesion around guiding themes and principles. This book is not one of these.

As Editors and also contributing authors, Jirojwong and Liamputtong bring together 15 chapters across five major

sections including Theory and Concepts, Needs Assessment, Planning, Implementation and Evaluation. The chapters have been written by some of the leading public health academics and practitioners in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Fiji. Most of the contributors are still actively engaged in health promotion research and practice in the settings they write about, which greatly increases the credibility of this material.

Population Health, Communities and Health Promotion is targeted primarily at undergraduate students and their teachers in these and related fields of public health. I believe it will find a wider appeal because it is a very well organised and immensely practical resource.

Each chapter provides helpful summaries of objectives, key terms, recommended reading and key websites for further information. Critical thinking exercises are also provided throughout. I found the case studies presented in this book particularly interesting and effective. For example, we move from reproductive and sexual health to healthy eating, from pedestrian injury to children and seniors, and smoking and burns prevention. Illustrations of health promotion at the individual, group and population levels are provided. These practical examples succeed in bringing the core conceptual content of the chapters to life, and would be a useful addition to curricula in this area.

To add extra value there are Appendices that contain practical resources including a nice overview of different health promotion theories and frameworks, a project planning example and an example of the application of the popular PRECEDE-PROCEED model of health promotion planning. These would be equally useful for students, teachers and practitioners.

All the 'key' concepts are here in this comprehensive book. Core topics are covered such as: health definitions and determinants; health promotion theories and models; needs assessment methodology; community capacity and empowerment; project planning and evaluation. There is also interesting sections on topics perhaps less 'mainstream' in health promotion that are now gaining due recognition, such as: travel, environment and health, policy advocacy, cross-cultural communication and competencies and ethical decision-making skills.

It is heartening to see the inclusion of ethics as a decision-making tool in a health promotion text such as this, and the topic is well placed in Chapter 6 that covers health professional and stakeholder needs assessment and prioritisation. However, my one reservation about this is that given the practical focus of other chapters, the 'bioethical tool' that is presented could have been further explained. The author claims the 'bioethical model' can be applied in training, planning and debriefing,

though does not explain how. In keeping with other chapters, this section of the book would be improved by inclusion of a case study.

This book would be suited to undergraduate and postgraduate students studying in the fields of public health, health promotion or indeed the wider health and medical sciences. It would also be of value to health promotion and other public health professionals working in either community or government sectors.

Jirojwong and Liamputtong, have achieved their aim of highlighting the principles of health promotion from the perspective of how these would apply in the planning, conduct and evaluation of actual health promotion projects. This is a comprehensive and highly recommended text, and in light of what it offers, is very fairly priced.

Errata

Two articles in the April issue of this Journal carried incorrect titles in the table of contents. The correct titles are:

Staying active, staying strong: pilot evaluation of a once-weekly, community-based strength training program for older adults. *Health Promotion Journal of Australia* 2009; 20:42-7

Suitability of a structured Fundamental Movement Skills program for long day care centres: a process evaluation. Nick Petrunoff, Beverley Lloyd, Natalie Watson and David Morrissey. *Health Promotion Journal of Australia* 2009; 20:65-8