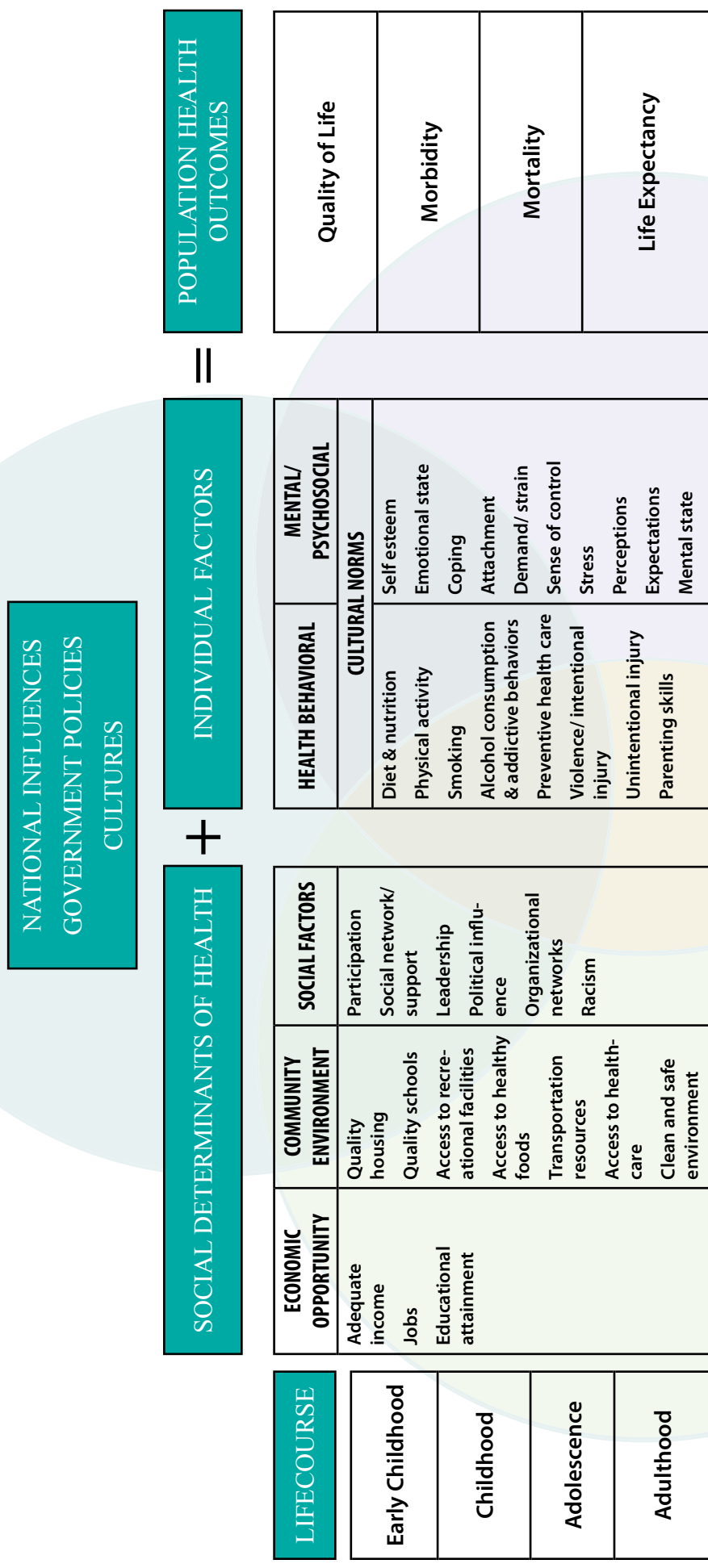


HEALTH EQUITY

AN EXPLANATORY FRAMEWORK FOR CONCEPTUALIZING THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



Public Health's Role in Addressing the Social Determinants of Health

- Advocating for and defining public policy to achieve health equity
- Coordinated interagency efforts
- Creating supportive environments to enable change
- Data collection, monitoring and surveillance
- Population based interventions to address individual factors
- Community engagement and capacity building

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Achieving health equity, by addressing the Social Determinants of Health, so that no one is disadvantaged from achieving their full potential because of socially determined circumstances.

The Social Determinants of Health Framework

Definition

Social determinants of health (SDoH) are life enhancing resources whose distribution across populations effectively determines length and quality of life. (S. James, Promoting Health Equity, CDC, 2008)

Life Course Perspective

Stages of Development

By directing attention to how the SDoH operate at each level, more targeted approaches can be determined, so that the cumulative effects of inequalities can be ameliorated.

The Social Determinants (CDC)

- Economic Opportunity
- Community Empowerment
- Social Factors

In order to affect health equity and improve the larger population health outcomes, the public health system must do its part to

define and identify healthy public policy that leads to more equitable distribution of positive markers/indicators

Individual Factors

This is where current public health work focuses.

Through population-based approaches, the public health system delivers culturally appropriate interventions to improve health behaviors and reduce risk factors. Although this is a necessary component to improving health outcomes it focuses on individual changes. A more macro level approach of addressing the SDoH through policy is needed.

Population Health Outcomes

In general, the goal of any public institution is to improve quality of life.

By increasing coordinated interagency efforts and building awareness and engagement around addressing the SDoH, measures of overall health outcomes can improve.

Public Health's Role in Addressing the Social Determinants of Health

Addressing the Social Determinants of Health through Healthy Public Policy to Achieve Health Equity Among All Coloradans

The Public Health System can affect population health outcomes by addressing the social determinants of health (SDoH) through a life course perspective. By directing attention to how policies can positively change the SDoH, how they operate at every level of development and continuing our work on individual factors, changes can be made to Colorado's health outcomes.

Advocating for and Defining Public Policy to Achieve Health Equity

Local and state policy that is focused on the social determinants of health, such as economic development (education & adequate income), community environment (built environment & transportation) and the social factors (social support, leadership and racism), have the greatest effect on making the changes needed to achieve health equity.

Coordinated Interagency Efforts

In order to ensure that awareness and engagement is built around the social determinants of health across all state agencies and public health partners, there must be coordinated interagency efforts. With this engagement comes a stronger voice to make the policy changes necessary to achieve equity.

Creating Supportive Environments to Enable Change

Changes need to happen internally within agencies because work on the social determinants of health is a shift in the way we currently address public health issues.

Data Collection, Monitoring and Surveillance

The social determinants framework requires that we look for and look at data in new ways. By engaging system partners in data sharing and learning how to appropriately analyze and interpret data from fields such as education, transportation, and housing, the social determinants framework provides a rich and robust view of health. This type

of data synthesis will lead to a deeper understanding of the many issues that ultimately affect the health and health behaviors of people in families, neighborhoods and communities.

Population Based Interventions to Address Individual Factors

Although addressing the social determinants of health means working more deliberately on the previously mentioned areas, population based interventions of the current public health system are still needed.

Community Engagement and Capacity Building

Community members must be engaged and informed in order to move policy change forward. Communities are the most important participants in identifying the problem and educating decision makers on changes that can benefit all. With proper support, such as knowledge, skills and tools, communities can champion solutions that result in long term changes to the social determinants of health.