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**Health promotion and disease prevention through population-based interventions, including action to address social determinants and health inequity****Mini Radhakrishnan**

Danat Al Emarat Women and Children Hospital, UAE

**Public health connects us all:** Public health is the science of protecting and improving the health of families and communities through promotion of healthy lifestyles, research for disease and injury prevention and detection and control of infectious diseases. Overall, public health is concerned with protecting the health of entire populations. These populations can be as small as a local neighbourhood, or as big as an entire country or region of the world. Public health professionals try to prevent problems from happening or recurring through implementing educational programs, recommending policies, administering services and conducting research in contrast to clinical professionals like doctors and nurses, who focus primarily on treating individuals after they become sick or injured. Public health also works to limit health disparities.

**Disease prevention:** Disease prevention, understood as specific, population-based and individual-based interventions for primary and secondary (early detection) prevention, aiming to minimize the burden of diseases and associated risk factors. Primary prevention refers to actions aimed at avoiding the manifestation of a disease (this may include actions to improve health through changing the impact of social and economic determinants on health; the provision of information on behavioral and medical health risks, alongside consultation and measures to decrease them at the personal and community level; nutritional and food supplementation; oral and dental hygiene education; and clinical preventive services such as immunization and vaccination of children, adults and the elderly, as well as vaccination or post-exposure prophylaxis for people exposed to a communicable disease).

**Health promotion:** Health promotion is the process of empowering people to increase control over their health and its determinants through health literacy efforts and multisectoral action to increase healthy behaviors. This process includes activities for the community-at-large or for populations at increased risk of negative health outcomes. Health promotion usually addresses behavioral risk factors such as tobacco use, obesity, diet and physical inactivity, as well as the areas of mental health, injury prevention, drug abuse control, alcohol control, health behavior related to HIV, and sexual health.

**Scope of the function****Disease prevention**

- **Primary prevention services and activities include:**

Vaccination and post-exposure prophylaxis of children, adults and the elderly; Provision of information on behavioral and medical health risks, and measures to reduce risks at the individual and population levels; Inclusion of disease prevention programmes at primary and specialized health care levels, such as access to preventive services (e.g., counselling); and Nutritional and food supplementation; and Dental hygiene education and oral health services.

- **Secondary prevention includes activities such as:**

Population-based screening programmes for early detection of diseases; Provision of maternal and child health programmes, including screening and prevention of congenital malformations; and Provision of chemo-prophylactic agents to control risk factors (e.g., hypertension).

**Support mechanisms for health promotion and disease prevention**

- Multisectoral partnerships for health promotion and disease prevention
- Educational and social communication activities aimed at promoting healthy conditions, lifestyles, behavior and environments
- Reorientation of health services to develop care models that encourage disease prevention and health promotion
- Risk communication

**Biography**

Mini Radhakrishnan is an Infection Control Practitioner working in Danat Al Emarat Women and Children Hospital, Abu Dhabi. She is a certified Infection Control Practitioner, CIC from CBIC, USA. She has completed her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from India and obtained her NCLEX Rn License from Vermont Board, USA.

mini\_pillai26@yahoo.com