

Operational definition

Research is fundamental to informing policy development and service delivery. This function refers to the generation of research that aims to increase knowledge to support decision-making at various levels.

Communication for public health aims at improving the health literacy and status of individuals and populations by informing, influencing, and motivating individuals, institutions, and public audiences about important health problems and determinants.

Health communication encompasses several areas including health journalism, entertainment, education, interpersonal communication, media advocacy, organizational communication, risk and crisis communication, social communication and social marketing.

This communication function offers the public a way to counter the active promotion of hazardous products and lifestyles; e.g. tobacco, and is a two-way information exchange activity which requires listening, intelligence gathering and learning about how people perceive and frame messages on health.

Scope of the function

Communication strategy incorporated into priority public health programmes

Vision, measurable objectives, clearance procedures, methods of evaluation

Seeking community opinion

Message framing based on target audiences

Utilization of different media (from traditional media to mobile applications and online social media)

Countering unhealthy marketing campaigns

Organization of communication and social mobilization

Responsibilities of various staff and networking

Partnership with private media and marketing firms

Interaction with civil society promoting public health issues

Evaluation of the communication and social mobilization efforts/activities

Linkage and synergy with relevant/key stakeholders.

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