

PEOPLE

OPPORTUNITY

NATURE

BELONGING

Minnesota Statewide Health Assessment

Introduction Lecture

Agenda

- What is health?
- Systems impact health
- Understanding racism
- Health equity
- Intersectionality
- COVID's influence on health in MN
- What we need to be healthy: People, Opportunity, Nature, Belonging

What is health?

- “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” (World Health Organization, 2006)
- Health is a resource and something we shape together
- Shift our understanding of health from individualistic lens to a systems lens



Systems Impact Health

- A system consists of many things working together – such as the transportation system
- These things working together lead to a function – such as getting you from point A to point B
- Some of the impacts of a system are intentional, and some are not.
 - Healthcare system works to diagnose and treat disease
 - Health disparities due to systemic racism
- Systems change requires conditions that must shift for change to happen
- These conditions determine who benefits from the opportunities and services created



Understanding Racism

- Understanding race
- Individual racism: is the belief that one's own race is superior to others. It prompts us to see the “other” as a threat and to treat people differently according to certain easily identifiable physical characteristics
- Institutional or systemic racism: is present when race as a societal creation is embedded into policies, practices, and procedures that work better for one group of people than for others—when they work better for white people than for communities of color
- Racism impacts health

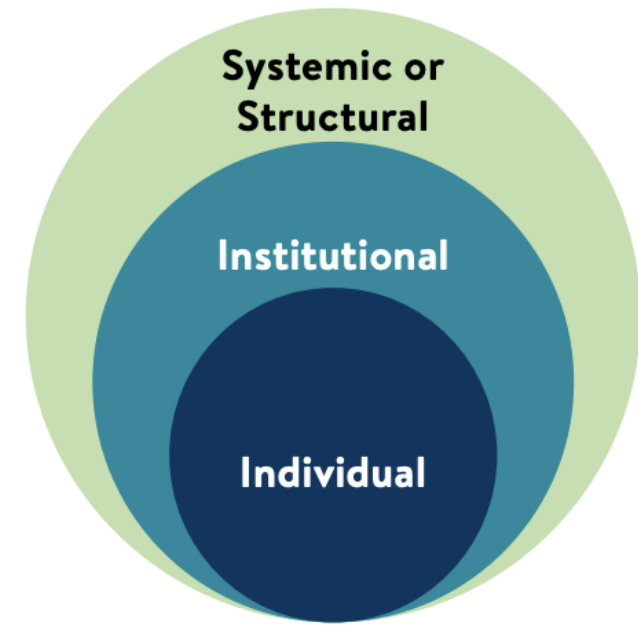


Figure 1: Levels of Racism



Intersectionality



- Defined as: **interconnected** nature of social **categorizations** such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and **interdependent** systems of discrimination or disadvantage.
- Discrimination based on other things than race can impact health equity
- Differences in addition to racism can intensify challenges
- Limitations in data on identity are not available in useful ways to fully explore intersectionality



COVID's Impact on the Assessment

- The pandemic changed us all
- The SHA reveals the influence the pandemic had on the health of Minnesotans.
- Health data was impacted so the approach of comparison had to change



What we need to be healthy

People: who we are and where we have come from, and our differences (real and perceived) shape our health.

Opportunity: Inequitable social and economic opportunities that impact our health—in education, employment, income, housing, transportation, and more

Nature: our health being shaped by our connection to and interactions with the natural environment

Belonging: being included in our communities, and our connections with each other can improve or weaken our lifelong health.



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