

Medical Anthropology (2)

What is health?

* WHO's definition: "**complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity**" in the Constitution (1948), with "the capability to function in the face of changing circumstances" / "highest possible level of health" allows people to participate in social life and work productively → still widely accepted and useful as an ideal goal, but there have been many critics and discussion (eg. too ideal, not practical, intolerant for diversity, paternalistic, ...)

* Revision movement related to the inclusion of spirituality (and "dynamic"):

See, Nagase M (2012) Does a Multi-Dimensional Concept of Health Include Spirituality? Analysis of Japan Health Science Council's Discussions on WHO's 'Definition of Health' (1998). *International Journal of Applied Sociology*, 2(6): 71-77.

(<http://article.sapub.org/pdf/10.5923.j.ijas.20120206.03.pdf>)

* Biomedical measures: life expectancy, span of healthy life, health behaviors, reserve health, social support, overall birth rate, population growth rate, ...

* Critical medical anthropology concepts

* Public health concepts

* Cultural and organizational concepts

* Personal concepts to improve health

* Systems approach to health: including biopsychosocial model, cultural systems model

<Debate>

"Is WHO's definition of health still adequate?" considering the discussion about the inclusion of spiritual health and its denial by the disagreement from religious aspects.

Pro.: Appropriate.

Opp.: Inappropriate.

cf. <https://www.joghr.org/article/11924-what-is-needed-to-realize-universal-health-coverage-the-meaning-of-health-revisited>