

HEALTH AND WELLNESS FOR DIRECTORS AND INSPECTORS OF AREA/SHARIA/CUSTOMARY COURTS, A PAPER PRESENTED BY DR FARUK ABDULLAHI NABAGE (MBBS,MPH) ON THURSDAY 22nd APRIL, 2021 AT THE NATIONAL JUDICIAL INSTITUTE (NJI).

It is a common belief that Health is considered to be absence of illness, sickness or disease, Or a state of being free from illness or injury. This perspective of health definition emphasises the role of only Clinical Diagnosis and Interventions.

Health and wellness are terms that are often combined and used interchangeably. However, the two are quite variable interms of their origins and meaning. Conversely you cannot really have health without wellness. In an attempt to understand the difference between the two concepts, it is important to isolate their respective definations.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defined **Health** as a state of complete Physical, Mental and Social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (physical weakness or ailment). While **wellness** as the optimal state of Health of Individuals and groups and also expressed by a positive approach to living. The National Wellness Institute also defined it as an active process through which people became aware of and make choices towards a more successful existence.

In as much as Health has the components of Physical, Social and Mental aspects, so also wellness as a multidimensional and holistic, encompassing lifestyle, mental and spiritual wellbeing and the environment. Health is the goal and wellness is the active process of achieving it which shows that wellness has a direct

influence on health. While we cannot always choose the state of our health, we do have conscious choice to make decisions towards wellness.

In Nigeria, the 10 topmost causes of death are Lower Respiratory Tract Infection, Neonatal disorders, HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Diarrheal diseases, Tuberculosis, Meningitis, Ischaemic heart disease, Stroke, Cirrhosis.

About 70% of the diseases are preventable while 70% of the government resources to health goes to curative.

DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

To achieve a healthy state or not in an individual is an interplay between several factors. These factors are called Determinants. An individual in some instances has little or no control over these determinants while some are modifiable. They are classified as;

- **Income and Social status** - It is believed that the higher the income and social class, the better ability of an individual to access better and prompt healthcare, while poor individuals have limited access to quality health care. This partly explains the reason for the medical Tourism in the country.
- **Literacy/Education:** - Lack of awareness, poor knowledge, low level literacy is linked with poor health outcomes. Some people living in remote areas are believe to enjoy poor Health due to lack of schools and basic information dissemination channels such as television, Newspapers, social media. The existence of harmful traditional practices also affects health.

- **Health care services:** - Availability, Accessibility and Affordability of health care services forms a strong factor that determined the health of an individual and community. Absence of the basic primary health care in some areas, coupled with poor access roads and the cost of services served as a limiting factor to achieving a qualitative health care. Others are Insurance coverage, language barriers, attitudes of health workers etc. About 70% of health expenses in Nigeria is out of pocket with only 5% insurance coverage so far.
- **Physical environmental factors:** Individuals living in areas with potable water, safe houses, good roads, electricity are believed to enjoy a better health while densely populated areas are at a higher risk of Poor Health condition due to lack of basic amenities and congestion.
- **Nutrition/Diet:**-Malnutrition, Undernutrition, calorie deficiency affects people of the lower socioeconomic community because their diets consist of mainly whole grains with little body building and protection ingredients. On the other hand, individuals that eat alot of junk foods with less physical activity usually have calorie overload with resultant risk of developing diseases like Diabetes mellitus, hypertension, high cholesterol, Heart disease, Cancer. etc.
- **Exercise:** Lack of physical activity predisposes to developing obesity which is a risk factor for diseases like Diabetes mellitus, High Cholesterol and worsening of some diseases like hypertension, Arthritis.

- **Life style:** In the extreme of cases, individuals engaging in some lifestyles may be harmful to their health. Cigarette smoking, alcohol intake, bad sexual behaviour, drug use. They are at risk of developing cancers of the lungs, liver, colon etc.
- **Genetics and Biology:** Presence of a particular illness in a family or community affects the health of the generations of that family significantly through inheritance e.g. sickle cell Anaemia, Diabetes mellitus, hypertension, Mental disorder, BRCA 1&2 gene. Being a female or male may be a risk of some diseases related to the sex of the individuals. e.g. Breast and Prostate Cancer in females and males respectively.
- **Sanitation/Hygiene:** - This entails the attitudes towards the environment as well as the individual self. Poor sanitary condition, poor personal and food hygiene are a major factor in causing some of preventable medical conditions.

COMPONENTS/DIMENSIONS OF WELLNESS

To understand the significance of wellness, it is important to describe it's linked to health. According to Global wellness Institute, wellness is multi-dimensional with at least 6 dimensions as:

Physical wellness: This gives physical fitness and can be achieved through exercise such as walking, cycling, jogging. Nutrition that is made of balanced diet, good and adequate sleep. Doing this prevents sedentary life style

Mental wellness: It has to do with engaging the world through learning, solving problems, creativity, mind challenge. These can avoid mental health problems.

Emotional wellness: A person with emotional wellness will be

able to be in touch with, aware of, accepting and able to express ones feelings and those of others.

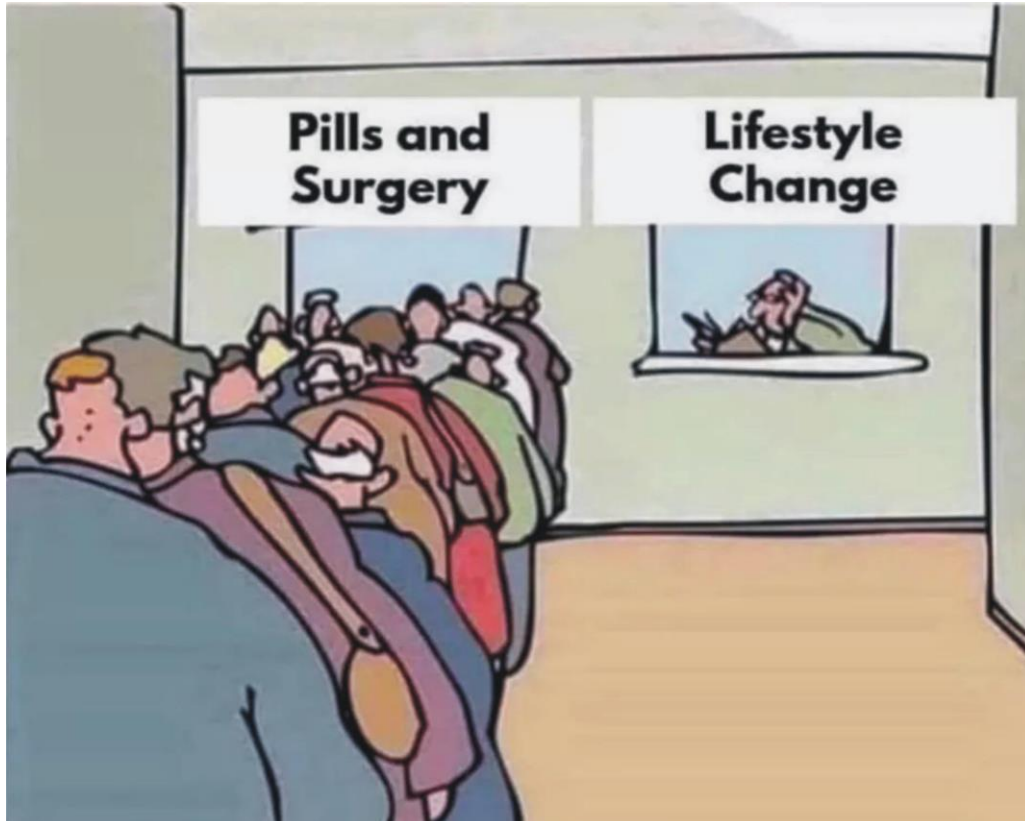
Environmental wellness: Living in a healthy physical environment free of hazards, awareness of the role we play in bettering rather than denigrating the natural environment.

Social wellness: Connecting with, interacting with and contributing to other people and our community. Establishing good interpersonal relationship with family, friends keeps a person happier.

Spiritual wellness: The search for the meaning and purpose of human existence, developing compassion, caring, forgiving helps in spiritual wellness.

ARCHIEVING HEALTH AND WELLNESS

It is obvious that life style modification is the key to improved Health, prevent diseases and enhance quality of life and a sense of wellbeing. American College of lifestyle medicine said that nearly 80% of all chronic diseases are preventable by readily available means-Lifestyle modification as medicine.



It involves altering long term habits typically of eating, physical activity and maintaining new behavior. This can be achieved through General Health Promotion:

- (1) Creating awareness, knowledge, beliefs, and actions about behaviors that promote health and prevent diseases. Through the available channels of Public lectures Social media, radio, TV, Posters etc.
- (2) Emphasis should be on balance diets that contain adequate amount of nutrients, Vegetables, fruits, grains, nuts are important to health.
- (3) Exercises such as jogging, Walking, Cycling for atleast 3-4 times in a week or not less that 30-60 minutes in a day is highly encouraged. This help prevents and modify diseases like diabetics, hypertension.

- (4) Improve personal/food hygiene and sanitation by regular hand washing, and keeping the environment clean.
- (5) Smoking, Alcohol intake should be discouraged with unnecessary use of drugs. Adequate sleep is also advocated
- (6) Individuals should be made to pay less and reduce out of pocket expenses through strengthening and extending the Health insurance coverage and increase budgetary allocation to Health.
- (7) Emphasis should also be on preventive health services by strengthening the primary healthcare Centres, making them more functional and available.
- (8) The government should provide more life compatible atmospheres through provision of basic amenities like good roads, affordable houses, electricity and safe drinking water.
- (9) Premarital counselling and testing to put a stop at some genetically transmitted illnesses.
- (10) Covid 19 Prevention Protocol and Vaccine is highly recommended

FINALLY, PEOPLE SHOULD BE EMPOWERED TO TAKE THEIR HEALTH INTO THEIR OWN HANDS, THROUGH LIFESTYLE MODIFICATION. THIS WILL DRASTICALLY REDUCE DEPENDENCE ON DOCTORS.

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING