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The social determinants of men's health

Globally, there has been a growth in interest in men's health in the past two decades. At the time of writing there are three countries with national male health policies: Ireland, Brazil and Australia. The thinking and research on men's health can (of course in a necessarily oversimplified but nevertheless accurate manner) be seen to revolve around three themes which are to some extent reflected in these policies and other current work on men's health. These themes are: (1) Urological concerns: Diseases of the prostate and erectile dysfunction. This strand has considerable support from the medical profession and the pharmaceutical industry. (2) Men's behavior: Medical and health sociologists and health promotion professionals draw attention to men's health threatening behavior, often ascribed to 'masculinity', seen as a propensity to violence and competition and negative lifestyle choices like smoking and alcohol consumption. (3) The social determinants of health approach: This strand of thinking draws on the World Health Organization's promotion of the social determinants of health (the enormous influence of life context on people's health, like work, the social gradient and social support). The presentation will overview these approaches to men's health policies and suggest that the third one (social determinants) can include the other two while providing a way forward, globally, towards an evidence-based approach in the formulation of global men's health policies.

Biography

John J Macdonald had taught Primary Health Care in Manchester and Bristol University in the UK as well as in French at INSERM in Paris. He has worked in Zambia for 10 years and has worked for shorter periods of time in many countries, such as Nicaragua, Chile, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Tanzania, Botswana, South Africa and Hong Kong. He has been a Consultant to the World Health Organization in Geneva, most recently in January-February of 2016 and was a Consultant to the Male Health Policy of Australia (2010).

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