

Training PhD students

Session: Multi-level framework

Skills and competencies

critical thinking, analytical skills, critically review literature, identify a research gap, make an argument in writing and oral presentation

Duration and scheduling

120-minute session

During the same week as "[Searching](#), [reading](#) and [synthesis](#)"

Mode of delivery

In person, virtual or blended learning

Video: <https://youtu.be/KU9YzKJDEk4>

Outline

This session introduces the social determinants of health. Drawing on their literature reviews, discipline-specific groups work together to map out a conceptual framework. They cluster social determinants at different levels – individual, household, community, national and global – and explore the links between them.

Objectives

- Generate and categorise social determinants within a multilevel framework
- Enhance argument skills as students justify the categorization of particular social determinants
- Introduce students to a conceptual framework (the multilevel framework)

Preparation

Facilitators

PowerPoint presentation on social determinants of health

Post-it notes in different colours

Board with headings matching the colours of the post-it notes

String

Students

Findings from discipline-specific literature reviews (see [Searching](#), [reading](#) and [synthesis](#))

Steps

1. Introduce the social determinants of health (0 – 20 mins)

The facilitator explains the concept, with the use of a PowerPoint presentation.

2. Group work (20–50 mins)

In small groups, and with reference to the topic of their literature searches (such as under-five mortality and morbidity), students come up with different social determinants of this public health issue. Then, they identify the level at which each social determinant operates.

For example:

health knowledge at the individual level

household income at household level

distance from the nearest clinic at community level,

policy at national level

migration at a global level

They note each social determinant on a coloured post-it, one colour for each level

3. Create a multi-level framework (50–120 mins)

In plenary, groups take turns to place their post-its in the relevant section for each level (as demonstrated in the video). For each one, they state why it fits at that level and how it operates as a social determinant. The facilitator encourages discussion, especially if the determinant is not placed at the correct level.

At the end, one student volunteers and, using string, trace how social determinants might influence health outcomes in a case that the facilitator describes, such as a 40-year-old man who develops Diabetes Type 2.

Outcomes

After this session, students should be able to:

1. Explain the social determinants of health
2. Apply a multi-level framework to analyse how social determinants operate at different levels

Assessment

Self-evaluation through discussion

