



HEALTH AND MEDICINE DIVISION

# Sustainability Through the Lens of Population Health and Public Health Practice

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# How Does BPH Address Sustainability

- Roundtable on Environmental Health Sciences, Research, and Medicine
- Roundtable on Population Health Improvement
- Consensus studies
- Collaborations with other units



# Two Terms

- **Population Health:** the health outcomes of a group of individuals, including the distribution of such outcomes within the group (Kindig and Stoddart, 2003). While not a part of the definition itself, it is understood that such population health outcomes are the product of multiple determinants of health, including medical care, public health, genetics, behaviors, social factors, and environmental factors.
- **Health Equity:** the state in which everyone has the opportunity to attain full health potential and no one is disadvantaged from achieving this potential because of social position or any other socially defined circumstance



# What is Sustainability

To create and maintain conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony and that permit fulfilling social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations (National Environmental Protection Act of 1969 [NEPA, 2000]; Executive Order 13514 [White House, 2009]).



# Sustainability is...

the ability to meet our present needs without compromising future generations to meet their own needs (Brundtland Commission 1987), and it has three components: environmental conservation, social responsibility, and economic development. **By definition, sustainability aims to promote healthy, viable, and equitable communities.**



# Specific Examples of Sustainability in BPH

- Global Development Goals
- Food and Nutrition
- Ecosystem Services
- Green Health Care Institutions
- Urban Design (not just “greening”)
- Population Health (making the business case)



# Sustainable Diets:

Food for Healthy People and a Healthy Planet

- are those diets with low environmental impacts which contribute to food and nutrition security and to healthy life for present and future generations
- are protective and respectful of biodiversity and ecosystems, culturally acceptable, accessible, economically fair and affordable; nutritionally adequate, safe and healthy; while optimizing natural and human resources.



# Sustainable Diets

- Diet impacts the environment.
- Meat has a significantly greater environmental impact than other food groups.
- Trade-offs are two-way. The environment also impacts diet.





# Sustainable Diets

“Although the dietary energy supply, which is considered a proxy for hunger, can be satisfied without biodiversity, the same is not true of the micronutrient supply.”



# Coastal Waters and Ocean Ecosystem Services and Human Health

- Seafood Supplies and Food Security
- Opportunities for Medicines
- Coastal Change and Human Health
- Benefits of Recreation



# Green Health Care Institutions

The healthcare industry is a significant consumer of energy and water and generates considerable amounts of waste.

The industry has a responsibility to adopt sustainable practices in order to efficiently use its resources and minimize environmental impacts.



# Health Care and Sustainability

- Environmental - LEED certification, markets for waste, recycling construction debris, green spaces
- Social - Preventable conditions like diabetes, some cancers, viral diseases incur 70% of US healthcare costs; need a new norm
- Economic - purchasing, supply chain, new partnerships



# Bringing Public Health into Urban Revitalization

Progress on health requires other constituencies

- Private enterprise (show it can be profitable)
- Communities (show it improves equity and respect for dignity of life)



# Sustainability and Population Health

stands for maximizing efficiency in keeping with aspirational community values, with health inequities as a MAJOR example of unsustainable conditions, practices, and policies



# Communities in Action: Pathways to Health Equity

This 2017 report shows over and over how unsustainable societal practices have huge human and economic costs.



# Health in All Policies

- Sustainable workforce\*
- Sustainable health care operations
- Sustainable business practices (e.g. hiring, sourcing, waste, environmental impact)
- Sustainable development\*





# Sustainable Workforce

Three broad sustainability pillars: unlocking the potential of people and science; valuing nature; and courageous collaboration

Sustainable hiring practices include formerly incarcerated individuals, individuals with disabilities, and others.



# Sustainable Development and Sustainable Communities

- enhancing livability for all, including affordable housing, equitable food environments, access to transit, etc
- tying the quality and location of housing to broader opportunities, like access to good jobs, quality schools, and safe streets
- helping communities that face common problems start sharing solutions
- being a partner to sustainable development, not a barrier



# Sustainability?

# Population Health?

