

Course Package

Innovation in Public Health

Name module	Innovation in Public Health
Educational programme	MSc Health Sciences
Period	Second quartile of the first semester (Quarter 1B)
Study load	15 ECTS

Innovation in Public Health			
Quarter 1A	Quarter 1B	Quarter 2A	Quarter 2B
	Public Health innovations (5 EC)		
	Public Health: Dynamics in policy, law & regulation (5 EC)		
	Health Economics: Maximizing Societal Welfare (5 EC)		

Required preliminary knowledge: *Not yet available.*

Public Health innovations

This course provides students with a state of the art knowledge and insight into the processes of diffusion and implementation of medical technologies in public health care organizations and networks. Public Health innovations are implemented in open interaction between clients, professionals, and (networks of) organizations. Increasingly, organizations and professionals must intensively and successfully collaborate to improve the quality of public health and wellbeing of the population. In this course we study how organizations and professionals optimally collaborate in the implementation of public health innovations. Substantive examples of innovations covered are in the areas of vaccinations, child abuse, poverty related health care for children, ADHD-care, and elderly care.

The first aim of this course is to provide students with the competences to analyze the landscape of innovation in public health care. Students learn to combine state-of-the-art theory and research with a close examination of substantive examples of collaboration in the implementation of public health innovations.

Lectures (including class discussions led by students) and master classes (including panel discussions led by students) support this first aim. During the lectures, we will discuss the major theories implementing medical innovations as well as the actors that are involved. During the master classes,

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students discuss the implementation of public health innovations related to several topics with experts from the field.

The second aim of this course is to provide students with the competences to critically evaluate and reflect on how they can make a difference in public health care delivery by stimulating public health innovation. They are able to identify the conditions in the collaboration between clients, professionals, and organizations for the successful implementation and diffusion of public health innovations. The video seminars and a design project support this second aim. Students focus on the design of a plan for a new public health innovation—in its (inter)organizational design, implementation, and/or diffusion.

Public Health: Dynamics in policy, law & regulation

Public health is up for a challenge. Basic public health measures of the past century such as improvements in hygiene and vaccinations have contributed dramatically to the improved life expectancy and quality of life of the past generations. The big health issues of our day, however, have increased in sophistication and require a different approach. Problems such as obesity, toxicity, antibacterial resistance, and environmental degradation have huge implications for health outcomes; yet, they are caused or influenced by factors that are often far removed from the places traditionally associated with health such as hospitals, doctor's offices, and pharmacies. It is increasingly recognized that addressing the major health issues of the 21st century will require collaboration across a number of actors. These actors may be governments and legislators, public agencies, private bodies such as industry and standard-setting organizations, and communities. To complicate matters further, action is required at various levels – at the local, but also at the national, supranational and international levels. Solving these problems requires that experts have deep understanding not only of health and illness, but that they are also competent in matters related to policy-making and planning, legislative processes and legal principles, implementation and enforcement of regulation.

This course provides students with the tools necessary to be an active participant in the shaping of the future of public health. In the first two weeks of the course, students are introduced to the concept of public health, the developments in this discipline over the past centuries and the latest thinking on the future of the discipline. An example of the latter is the idea of “health in any policy” (HIAP) which proposes that health outcomes should be taken into account across a broad spectrum of policies. But how to achieve HIAP in practice? The legal and regulatory challenges for achieving HIAP are explored in more depth over the next four weeks of the course. Students receive an introduction to law and essential legal principles governing the work of legislators, regulators and courts. Different modalities of regulation (public or private, ex ante and ex post, flexible or command-and-control) are discussed to explain what options might be most suitable for a given problem. This portion of the course enables students to understand why sometimes good ideas cannot be implemented in law; it also explains how the law can be conducive to change. After the introduction to the broad legal challenges, students dive deeper into the nitty-gritty of regulation. Legal commitments to health outcomes have to lead to better health outcomes. Yet, regulation is often ineffective and prone to failure. In four interactive, practice-oriented classes, students learn tools such as stakeholder analysis that help them analyze and improve the effectiveness of regulation. The course ends with discussion of how the knowledge about policy, law and regulation can be integrated to achieve health in any policy. Students prepare a short poster and paper analyzing a concrete health problem with the help of the tools learned in the course.

Health Economics: Maximizing Societal Welfare

Remarkable progress has been made over the last century in enhancing population health through health technologies and public health interventions. As we look to the future, innovation in healthcare and health services has the potential to lead to a new renaissance in health outputs and outcomes to the extent that the expectations of individual patients, communities and health systems

(as a whole) and sustainability of health spending are achieved. The latter may be the more formidable given questions regarding the efficiency of health spending growth and allocation of health resources and differences in perspective on healthcare and health spending, and institutions – including the interests of key stakeholders, which may not completely align, although they may be overlapping.

This module will demonstrate how health economic analysis can facilitate the achievement of improvements in population health and sustainable financing of health technologies and provision of health services. Lectures will draw upon relevant theories (i.e. complex adaptive systems, complex interventions and logic models) as well as survey empirical studies to examine the linkage between theory, empirical observations and policies. The module will discuss (potential) market failures in the supply of health services and insurance, and (the potential for and magnitude of) government intervention across countries. Finally, the module will acquaint students with the challenges in health and healthcare for which they might be called upon for solutions as managers, policy wonks and scholars particularly in the context of maximizing societal welfare.