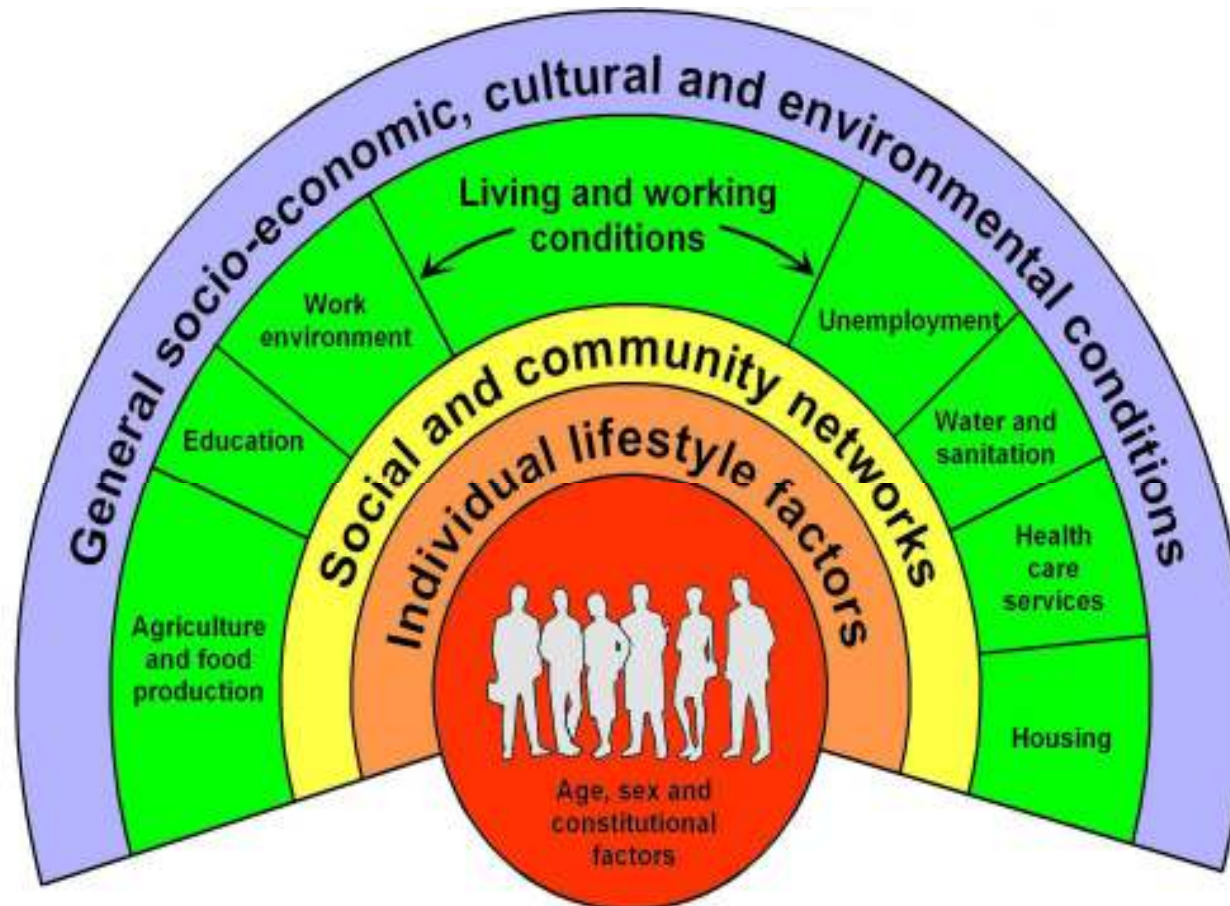


Determinants of Health, Healthy Cities, and Health Inequalities

Andy Walker

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Determinants of Health



Source: Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991

Social Determinants of Health

- The social determinants of health are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age
- Most of the factors that shape our health and wellbeing are, for the most part, outside the direct influence of the health and social care services
- Sectors outside of health have key roles in protecting and promoting the population's health

Why treat people, and then send them back to the conditions that made them sick?

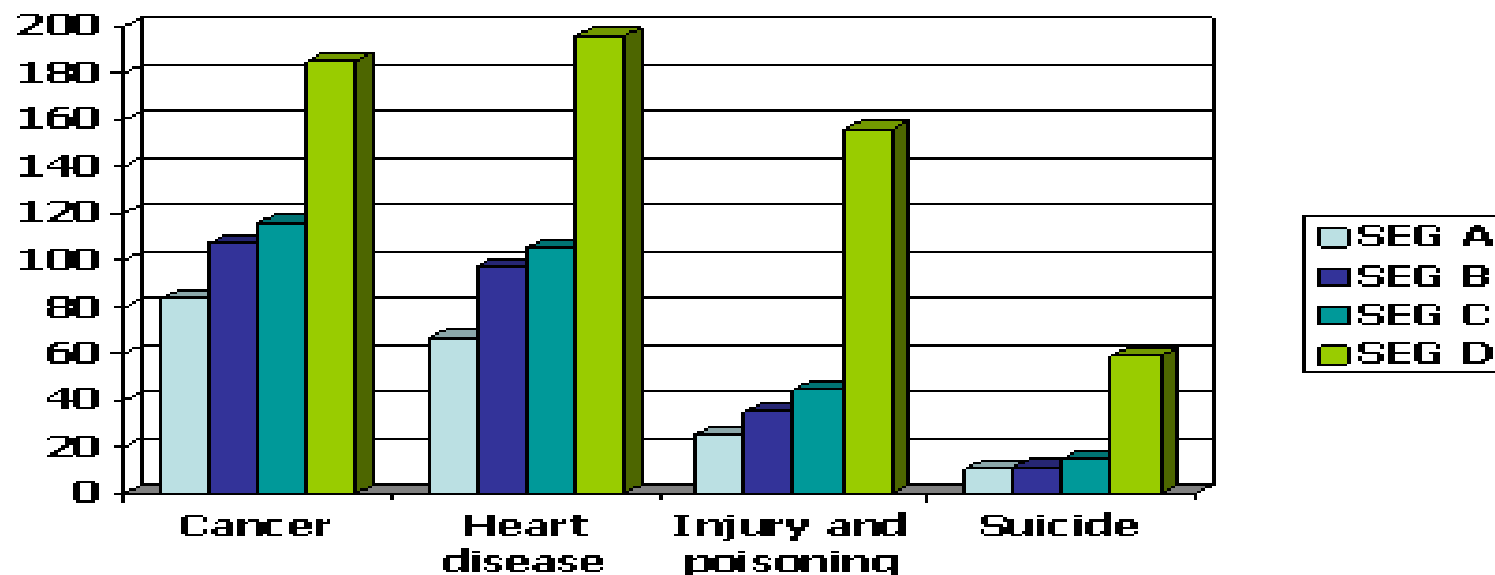


Health Inequalities

- The social conditions in which people live and work can help create or destroy their health. Lack of income, inappropriate housing, unsafe workplaces and lack of access to health care systems are some of the social determinants of health leading to inequalities. (*WHO 2004*)
- ‘Poor social and economic circumstances affect health throughout life. People further down the social ladder usually run at least twice the risk of serious illness and premature death as those near the top’ (*Wilkinson and Marmot 2003*).

Health Inequalities in Ireland

Impact of the social gradient on health



Cause of death in working age males by social class, Ireland 1989-1998

Source of data 'Inequalities in Mortality 1989-1998'

Key to Socio- Economic Grouping (SEG)

SEG A – Professionals

SEG B – Employers, Managers and salaried employees

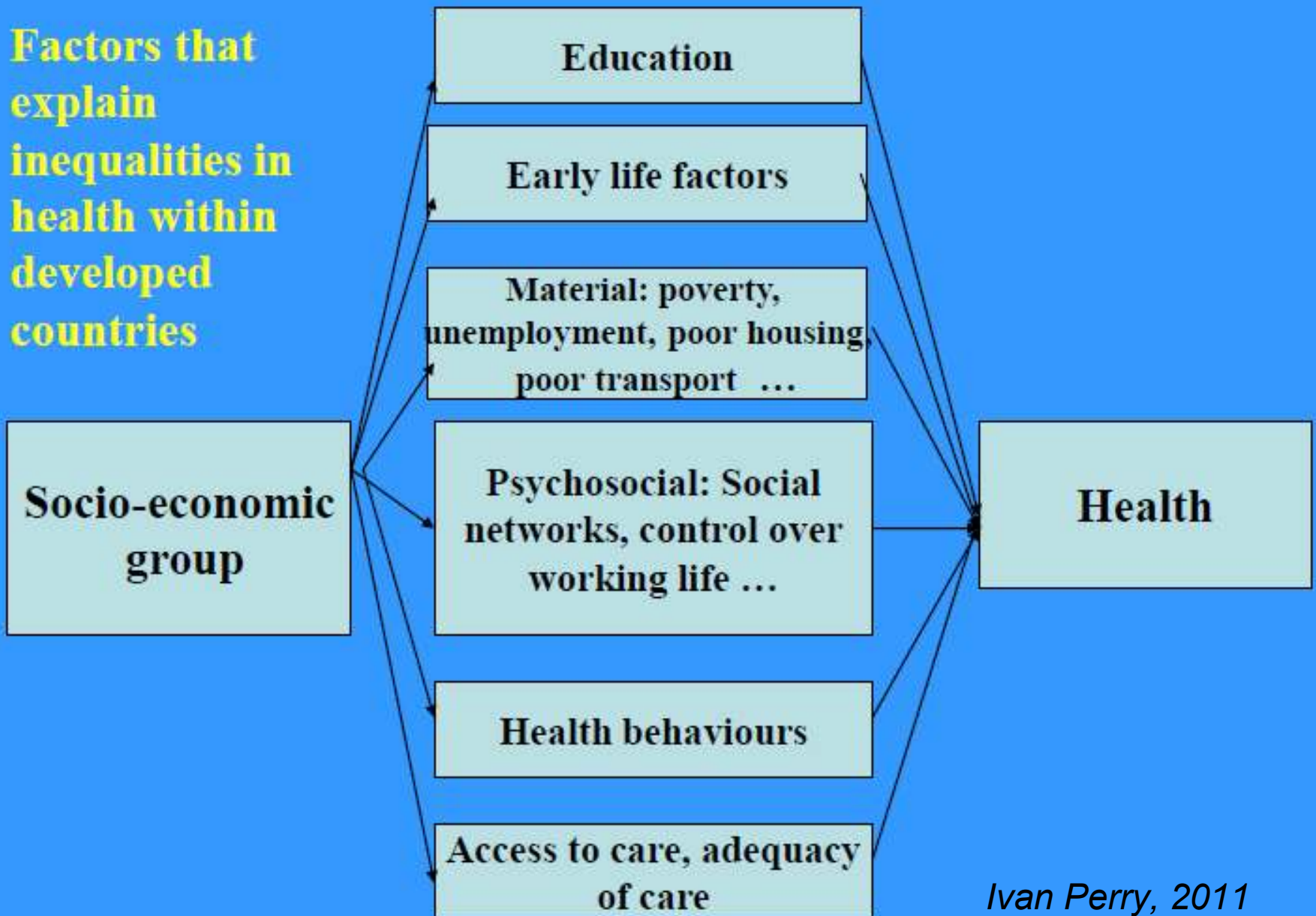
SEG C – Skilled manual workers

SEG D – Semi-skilled / unskilled manual workers

Health Inequalities

- It has been estimated that 5,400 fewer people would die prematurely each year across the island of Ireland by tackling social deprivation and inequalities – (*DoH, Social Services and Public Safety, Northern Ireland 2002*)
- ‘As health inequalities are not simply a matter of chance but are strongly influenced by the actions of governments, organizations, communities and individuals, they are not inevitable. Action to reduce health inequalities means tackling those factors which impact unequally on the health of the population in a way which is avoidable and can be dealt with through public policy’ (*Commission of European Communities, 2009*)

Factors that explain inequalities in health within developed countries



Ivan Perry, 2011

Healthy Cities

- Healthy Cities 'work to systematically promote the active engagement and the collaboration of different sectors in the pursuit of health outcomes' *WHO 2009*
- WHO Healthy Cities Phase V Health and Health Equity in All Policies - 'Health in all policies addresses policies such as those influencing transport, housing and urban development, the environment, education, agriculture, fiscal policies, tax policies and economic policies'

WHO Healthy City Themes for Phase V

- **Caring and supportive environments.** *A healthy city should be, above all, a city for all its citizens, inclusive, supportive, sensitive and responsive to their diverse needs and expectations*
- **Healthy living.** *A healthy city provides conditions and opportunities that support healthy lifestyles*
- **Healthy urban environment and design.** *A healthy city offers a physical and built environment that supports health, recreation and well-being, safety, social interaction, easy mobility, a sense of pride and cultural identity and that is accessible to the needs of all its citizens*