



Global Handbook on Noncommunicable Diseases and Health Promotion

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Since the beginning of the 21st century, chronic diseases account for the majority of all deaths globally and represent an enormous financial burden on all countries, regardless of level of economic development. Originally defined as being long-term, generally incurable diseases of older persons, chronic diseases have increasingly been conceptualized as noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). These long-term afflictions are the leading health problems of the modern world and represent some of the greatest challenges to clinical, preventive medicine and health promotion at this time. Health promotion has arisen as an approach that is most critical in dealing with the broad array of causes of NCDs. Thus, this book addresses NCDs and health promotion in this global context. There is a widely recognized global incapacity to deal with chronic diseases. Furthermore, the needed capacity may vary enormously with level of development and multiple social and economic factors. Simple approaches that deal with single risk factors have enjoyed a modicum of success in some parts of the world, but today the salient opinion is that broad social and policy approaches are the long-term effective approaches. This book takes a critical perspective analyzing the relative success of recent and current approaches to addressing the challenges of the noncommunicable diseases in different social, economic, and political contexts. Because the extant literature addressing NCDs and health promotion appears to be primarily in the Western press and in an epidemiological context, this book makes every effort to offer discussions from other perspectives. Thus some of the sections of the book offer a lens or a critical perspective into the approach to chronic diseases. In addition each section addresses the state of the evidence for the effectiveness of the approach.

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