Social Justice Principle (continued…)

Q: EXPLAIN why social justice principles are considered when identifying priority health issues.

Social justice plays a fundamental role in the development of health programs. Social justice is characterised by three main principles being equity, diversity and creating supportive environments.

Equity relates to the fair distribution of resources and funding free from discrimination. It aims to provide health equity, which means that all people have access to the health services and support they need at the time they need it, in a place that is readily accessible. It involves creating equal opportunities for all people to achieve health. Equity is significant when identifying priority health issues because understanding what equity is enables us to target marginalised population groups within a community who suffer some form of inequity. For example, understanding what equity is enables Individuals/Government organisations to determine that there is significant inequality between Indigenous Australians and other Australians when referring to life expectancy. We then need to determine the underlying health issues within the identified community in order to make educated decisions around the allocation of resources and funding. If CVD is the major cause of death in the said community, resources such as Doctors and Nurses should be considered. Incentive schemes resultant from Government funding would also encourage medical professionals to communities that are rural or remote in location. The implementation of qualified medical practitioners brings experts in CVD who can assist with education around preventative measures in the form of lifestyle choices, which will ultimately decrease CVD related illnesses leading to an increased life expectancy. Therefore, equity is significant in identifying priority health issues.

Diversity refers the joint efforts of community groups in planning and making decisions about health issues. Diversity considers the cultural and social diversity of society and examining diverse values, beliefs and attitudes. When looking into individual attitudes, beliefs and values, diversity considers the contribution of social, cultural, economic and biological factors. Diversity explores different views on gender roles, physical activity, peer-group relationships, sexuality, cultural beliefs and what constitutes a healthy environment and explores conflicting values, morals and ethics. The significance of diversity in identifying priority health issues includes its ability to understand or cater for cultures or cultural groups who may suffer from discrimination. For example, understanding that certain cultures suffer discrimination and can lead to mental illness allows Individuals/Governments to allocate funding and resources to preventative measures such as education eg. Mindmatters (School program). Therefore, diversity allows Inividuals/Governments to identify priority health issues.

The principle of supportive environments refers to both our physical and social surroundings. It includes where people live, their local community, their home and where they work and play. Supportive environments also refers to access to resources. Physical, social, spiritual, economic and political factors should be considered when developing supportive environments. Supportive environments are a significant factor to consider when identifying priority health issues… For example… Therefore,…