

# WHAT IS PUBLIC HEALTH?

A guide by California Black Women's Health Project | cabwhp.org

**Public health is the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organized efforts and informed choices of society, public and private organizations, communities and individuals.**

**Preventing illness & promoting wellness are elements of public health.**

Public health professionals help prevent illness and promote wellness in various ways, including through medical and scientific advancements, programming, research and clinical studies and the implementation of services and campaigns.

**Public health is COMMUNITY health.**

Public health is concerned about the health and wellness of communities. This includes cultural communities, ethnic/racial communities, local communities, statewide communities, nationwide communities and global communities.

**Public health is YOUR health.**

Public health encompasses all elements related to an individual's health and well-being. This includes health conditions, outcomes, barriers, services, resources, disparities and social determinants of health.

**Public health focuses on HOLISTIC health.**

Holistic health reflects all areas of health, including: behavioral health, cognitive health, cultural health, emotional health, environmental health, financial health, mental health, physical health, social health and spiritual health.

**Public health addresses health disparities & social determinants of health.**

Social determinants of health are factors that influence health outcomes, including racism, economic policies and systems, social norms, social policies, climate change and political systems. Health disparities are preventable differences in the burden of disease, injury, violence, or opportunities to achieve optimal health that are experienced by socially disadvantaged populations.

**It takes a village to protect & uplift public health.**

Each individual can uplift public health by taking care of their well-being, supporting their community and encouraging others to do the same!

**Health advocates support public health.**

Public health advocates help educate, organize and mobilize. As a village, we must advocate for equity in public health to uplift the Black community's health and wellness.

