



## **An Examination of Health Psychology**

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### **Abstract**

The study of how biological, psychological, behavioural, and social variables interact to determine health and sickness is the focus of the subfield of psychology known as health psychology. The word health psychology is sometimes used synonymously with a number of other concepts, such as medical psychology and behavioural medicine. There are a lot of different things that might have a role in your health and disease. There are numerous behavioural and psychological elements that may have an effect on an individual's general physical well-being in addition to the symptoms and severity of a variety of medical diseases. "The subfield of psychology known as health psychology focuses on not only the promotion of health but also the avoidance of disease and the treatment of existing conditions. Understanding how individuals respond to and deal with sickness, as well as how they recover from it, is another primary emphasis of health psychologists. Some health psychologists dedicate their careers to improving both the existing health care system and the way the government thinks about health policy.

**Key words:** Health, social, conditions, treatment, disease etc.

### **Introduction**

Health psychology investigates these incentives with the goal of persuading individuals to adopt behaviours that are beneficial to their health and avoid sickness. This subfield investigates the ways in which biological, social, and psychological elements interact to shape the decisions that people make about their health. Psychologists that specialise in health do research on the elements that contribute to people's overall health, as well as their ability to recover from disease or live with a chronic condition. Because of their expertise in the field of health and behaviour, they are in high demand as members of integrated health care delivery teams, where they collaborate with other medical professionals to offer treatment that addresses the health needs of the complete person.

It is using our understanding of mind and body and utilising it to understand and assist folks deal better, control their pain, and ultimately learn how to empower themselves. Health psychology actually comes from where medicine and psychology can operate symbiotically together.

The field of health psychology addresses a broad variety of concerns, ranging from persistent discomfort to terminal disease, with the aim of assisting individuals in enhancing the overall quality of their lives and resolving particular health problems. Health psychologists conduct a lot of preventative



work around a variety of concerns, from avoiding obesity to keeping a happy perspective in life, preventing anxiety and depression, and attempting to increase the quality of life of persons, according to the American Psychological Association.

Health psychologists play a significant role in the military as well, assisting service members and veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as well as assisting with life transition and the prevention of suicide.

In addition to this, they address underlying psychological concerns such as stress, sadness, and anxiety by encouraging healthy habits and providing treatment for those conditions. Withrow explained that other clinical psychologists are trained to know about disease processes and physiology, but health psychologists are trained to know about how the mind and body can work together on what's going on with a specific illness in order to help that person deal with whatever issues they are being presented with.

### **Current Issues in Health Psychology**

Psychologists who specialise in health work with people, organisations, and communities to enhance general health, lower sickness rates, and minimise the number of risk factors. They carry out research and provide services in a variety of fields, including the following:

- Stress reduction
- Weight management
- Smoking cessation
- Improving daily nutrition
- Reducing risky sexual behaviors
- Hospice care and grief counselling
- Preventing illness
- Understanding the effects of illness
- Improving recovery
- Teaching coping skills

### **Goals of Health Psychology**

There are eight major goals of health psychology:

- understanding behavioral and contextual factors for health and illness
- preventing illness
- investigating the effects of disease
- providing critical analyses of health policies
- conducting research on prevention of and intervention in health problems



- improving doctor-patient communication
- improving adherence to medical advice
- Finding treatments to manage pain.

### **Focuses of Health Psychology**

Health psychologists engage with people, organisations, and communities to enhance general health, minimise sickness, and lower the risk factors that contribute to poor health. They offer services and carry out research in a variety of fields, including the following:

#### **Clinical Health Psychology**

The application of scientific knowledge to clinical concerns that come up throughout the spectrum of healthcare is what's meant to be understood by the term clinical health psychology. The field of clinical health psychology is considered a speciality practise area for clinical psychologists". This is due to the fact that it concentrates on the prevention and treatment of health disorders. Education on the underlying processes of behaviour change and psychotherapy are both components of clinical practise.

#### **Public Health Psychology**

At the population level, the field of public health psychology looks at the possibility of causal linkages between psychological and social variables and health. "Research findings on epidemiological data connected to health habits are presented by public health psychologists to educators, policy makers, and health care providers in order to support public health programmes for populations who are at risk.

#### **Community Health Psychology**

Research in the field of community health psychology focuses on analysing the ways in which communities shape individuals' health and well-being. Community health psychology also involves the development of treatments at the community level with the goals of preventing illness and enhancing both physical and mental well-being. Community health projects include things like campaigns to remove sugary beverages from schools and activities to raise awareness about diabetes, among other things.

#### **Critical Health Psychology**

Critical health psychology is concerned with the distribution of power as well as the influence of power differentials on health behaviours, healthcare systems, and health policy. Critical health psychology places an emphasis on social justice and the principle that all individuals, regardless of their colour, gender, age, or socioeconomic standing, have an inherent right to excellent health. Inequality in terms of one's health is a big problem, and the critical health psychologist serves as a catalyst for change by striving to ensure that everyone has equitable access to medical treatment.

### **Conclusion**



The relatively young discipline of psychology known as health psychology investigates psychological issues connected to how individuals maintain their health, why they get unwell, and how they react when they do become ill. According to one definition, Health Psychology is the aggregate of the specific educational, scientific, and professional contributions of the discipline of psychology to the promotion and maintenance of health, the prevention and treatment of illness, the identification of etiologic and diagnostic correlates of health, illness, and related dysfunction and to the analysis and improvement of the health care system and health policy formation.” The biopsychosocial paradigm is emphasised in health psychology. According to this concept, physical health and illness are reflections of a complex set of linked processes that include biological variables.

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