

RESPONSES TO QUESTION 7

How can public policy promote healthier lifestyles?

- We need a paradigm shift to make preventive strategies as or more important than disease treatment. We need to use dual approach “carrot approach” (i.e., reduced premiums for healthy people) and “stick” approach (i.e., “sin tax” for those who are unhealthy).
- Support employers that provide evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention programs and services for their employees and dependents.
- Use of the term preventive keeps us stuck in the same paradigm of focus on disease. Instead we should focus on health-building behaviors and use the term “proactive”—e.g., what can people do to be more proactive? We need to differentiate between what individuals can do versus what communities can do.
- Increase education during K-12. Elimination of physical education is out of sync with reduction in childhood obesity and healthy lifestyles. On one hand government attempts to improve health, but has policies in effective that neutralize healthy lifestyles. Thus, government should stay out of individual's business.
- For example, the "health care system" focuses on the problem of obesity by studying what weight loss technologies (from diet plans, drugs, gastroplasty, etc.) may work, and therefore should be paid for by insurance, while farm policy, in effect, promotes the public's increasing use of high fructose corn syrup (for one example only) that produces obesity in the first place. In order for "public policy" to promote healthier lifestyles, there needs to be recognition that almost every other public policy issue has a public health dimension.
- It starts at basic levels. For example, the government can support healthy eating and exercise through support of on-site programs for their employees. This would be a great example of health promotion at the front lines. In addition, at conferences or programs sponsored by the government, healthy choices including incorporating exercise, mind-body modalities and good nutrition should be encouraged and supported. Also, media presentations should be focused on health promoting behaviors and should be distributed as part of the commercials that are seen nationally.
- Foster the use of integrative therapies in in-patient and out-patient settings.
- Encourage healthier lifestyles by acknowledging the mind-body relationship of health. Teach children and families how anger causes constriction in the body and how lack of joy hurts the heart, etc. Teach meditation and relaxation for coping. Emphasize exercise to improve circulation. Teach about food and how some foods are better than others for certain conditions or body types (Ayurveda or Traditional Chinese Medicine).
- Providing tools and technologies that personalize the information for the consumer. Also design training programs AND financial reward structures for lay people who can be trained for primary care management that are culturally competent and validated by the targeted consumer group.
- Through cultural leaders; well-know pastors, film stars, etc. who could make real efforts to promote healthier lifestyles.
- Through postings of very clear messages about calorie counts in fast-food restaurants.
- By initiating education early in grade school.
- It's difficult to change the culture, but I believe that more people would participate in receiving acupressure, acupuncture, massage, tec. if it were easily covered by insurance or subsidized in some way as being a "preventive" option, or "choice for wellness."
- Tax breaks for organizations to promote health

- Through supporting education.
- Not allowing pharmaceutical companies to advertise (they already disallow alcohol and tobacco so this is not far fetched)
- Have ""public good"" announcements about nutrition, exercise and stress reduction on TV and radio to counteract the sugary food and ""pills to feel better"" advertising.
- Appoint a person to a cabinet position who has the title Secretary of Health and Wellness
- license Naturopathic Physicians in all 50 states.
- By keeping the essentials marketed. Consider putting essential words on our money.
- Put 10% of the health care budget in to programs and policies that establish true proactive self-care and healing oriented interventions. Those are comprehensive lifestyle programs (nutrition, exercise, stress management and social integration) and integrative health practices.
- Economic - higher taxes on consumption - tobacco
- Schools Children - better nutrition, no soda, more movement (preschool interventions - see www.partnershipforsuccess.org)
- At level of cities - organize to lose weight - (Oklahoma City initiative)
- It can invest in using the internet and the other media to educate the public as to their options. As you can see in the Pew study it is happening organically, it needs to be more pro-active.
- In the last ten years the public has been inundated with books, articles, ads about the dangers of obesity. Ten years later obesity statistics are going higher and higher. The public has been educated to take a drug for a symptom allowing dangerous life styles to continue, since symptoms disappear, but the malady lingers on into degenerative diseases.
- Television ads that promote drug use should be abolished and replaced with ads that encourage wellness. Madison Avenue needs to be recruited to do what they do best; motivate.
- We need public policy that supports the public and private sector to pursue opportunities to emphasize health and well-being. This includes policies that span commerce, infrastructure, and education. For example, the idea of place-based initiatives, wellness zones, etc in which all community organizations agree to make healthier choices in the foods or other products that they sell, choose to use their space for healthy living and exercising available to the community, and focus on decreasing negative health influences can be effective.
- Just as "Say no to Drugs", "Keep America Beautiful", etc. We need a "Say Yes to Prevention" program.
- by forming stronger connections between the individual and the community that supports that individual. Perhaps leveraging social networks for individuals to share positive experiences, support each other, and share resources available within their community for healthy living. At a minimum, we need to mandate healthy school lunches! Stronger collaborations with industry for developing distribution platforms and positive branding of well-being initiatives.
- affordability. It is more expensive to eat healthy.
- be a leader in showing how to create health - we have a system that individualizes the steps to a healthier life based on each client's needs and bio chemistry (eventually genes will lead the way) we look at nutrition (food and supplements), activity (exercise), lifestyle habits,
- Increase education about health in the school systems - public and private.
- Offer health coaches that are not doctors or nurses trained to cure but people with different attitudes and philosophies. People have negative feelings about doctors and nurses created by the post-traumatic stress of medical experiences. I know people who get faint or sick just thinking about going to a doctor, hospital or dentist.
- Make a separate professional field of prevention. Do not make it part of medicine."

- Incentivize consumers of services for being healthy. Incentivize employers and employees for being healthy.
- By providing effective incentives through income tax deductions, reduced health insurance premiums, and other measures which reflect the savings to the public through healthy lifestyles.
- Educate the public on the benefits using smart 15-20 sec infomercials, done by rock stars, Hollywood starlets, etc
- Give financial incentives for those who comply with testing (\$50 Starbucks coupon after your MMG is done)
- Reduced cost of membership in health clubs, etc if frequency of usage data is compiled. (i.e. I went 12/30 days in Sept, so my Nov dues are $12/30 = 40\%$ reduced).
- One idea would be to regulate the kind of information that the public can receive from pharmaceutical companies (like smoking ads were restricted) and regulate the kind of influence pharmaceutical companies can have on physicians and purchasers, and legislators.
- First, define what it means to be healthy and have a high state of well being. Next, communicate how each key element of optimal lifestyle, i.e., diet, stress management, group support, and exercise, contribute to achieving health and well-being. Next, create regional demonstration and research centers throughout the US to implement a comprehensive, prevention-based lifestyle program at a multi-tiered level that would include: medical facilities, schools, churches, synagogues, temples, restaurants, food markets, fast food chains, food courts, community recreation facilities, etc. Then take what was successful and disseminate it to other areas within each region. Create a high visibility for this process as well as accountability. Have this initiative supported at all branches of government including the executive, legislative, and judicial.
- We need to change the psyche of the nation from one of diagnosis and treatment for illness to one of reaching our health potential.
- Public Health Policy needs to promote a new campaign and way of viewing health. It is not about waiting for the diagnosis ...
- Healthier lifestyles begins with a public health policy campaign and needs to replace the current message we are given.
- We need to get some control over advertising...specifically: the billions of dollars of corporate advertising for junk food to our children on TV, big Pharma and drug advertising.
- To assume personal responsibility for one's health, there needs to be a different message in a health campaign...it is another part of the ""YES WE CAN "" campaign as it relates to a healthy nation.
- As a public health nurse , holistic nurse, and clinical nutritionist, I have seen individuals, families, and communities, make better choices when supported and empowered through education in prevention.
- That returns us to nurses as coaches...they are everywhere: in schools, communities, corporations, etc....
- Public policy can use initiatives in social marketing through media: embedding healthy lifestyle choices with positive characters on television; use of celebrity messages in PSAs; and emphasis on the lifestyles of sports figures who have healthy choices.
- Public policy can set guidelines and incentives for professionals working more than 40 hours a week to have movement healthy food options, stress management, and conflict resolution as part of their work routine.
- Corporations can receive tax breaks for having gym memberships for their employees, or on-site physical movement incentives, such as use of stairs, workout facilities, and stress management workshops.

- Public policy can address the need for whole foods, less preservatives and healthy food options in the public school systems across America, beginning with incentives and nutrition classes for all teachers, who are underpaid and overworked.
- A policy for all members of the media to have healthy food options would be effective. We could do clinical studies on the effects of healthy foods on them and publicize the effects. When they eat well, they will spread the message exponentially faster than those without a microphone.
- Policies creating anger management and conflict resolution should be a mandate for all people heading to the courts and justice system, at whatever level of law they become engaged in. That includes lawyers, criminals, judges, government officials, and plaintiffs/defendants.
- Reinstate mandatory fitness training/education in all public and private schools. Implement a FOSHU-like program (Japan) which promotes healthy diet through economic incentives & labeling. Allow insurers to build program models which economically incentivize participants to participate in healthy choices, and economically punish those who do not.