


## Chapter 2

# Community Participation as an Integral Part of the Biological, Psychosocial, and Social Aspects of the Management of Diseases and Illnesses

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### ABSTRACT

*Community participation is one of the pillars of primary healthcare. In a primary healthcare approach, the community is considered vital to the design, implementation, and evaluation of healthcare services. Ideally, community participation entails efforts to reach underserved community members. Although healthcare service policies promote community participation, there is evidence of major gaps in community members', policymakers', and practitioners' understandings of its purpose, process, and outcomes. Therefore, this chapter will unpack the concept of community participation, firstly by giving broader definitions of community and participation and then explaining typology of community participation as well as the application of community participation in public health initiatives. In addition, the role of community participation in the prevention and management of COVID-19 is discussed.*

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-6496-0.ch002

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter aims to explore the concept of community participation and its role in the biological, psychosocial, and social aspects leading to both the development and management of disease and illness. Community participation is one of the pillars of Primary Health Care (PHC) and is fundamental to public health initiatives. In the background section of this chapter, a definition of PHC will be given and the way it is linked to community participation will be explained.

Although community participation appears to be widely promoted in health care service policies, there is evidence of major gaps in community members', policymakers' and practitioners' understanding of its purpose, process and outcomes (Kenny et al., 2013). The chapter unpacks the concept of community participation, firstly by giving definitions of community and participation separately, and then discussing the levels and typology of community participation, the application of community participation in public health initiatives as well as how community participation was used in the prevention of COVID-19 and the management of the COVID-19 pandemic. After detailed definitions are given, the role of community participation in the biophysical, psychosocial and social aspects will be discussed. The chapter makes a number of recommendations on how community members may be involved and engaged in disease and illness management in terms of biological, psychosocial and social aspects.

### **Chapter Objectives**

After reading this chapter, you should be able to

- define the concept of community participation
- discover how community participation is applied in public health initiatives
- recognise the role of community participation in biological, psychosocial and social aspects of disease and illness development
- recognise the role of community participation in biological, psychosocial and social aspects of disease and illness management
- design community participation initiatives to address the biological, psychosocial and social aspects leading to the development of disease and illness, as well as their management.

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