Public health research

with Dr. Deepak Palakshappa

Talking *points*

Knowledge

1. What is food insecurity?

Comprehension

2. What is the difference between primary research and secondary research?
3. Why is food insecurity typically treated as a household issue rather than an individual issue?
4. Why can households not suffering from hunger still be classified as food insecure?

Application

5. Why do you think some healthcare professionals might continue to see food insecurity as a public health issue, rather than a healthcare issue? What type of evidence might convince them otherwise?
6. "Factors including poverty, structural racism, and educational inequality all affect health," says Deepak. What types of health issues might these factors lead to, and how? Give several examples.

Analysis

7. Deepak mentions that the US has a weaker social safety net than most other developed nations. What social, economic, and political reasons might explain this?
8. Why do you think that food with low nutritional value is typically more affordable? What public health measures could help to change this?

Synthesis

9. In the US, a higher percentage of Black and Hispanic households suffer from food insecurity than White households. What social and economic factors might be responsible for this, and how could these be addressed?

Evaluation

10. To what extent do you think that preventing or addressing food insecurity should be the responsibility of healthcare professionals? What arguments can you think of for and against, and what conclusions can you draw?
11. To what extent is food insecurity an issue in your local community? What steps could be taken to help your community address this issue?

Activity

On a large piece of paper, create a mind map of the factors that lead to food insecurity, the effects of food insecurity on health, and interventions for addressing food insecurity.

- In the center of the page, draw a food-insecure household.
- In the top half of the page, write down the causes of food insecurity (e.g., low income, no nearby grocery stores, etc.) and draw arrows leading to the household.
- In the bottom half of the page, in a different color, write down the effects of food insecurity on health (e.g., high blood pressure, anxiety, discrimination at school, etc.) and draw arrows from the household to these effects.
- Now, in another color, write down interventions that could combat the causes and effects of food insecurity (e.g., higher salaries to address low income, medication to address high blood pressure, etc.) and draw arrows linking them to the relative causes and/or effects.
- Circle 3-5 interventions that you feel are the most powerful in addressing food insecurity. Write down your justification for each (on a separate page if you have no space left), explaining how they could effectively tackle food insecurity.
- Compare your mindmap with a classmate's. What similarities and differences are there in the causes, effects, and interventions you included? Did you identify the same or different interventions as the most powerful? Did your justifications differ? Can you see any common themes between those justifications deemed the most powerful?

More *resources*

- Visit Deepak's Futurum webpage to read his article in Spanish and to find an animation, podcast and PowerPoint about his work: **www.futurumcareers.com/public-health-research-with-dr-deepak-palakshappa**
- This Health Affairs podcast features Deepak discussing his research into the relationship between food insecurity and health care expenditures in families: **www.healthaffairs.org/do/10.1377/hp20230109.252873**
- This short TEDx video from nutritionist Clancy Cash Harrison debunks myths and examines structural roots of food insecurity in the US: **www.youtube.com/watch?v=HakCAdPrlms**

Let us know what you think of this educational and career resource. To provide input, simply scan the QR code or use this link: redcap.school.wakehealth.edu/surveys/?s=NPK347RYH CR3FNDC