



# 15th World Congress on Public Health

3-7 April 2017 Melbourne Australia [www.wcph2017.com](http://www.wcph2017.com)

## Child Health: Can we create more equitable systems of care for the health and development of children? Implications for “what works” in policy and practice

Tuesday 4 April, 1330 – 1530, Plenary Hall 3

---

Lead Professor Sharon Goldfeld, Murdoch Children’s Research Institute

Speakers Professor Paul Freeman, University of Washington  
Professor Sharon Goldfeld, Murdoch Children’s Research Institute  
Professor Jody Heymann, UCLA

Health and developmental inequities are differential outcomes that are unjust, unnecessary, and preventable. Child health inequities exist in all countries and are observed in children’s physical health, social-emotional wellbeing, and academic learning. For example, by the time children start school, clear inequities in their development and wellbeing are already evident, driven by their life circumstances, coupled with the failure of health, welfare, and educational systems to ameliorate these impacts. Inequities emerging in early childhood often continue into adulthood, contributing to unequal rates of mortality and physical, social, and cognitive impairments. Inequities constitute a significant and ongoing public health problem with major implications for public policy. Indeed public health and public policy interventions can be effective platforms to address inequities in child health, development and wellbeing

**Aim:** This WLD aims to showcase a series of potential real possibilities for addressing child health inequities through promising public health and public policy approaches

### **SESSION 1: PRIMARY CARE: CAN UNIVERSAL PRIMARY CARE ADDRESS CHILD HEALTH INEQUITY?**

**Respondent/ Discussant:**

Professor Fiona Stanley  
Distinguished Research Professor, UWA  
Vice Chancellor’s Fellow, University of Melbourne

**Main speaker:**

**Professor Paul Freeman:**  
Chair Emeritus International Health Section APHA





# 15th World Congress on Public Health

3-7 April 2017 Melbourne Australia [www.wcph2017.com](http://www.wcph2017.com)

CI Assistant Professor DGH University of Washington  
Associate Member Coregroup

***Title: Findings from a Comprehensive Review of the Effectiveness of Community-based Primary Health Care in Improving Child and Maternal Health***

Since 2006, a Task Force of the Working Group on Community-based Primary Health Care of the American Public Health Association has been conducting a review of the effectiveness of community-based primary health care (CBPHC) in improving child and maternal. This work has been guided by an Expert Panel composed of global leaders in community health programs, research and policy. The purpose of the review has been to identify CBPHC programs, projects and studies that have improved child and/or maternal health (as defined by changes in mortality, nutritional status, serious morbidity, or changes population coverage of evidence-based interventions in the geographic area served) and to elucidate the strategies used to achieve effectiveness.

More than 10,000 reports were identified from a PUB MED search and searches of the gray literature. Of these, and from follow up of references related to qualifying documents, a total of 702 documents were included in the review (549 reports for child health and 153 for maternal health), from 1950 through 31 December 2015. Two independent reviewers completed a data extraction form for each report. A third reviewer compared the two data extraction forms and resolved differences before entering in the database. Data were analyzed using the STATA statistical package.

The presentation will consist of a presentation of the background and methods of the review; specific findings of the review: as they relate to child health and maternal health; key strategies; and equity and policy implications and best practices to maximize positive outcomes.

**Local example:**

**Professor Sharon Goldfeld**

Deputy Director, Centre for Community Child Health, Royal Children's Hospital  
Co-Group Leader, Policy Equity and Translation, Murdoch Childrens Research Institute

Professor, Department of Paediatrics, Faculty of Medicine Dentistry and Health Sciences, University of Melbourne

***Title: Outcomes from a sustained nurse home visiting randomised controlled trial: can proportionate universalism really work to address inequity?***

Sustained nurse home visiting (SNHV) offers a potential platform to help redress health and developmental inequities for children experiencing social adversity. While SNHV programs have grown in popularity internationally, their effectiveness in the





# 15th World Congress on Public Health

3-7 April 2017 Melbourne Australia [www.wcph2017.com](http://www.wcph2017.com)

existing Australian service system is not known. The right@home trial aimed to investigate whether a SNHV program offered to women from pregnancy to child age 2 years improved parenting, the home learning environment and parental routine care. The intervention comprised 25 home visits from pregnancy to 2 years (delivered by specifically trained existing nurses) including “modules” focused on known determinants of child outcomes: parent responsiveness, routine care (e.g. sleep), and the quality of the home learning environment. The state-based universal, free, child and family health service provided the comparator (usual care). This robust Australian RCT offers lessons in how universal programs can be delivered with proportionate intensity and potentially at scale, with significant implications for the development of early childhood policy and strategy in Australia.

## **SESSION 2: JOINING THE DOTS: WHAT ARE THE WAYS IN WHICH PUBLIC POLICY CAN IMPACT CHILD HEALTH INEQUITY**

### **Respondent/Discussant:**

Professor Alex Ezech, Director of the African Population Health and Research Centre, Nairobi

### **Facilitator:**

Robert Griew  
Principal, Nous Group

### **Main speaker: Professor Jody Heymann**

Dean of the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health  
Founding Director of the WORLD Policy Analysis Center

### ***Title: Which policies make the most difference for child health inequity?: lessons from global policy analysis***

While medical care can markedly influence the health of individuals once they get sick, it is social and environmental conditions which shape the probability of individuals becoming sick or injured in the first place and which cause many of the inequalities in health in each of our countries. From reducing poverty to eliminating discrimination, from improving early childhood care to housing, effective social policies can markedly improve population health. Heymann will describe the work of the WORLD Policy Analysis Center, which she leads, to develop over 1500 quantitative measures of policies and laws in 193 countries. WORLD measures educational, labor, social, environmental, and other health policies and links them to outcome data around the world. Both the challenges to learning what is most effective and the successes of countries and collectives in advancing what works to improve social determinants of health will be discussed.





# 15th World Congress on Public Health

3-7 April 2017 Melbourne Australia [www.wcph2017.com](http://www.wcph2017.com)

## Local example:

### **Professor George Patton**

Professorial Fellow in Adolescent Health Research at the University of Melbourne  
Senior Principal Research Fellow (National Health and Medical Research Council)

### **Adolescence as an opportunity for health equity**

The social context of adolescence is shifting rapidly in many parts of the world. Adolescence itself is becoming a longer phase of the life-course with a falling age of puberty and delays in the social role transitions to marriage and parenthood that have historically marked its endpoint. Adolescence is also characterised by a shift in the range of social determinants of health with different school contexts, peer and media influences having formative roles. It is a time where health inequalities emerge with implications for health across the life course as well as into the next generation. This presentation will consider adolescence as an opportunity for health equity. It will draw on the work of the Lancet Commission on Adolescent Health and Well-being, published in May 2016 and moving forward as a Lancet Standing Commission. Specifically it will explore the potential of expanded secondary education to promote health and health equality.

