

HEALTH BRIEF FURTHER READING

1. MOVING FROM ILLNESS TO WELLNESS

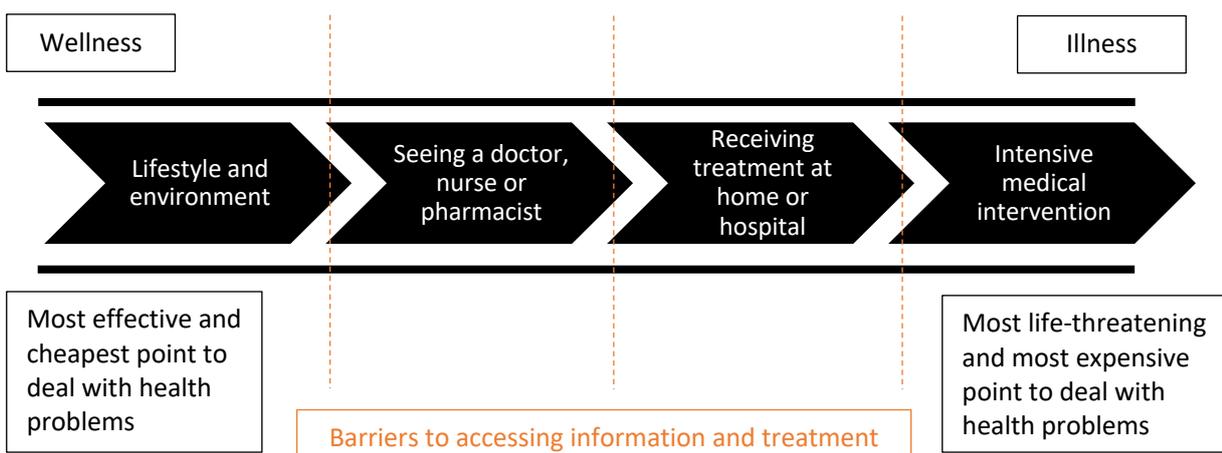
Most design for healthcare has focused on hospitals, health centres, or doctor's surgeries. This is important, because there is much that design of buildings and materials can do to reduce infection transmission, to make clients feel at ease, to recover well, and to offer vital health care services in settings with unstable energy supply or limited infrastructure.

However, the **main** determinants of our health and wellbeing happen outside of the healthcare setting. They are either individual actions: what we eat and drink, whether we smoke, our levels of activity; or they are societal such as: the air we breathe; the roads we drive; our vulnerability to violence or accidents; our livelihoods or jobs, and the quality of our housing and sewage systems.

If we can focus greater efforts on a healthier life becoming a possibility for more people, then our societies will become much more resilient. We would also save money and resources, because interventions become more expensive and complicated as a person acquires more chronic health problems or becomes critically ill.

As some societies (like the UK) age, then being able to grow old with dignity and without feeling lonely become core issues to creating healthier societies. This area of society and healthcare needs radical changes to be fit for purpose.

Big data, artificial intelligence and wearable technology offer major opportunities to increase widespread access to health information. However, these should be matched with alternative in-person options for people who may not have access to technology or feel comfortable using it.



2. KNOWLEDGE, EMPOWERMENT AND INCLUSIVITY IN HEALTHCARE SETTINGS

When people get sick, often there are many barriers to accessing the health services they need.

This can be because systems are set up without patient and community involvement; because information and advice is difficult to get, or because patients are expected to take charge of the organization and administration of their own treatment. In some cases, you need a certain social network to know how and when to seek medical advice.

In particular when looking at mental health, the motivation to seek treatment may be very low, and issues can go undetected and unmanaged until the situation becomes serious.

There can also be a loss of dignity for patients in healthcare settings, where they do not feel that the surroundings or the system treats them with respect.

The COVID 19 pandemic has highlighted the value that society puts on its health workers, but spending on health is often not a priority for governments and many jobs in healthcare are low paid and without support. In ageing societies, care work will also become an even more critical sector and needs to be a better-valued and aspirational career option.

3. KEY QUESTIONS

Healthy lives and wellbeing

- How can we make healthy lifestyle behaviours routine and sustainable for everyone?
- Are there ways to radically improve how people access information and knowledge about their current health?
- How can design solutions reduce deaths from accidents and violence, in particular violence against women?
- How can homes be designed better to support wellbeing, including to keep fit, and to allow older people to stay independent and living at home for longer?
- How can we implement innovations to tackle loneliness at mass scale?
- With the potential for social distancing to continue, how could transport be redesigned, and how could existing infrastructure be repurposed to support healthier lifestyle?

Improving healthcare systems

- What design solutions could move health services towards keeping people healthy, rather than dealing with illness?
 - How can barriers that exclude people from seeking medical help or advice be removed?
 - Can design-thinking make health services easier to navigate for patients and offer more responsive and flexible systems?
 - How can design improve the dignity and empowerment of patients in healthcare settings?
 - How can healthcare settings be made more sustainable, whether that is through the emissions of the buildings, reducing waste, and eliminating single-use items?
 - How can healthcare settings be made more hygienic through more 'contactless' design?
 - How can healthcare workers be supported to have healthier lives, and how can care work be made a more attractive and respected career option?
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