



STUDY SUMMARY

HEALTH AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT 2014–2017

Please Note: This study summary includes excerpts from the VCE Health and Human Development Study Design. The summary is not a substitute for the VCE Study Design. Users are advised to consult the VCAA website (www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/vce/studies/healthnhuman/healthumindex.aspx) to view the full accredited Study Design and other resources.

Scope of Study

Through the study of VCE Health and Human Development, students investigate health and human development in local, Australian and global communities. Health is a dynamic condition that is influenced by complex interrelationships between individuals and biomedical and behavioural factors, as well as physical and social environments. These interrelationships are reflected in a social view of health that sees health as being created in the settings where people live and work. This social view of health recognises the need for personal skills development, the importance of empowering communities to take action to promote health, the creation of social and physical environments that are supportive of health and development, an awareness of the impacts on health of public policies and the need for health services to be oriented towards health promotion and the prevention of ill health.

The VCE Health and Human Development study approaches the concept of ‘development’ as a continuum that begins with individual human development and progresses towards human development at a societal level. At an individual level, the study of human development is about individual change, that is, a continuous lifelong process that begins at conception and continues until death. Individual human developmental changes are cumulative; development that occurs in the future is dependent upon development occurring in the past. At a society level, the study takes a global perspective on health and human development and uses definitions of human development that are consistent with approaches taken by both the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations (UN).

Human development at this level is about expanding people’s choices and enhancing capabilities (the range of things people can be and do) and their freedoms; enabling people to live full, productive and creative lives; having access to knowledge, health and a decent standard of living; and participating in the life of their community and decisions affecting their lives (adapted from the United Nations Development Programme, 1990).

The study also promotes the understanding that nutrition plays a major role in influencing both health status and individual human development.

Rationale

VCE Health and Human Development provides students with the skills and knowledge to make informed decisions about their own health and to recognise the importance of health in society. In undertaking this study, they will be able to actively participate in making appropriate choices that allow for good health and be able to seek appropriate advice.

VCE Health and Human Development enables students to understand the current ideologies of health and human development in contemporary society. Students critically evaluate the health and development of the individual across the lifespan in the context of both Australia's and global health and human development.

VCE Health and Human Development offers students a range of pathways and caters to those who wish to pursue further formal study in areas such as health promotion, community health research and policy development, humanitarian aid work, allied health practices, education, and the health profession.

Structure

The study is made up of four units:

Unit 1: The health and development of Australia's youth

Unit 2: Individual human development and health issues

Unit 3: Australia's health

Unit 4: Global health and human development

Each unit deals with specific content contained in areas of study and is designed to enable students to achieve a set of outcomes for that unit. Each outcome is described in terms of key knowledge and key skills.

Entry

There are no prerequisites for entry to Units 1, 2 and 3. Students must undertake Unit 3 prior to undertaking Unit 4. Units 1 to 4 are designed to a standard equivalent to the final two years of secondary education.

Unit 1: The health and development of Australia's youth

In this unit students are introduced to the concepts of health and individual human development. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as 'a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity' (World Health Organization, 1946). The WHO's definition is still widely used today, despite the identification of a number of limitations.

Individual human development is a lifelong continuous process beginning at conception and ending with death and is perceived as involving a series of orderly and predictable changes, which can be classified as physical, social, emotional and intellectual.

This unit focuses on the health and individual human development of Australia's youth. For the purposes of this study, 'youth' is defined as twelve to eighteen years of age; however, it should be acknowledged that some agencies may use differing age classifications for the stage of youth. There are many factors that influence health and individual human development of youth, including the importance of nutrition.

The health status of Australia's youth is good and continues to improve as demonstrated by reductions in morbidity and mortality from communicable diseases, chronic diseases, suicide, motor vehicle accidents and other injuries. However, Australia's youth still experience a range of health issues that affect both their immediate and longer term health and individual human development.

In this unit students identify issues that have an impact on the health and individual human development of Australia's youth. Students investigate one health issue in detail and analyse personal, community and government strategies or programs that affect youth health and individual human development.

Unit 2: Individual human development and health issues

Individual human development involves a series of orderly and predictable changes, which can be classified as physical, social, emotional and intellectual. Over the lifespan, individuals accumulate life experiences that affect both their health and individual human development.

This unit focuses on the health and individual human development for the lifespan stages of prenatal, childhood and adulthood. The prenatal stage is characterised as the most rapid time of growth and physical development during the human lifespan. During this stage the health and development of the embryo/foetus is shaped by a range of determinants, which in turn can have an impact on future health and development.

Health and development during childhood has also been identified as having a significant impact on both health and development throughout the rest of the lifespan. There are many determinants of health and development of Australia's children; however, social factors such as family and community are crucial, as children develop through their relationships with others.

The lifespan stage of adulthood represents a period of great diversity. The period of adulthood commonly spans a time frame of over sixty years. The health and individual human development of this group can vary considerably and is influenced by a range of determinants, which include physical environment, biological, behavioural and social.

In this unit students identify issues that affect the health and individual human development of Australia's mothers and babies, children and adults. Students investigate health issues in detail and analyse personal, community and government strategies and programs that affect the health and individual human development of mothers and babies, children and adults.

Unit 3: Australia's health

Australians generally enjoy good health and are among the healthiest people in the world. The health status of Australians can be measured in many ways, such as consideration of burden of disease, health adjusted life expectancy, disability adjusted life years (DALYs), life expectancy, under-five mortality rate, mortality and morbidity rates, incidence and prevalence of disease. Despite Australia's good health status, there is still potential for improvements. The National Health Priority Areas (NHPAs) initiative provides a national approach that aims to improve health status in the areas that contribute most of the burden of disease in Australia. Regardless of how health is measured, health is not shared equally by all Australians. Different levels of health are experienced by different groups, which can be attributed to the determinants of health, including the physical environment, biological, behavioural and social.

Funding for the Australian health system involves a combination of both government and nongovernment sources. The Australian Government makes a significant contribution to the health system through the funding of Medicare. Both government and non-government organisations play an important role in the implementation of a range of initiatives designed to promote health in Australia.

Unit 4: Global health and human development

This unit takes a global perspective on achieving sustainable improvements in health and human development. In the context of this unit human development is about creating an environment in which people can develop to their full potential and lead productive, creative lives in accord with their needs and interests. It is about expanding people's choices and enhancing capabilities (the range of things people can be and do), having access to knowledge, health and a decent standard of living, and participating in the life of their community and decisions affecting their lives (adapted from the United Nations Development Programme, 1990). Sustainability 'implies meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (96th plenary meeting of the UN, December 1987).

The United Nations (UN) human development work is encapsulated in the Millennium Development Goals, where the world's countries have agreed to a set of measurable goals and targets for combatting poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women. A significant focus of the Millennium Development Goals is reducing the inequalities that result in human poverty and lead to inequalities in health status and human development.

The World Health Organization (WHO) is the directing and coordinating authority for international health within the United Nations. Both the WHO and the UN have a range of strategies aimed at reducing global burdens of disease and promoting human development through the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) manages the Australian Government's overseas aid program. AusAID aims to reduce poverty in developing countries and improve human development, with a focus on assisting developing countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Non-government organisations also play a role in promoting sustainable human development.

Assessment

Satisfactory Completion

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on a decision that the student has demonstrated achievement of the set of outcomes specified for the unit. This decision will be based on the teacher's assessment of the student's performance on assessment tasks designated for the unit.

Levels of Achievement

Units 1 and 2

Procedures for the assessment of levels of achievement in Units 1 and 2 are a matter for school decision.

Units 3 and 4

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority will supervise the assessment of all students undertaking Units 3 and 4. In the study of VCE Health and Human Development students' level of achievement will be determined by School-assessed Coursework and an end-of-year examination.

Percentage contributions to the study score in VCE Health and Human Development are as follows:

- Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework: 25 per cent
- Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework: 25 per cent
- End-of-year examination: 50 per cent.