

HEALTH-RELATED COMMUNITY SERVICE INTERVENTION

A health-related community service intervention is **a service, test, or treatment to improve health** (e.g., mass screenings, immunization services, emergency medical services, asthma clinics).

A health-related community service intervention can achieve many objectives:

- Offer greater comfort, accessibility, and ease of use of services (e.g., By using mobile vans, some hospitals provide mammograms in a comfortable, private setting to low-income women who would otherwise not receive such services because of transportation and time barriers.)
- Enable individuals to initiate behavior change (e.g., Offering low-cost flu shots at a local grocery store provides those considering getting a flu shot with an opportunity to act.)
- Demonstrate the agency's willingness to serve and provide outreach to a community (e.g., Bringing clinics into the community demonstrates an organization's commitment to the community and increases the community's trust in the medical services.)
- Detect a health problem when it can be remedied or controlled (e.g., Early detection of diabetes allows those with the disease to obtain proper medical services to control the disease, thus reducing their risk for heart disease, stroke, blindness, and amputation.)
- Help prevent a health problem (e.g., Routine child immunizations have nearly eliminated serious diseases like polio and also prevent the spread of diseases like hepatitis B among children.)

A health-related community service intervention cannot accomplish all objectives:

- Cannot ensure that people will use medical services (e.g., Simply providing a service is no guarantee of its use. The target population may also need awareness of the need for the service, transportation, childcare, affordability, and flexible clinic hours.)

Other factors about health-related community service interventions should be considered:

- Sustained behavior change requires a sustained health service intervention.
- Health service interventions require action by the targeted population.
- Health service intervention via outreach services requires the availability of trained outreach workers who are sensitive to the community.
- The targeted population must be able to obtain the service, afford the service, and see the benefit of taking action.