PMAC PRINCE MAHIDOL AWARD CONFERENCE 2021

WS203

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

| BACKGROUND

The social determinants of health have been increasingly acknowledged as crucial to creating healthy populations particularly since the work of the WHO's Commission on the Social Determinants of Health and health equity (CSDH, 2008). This Commission conceptualised the social determinants as the conditions of everyday life and the ways in which the distribution of power and resources in society shape the distribution and nature of these conditions. Estimates are that the contribution of sectors outside health to population health outcomes outstrips the contribution from the health sector. The COVID pandemic has confirmed this as its impact has been felt most acutely by groups who lives are blighted because they experience all or some of factors such as living in unhealthy environments, having insecure jobs, poor housing, low income, being subjected to racism and have little access to education. These adverse socio-economic conditions are often experienced most by women, people with disabilities, people of colour and Indigenous peoples and most people in lower and middle income countries. The COVID-19 pandemic acted as a magnifying glass on these existing inequities, and has highlighted the larger pandemic of social and health inequities in health across the world. Mental health issues have been exacerbated especially in economically poorer countries linked with poverty, living conditions and lack of resources for taking precautions against Covid-19. There is huge stress on how to live with the virus in these circumstances and people are frustrated and angry with governments and the politics of Covid-19 response.

This session will also examine sectors beyond the health sector that will have a big impact on health in the post-COVID world and consider how different sectors can contribute to a post-COVID world which is fairer and more sustainable. It will take as its starting point the 2008 report of the WHO Commission on the Social Determinants of Health and ask for each sector covered in the report whether more can be done post-COVID to achieve the Commission's goal of closing the gap in life expectancy.

| OBJECTIVES

- Review of the evidence on health inequities globally and within selected countries
- Review of the trends in the distribution of wealth and power
- Contributions concerning changes that are needed in the following sectors: employment, housing, urban planning, welfare systems which will each look at examples of best practice and ask how this could be extended to other settings
- Anti-racism movements including Black Lives Matter protests and measures
- Proposals that would redistribute wealth (taxation reform (including progressive income tax, crack down on tax evasion)



Speaker

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Philippa Howden-Chapman, sesquicentennial distinguished professor of public health at the University of Otago, Wellington, New Zealand, is co-director of He Kāinga Oranga/ Housing and Health Research Programme and director of the New Zealand Centre for Sustainable Cities. She has conducted a number of randomised community housing trials in partnership with local communities, which have had a major influence on housing, health and energy policy. She was chair of the WHO Housing and Health Guideline Development Group and is currently chair of the International Science Council Scientific Committee for Health & Wellbeing in the Changing Urban Environment: a systems approach.