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Routledge Handbook of Global Public Health in Asia

Edited by Siân M. Griffiths,
Jin Ling Tang and Eng Kiong Yeoh

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Routledge Handbook of Global Public Health in Asia

Global public health is of growing concern to most governments and populations, nowhere more so than in Asia, the world's largest and most populous continent. Whilst major advances have been made in controlling infectious diseases through public health measures as well as clinical medical treatments, the world now faces other challenges including ageing populations and the epidemic crisis of obesity and non-communicable diseases. New emerging infections continue to develop and the growing threats to health due to environmental pollution and climate change increase the need for resilience and sustainability. These threats to health are global in nature, and this Handbook will explore perspectives on current public health issues in South, Southeast and East Asia, informing global as well as regional debate.

Whilst many books cite Western examples of the development of global public health, this Handbook brings together both Western and Eastern scholarship, creating a new global public health perspective suitable to face modern challenges in promoting the population's health. This Handbook is essential reading not only for students, professionals and scholars of global public health and related fields but is also written to be accessible to those with a general interest in the health of Asia.

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'Deep insights into the complexities of health, its determinants and the wider development context in Asia have been hard to come by for students, practitioners and policy makers. This Handbook remedies this shortfall with a highly authoritative, expert account of global public health in Asia.'

*Sir Liam Donaldson, Chair in Health Policy, Imperial College, London
and former Chief Medical Officer of the UK*

'This Handbook represents a joint effort of the global community of healthcare professionals. Experts in public health and policy makers from North to South and East to West contribute their knowledge and share their experiences on various topics of global health. I pay tribute to their great efforts in this important work. I recommend this book to every medical student, practising medical practitioner, healthcare policy maker and academic in the healthcare profession.'

*Joseph J. Y. Sung, Mok Hing Yiu Professor of Medicine and Vice-Chancellor and President of the
Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) since 2010*

'The book is a significant contribution to our understanding of health in this most populous region of the world – a region that has seen remarkable improvements in health, especially over the past two decades. With a focus on East and Southeast Asia, it is highly recommended as an excellent source of information and analysis.'

*Richard A. Cash MD, MP, Senior Lecturer, Department of Global Health and Population, Harvard
School of Public Health and Visiting Professor, Public Health Foundation of India*

'This Handbook is one of the most important readings for those interested in global public health in general and in Asia specifically. It offers fascinating insights into the many great achievements that Asian countries have made over the past decades, and the enormous challenges that those countries are facing in the years to come.'

*Shenglan Tang, Professor of Medicine and Global Health and Associate Director of Duke Global
Health Institute, USA*

'With the accelerated globalization, great changes have taken place in health systems, medical technology and the disease spectrum which demand multi-discipline cooperation to explore the solutions to a series of issues brought by globalization from different perspectives. This book provides good support to learn about global health including challenges in global health and strategy as well as best practice in response to these challenges. The book can be used not only as a textbook for medical students, but also provides valuable learning material for public health professionals.'

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Foreword

The history of medicine has always been focused on diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of medical conditions *at a personal level*. However, due to the rapid development of information technology, the massive and unprecedented changes faced by the planet we are living on, the convenience of international travel and the globalization of the world economy, health has become a global issue.

An outbreak of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003 struck Hong Kong in a totally unprepared state. The newly emerged viral infection infected 1,755 citizens and claimed 299 lives in a calamity that lasted 100 days. The city came to a standstill and the economy faced a challenge like never before. Moreover, within one week, the deadly disease spread to different continents threatening the health of various populations and the global economy. It dawned on the world that we are far from being saved from the new microbes that come from animal reservoirs. The health authorities across nations realized that infectious diseases have no respect for borders and international collaboration was mandatory. The World Health Organization now plays an important role in orchestrating the battle against such new diseases.

Climate change and ecological imbalance have always posed major hazards to health worldwide. Air pollution, vector-borne diseases related to alterations in temperature and precipitation, water contamination and food safety create increasing problems in both developing and developed countries. Major disasters, such as earthquakes, tsunamis and flooding, carry major health impacts that cannot be overemphasized. Preparedness to face insidious changes in the environment and the sudden alterations in the earth's systems deserve more attention in health education. Once again, governmental policy, professional advice and international collaboration are called for to combat these challenges.

Medical problems related to chronic non-communicable conditions, such as diabetes, obesity, hypertension, tobacco and alcohol consumption have continued to grow over the last decades. The rising incidence of cancer is partly related to global ageing populations and partly to changes in lifestyles in our sophisticated societies. There is a great urgency to intervene in human behaviour and for modification of lifestyles in order to prevent a pandemic of metabolic disease, cardiovascular diseases and malignancies. Besides advances in science, the establishment of a cost-effective healthcare delivery system in both developed and developing countries holds the key to success in preventing further deterioration of health hazards and offering help to those who are in need.

This Handbook represents a joint effort of the global community of healthcare professionals. Experts in public health and policy makers from North to South and East to West contribute their knowledge and share their experiences on various topics of global health. I

Foreword

pay tribute to their great efforts in this important work. I recommend this book to every medical student, practising medical practitioner, healthcare policy maker and academic in the healthcare profession.

Joseph J. Y. Sung MD, PhD
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The editors would like to thank Victoria Khroundina and Christine Ko for all their help in compiling this book.

We would like to dedicate this book to all colleagues, collaborators and students wherever they may be in the world who share our commitment to developing global health knowledge and practice, especially those who have contributed to this book. In particular we dedicate this book to our colleague and mentor Professor S. H. Lee (1933–2014).

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