DEFINITION OF PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING

America Public Health Association
1996

The APHA defines public health nursing as: The practice of promoting and protecting the health of populations using knowledge from nursing, social, and public health sciences. Public health nursing practice is a systematic process by which

1. The health and health care needs of a population are assessed in order to identify subpopulations, families, and individuals who would benefit from health promotion or who are at risk of illness, injury, disability or premature death
2. A plan for intervention is developed with the community to meet identified needs that takes into account available resources, the range of activities that contribute to health and the prevention of illness, injury, disability, and premature death
3. The plan is implemented effectively, efficiently and equitably
4. Evaluations are conducted to determine the extent to which the interventions have an impact on the health status of individuals and the population and
5. The results of the process are used to influence and direct the current delivery of care, deployment of health resources, and the development of local, regional, state, and national health policy and research to promote health and prevent disease.” (APHA, 1996, p. 12)


Public health nurses integrate community involvement and knowledge about the entire population with personal, clinical understandings of the health and illness experiences of individuals and families within the population.

American Public Health Association (APHA), Public Health Nursing Section website: http://www.apha.org/membergroups/sections/aphasections/phn/