

# Determinants of Health

*Each factor that influences health is important in its own right.*

*At the same time, the factors are inter-related.*

*The combined influences of these factors together determine health status.*

**Following are the commonly recognized Determinants of Health:**

## **Health Services**

- ▶ Health is influenced by having access to services that are structured to restore, maintain and promote health, and prevent disease.

## **A Healthy Start - Early Childhood Development**

- ▶ Early child development influences health throughout the life span. Factors that influence child development include healthy birth weights, positive parenting, and safe, friendly neighbourhoods.

## **Income and Social Status**

- ▶ Income and social status influence people's access to housing and food, and their sense of control over life decisions. Health status generally improves as people's income and social status improve.

## **Biology and Genetic Endowment**

- ▶ People's genetic endowment contributes to their predisposition to certain diseases. Biology influences their response to sources of stress, such as viruses or emotional strain.

## **Employment and Working Conditions**

- ▶ People with a steady job that provides sufficient income and a safe workplace are generally healthier.

## **Education**

- ▶ People's level of education influences their opportunities for job selection and security, and a sufficient income.

## **Physical Environments**

- ▶ The natural environment, which includes air, water and soil, influences health. The human-built environment, which includes housing, workplaces, and road design, also influences health.

## **Personal Health Practices and Coping Skills**

- ▶ People's knowledge, behaviours and abilities to handle outside influences and stressors affect health.

## **Social Support Networks**

- ▶ Support from family, friends and the community contribute to better health.

## **Gender**

- ▶ Men and women do not always have equal roles, power and influence in society. Measures to address gender inequity and gender bias can improve health.

## **Culture**

- ▶ Language and beliefs influence people's health-related behaviours, access to health information, and the way people interact with the health system.

## **Social Environments**

- ▶ Social stability, recognition of diversity, good working relationships and cohesive communities contribute to healthy social environments.

