

Mental Health as Public Health

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Who is this Guy?

- Therapist and Nurse
 - HIV, Veterans Affairs, Adolescent Mental Health
 - Emergency Medicine, Homeless Outreach, Street Nursing
- Researcher
 - Mixed Methods
 - Patient and Family Focused
 - Mental Health
- Public Health Work
 - Adolescent Suicide Prevention



Goals

1. Identify mental health as a modern public health concern.
2. Discuss mental health awareness, prevention, and treatment through a public health lens
3. Describe strategies that nurses in **all settings** can use around mental health concerns

Public Health

- “Public health promotes and protects the health of people and the communities where they live, learn, work and play.”

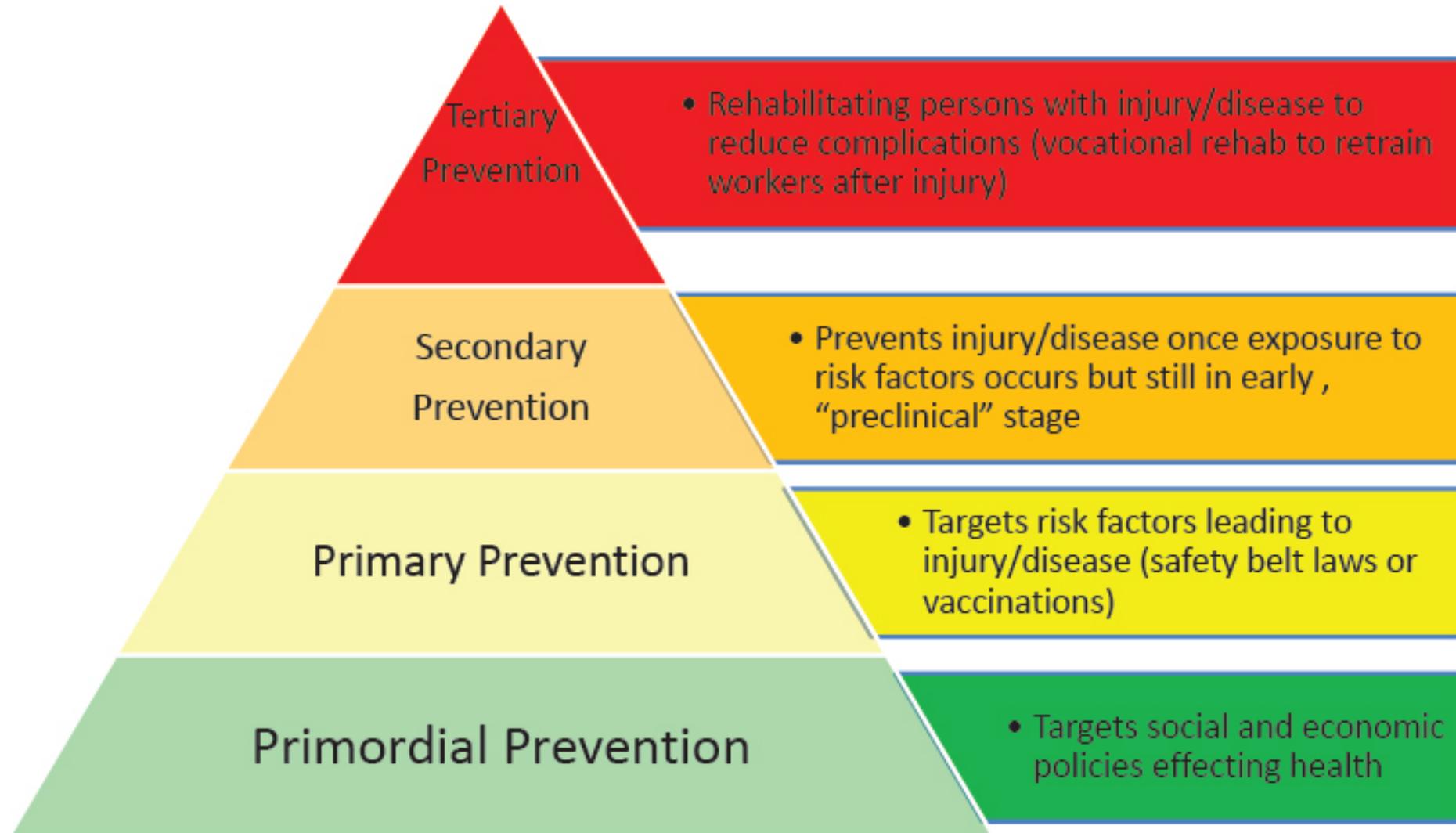
-American Public Health Association

- “Public health **nursing** practice focuses on population health, with the goal of promoting health, and preventing disease and disability.”

-Association of Public Health Nurses

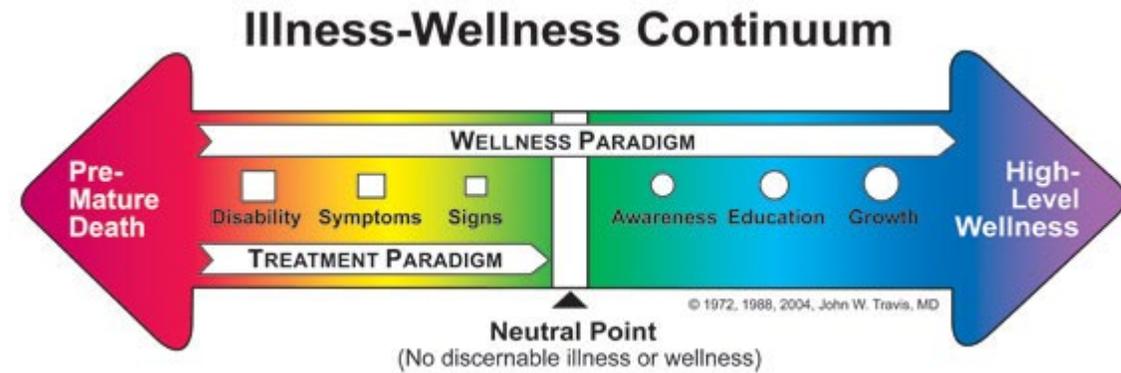


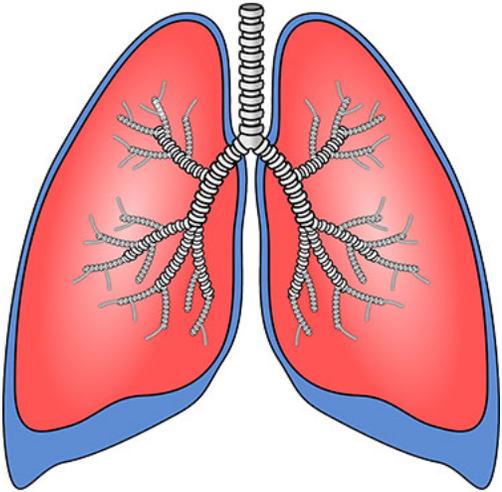
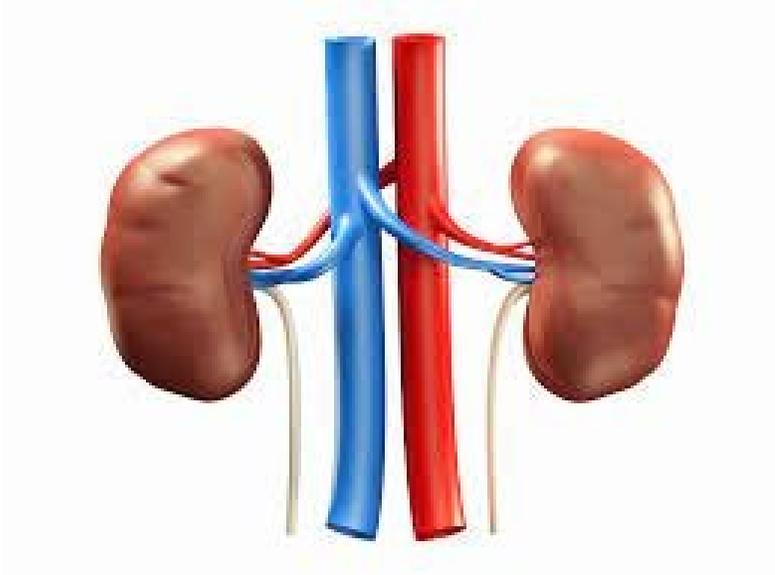
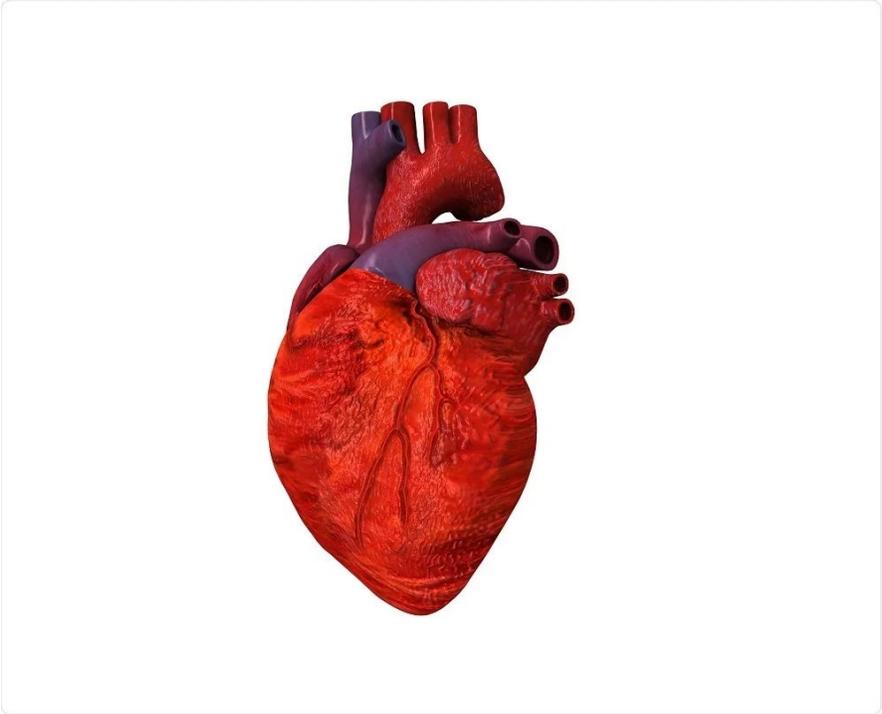
Public Health - Prevention



Mental Health

- “Mental health is our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.”
 - MentalHealth.gov
- Mental illnesses are health conditions involving mental health that are associated with significant distress and/or problems functioning.





Prevalence vs. Burden

- Global Prevalence
 - Tuberculosis: 1,929,208,600
 - **Depressive Disorders:**
264,455,600
 - **Anxiety Disorders:**
284,360,100
 - Malaria: 136,085,100
 - **Bipolar Disorders:** 45,549,400
 - HIV: 36,822,200
 - **Schizophrenia:** 19,776,900
 - **Eating Disorders:** 15,801,700

Prevalence vs. Burden

- Global Prevalence

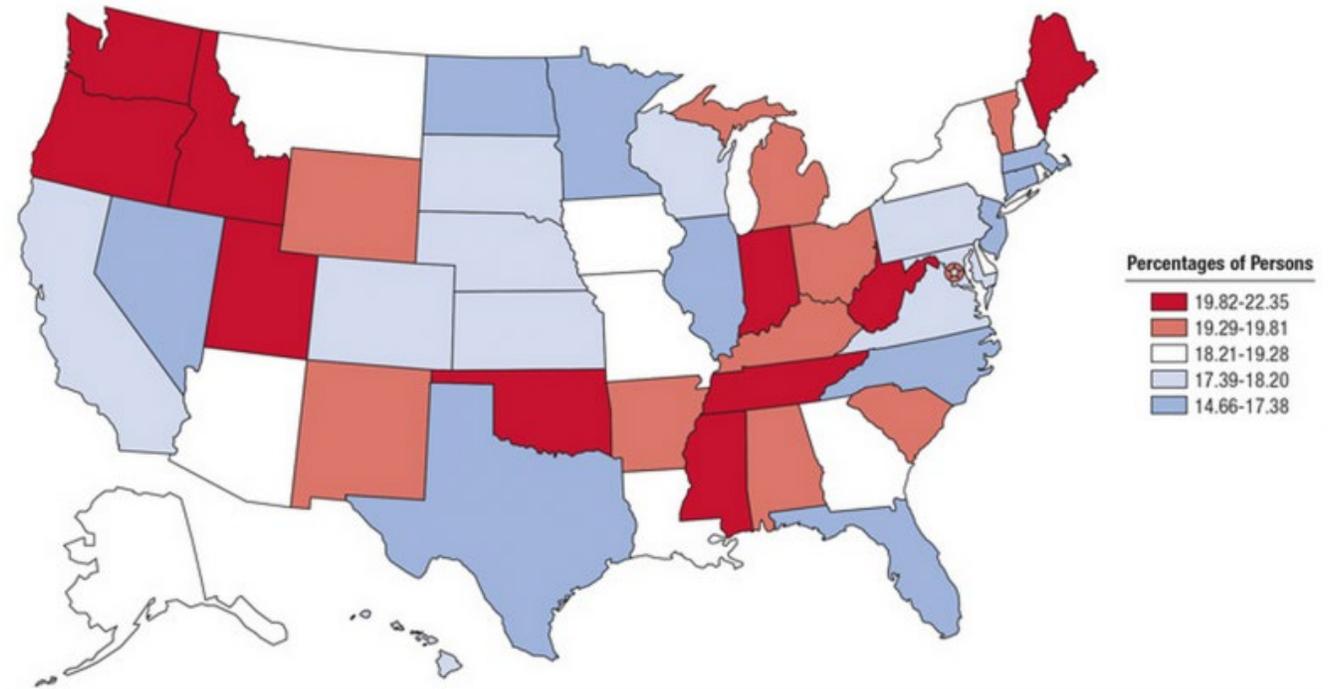
- Tuberculosis: 1,929,208,600
- Ischaemic Heart Disease: 126,451,500
- **Depressive Disorders:** 264,455,600
- **Anxiety Disorders:** 284,360,100
- Malaria: 136,085,100
- **Bipolar Disorders:** 45,549,400
- HIV: 36,822,200
- **Schizophrenia:** 19,776,900
- **Eating Disorders:** 15,801,700

- Years Living With Disability

- **Depressive Disorders:** 43,099,900
- **Anxiety Disorders:** 27,121,400
- **Schizophrenia:** 12,657,900
- **Bipolar Disorders:** 9,293,800
- Ischaemic Heart Disease: 5,291,900
- HIV: 3,949,000
- **Eating Disorders:** 3,351,900
- Tuberculosis: 3,120,400
- Malaria: 1,468,000

In the US...

- From NIMH:
 - About 21% of adults experience at least one mental illness every year
 - About 5% of adults experience serious mental illness (causing disability) each year
 - Rates of mental illness vary highly between states



Source: SAMHSA, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, National Surveys on Drug Use and Health (NSDUHs), 2011 (revised October 2013) and 2012.

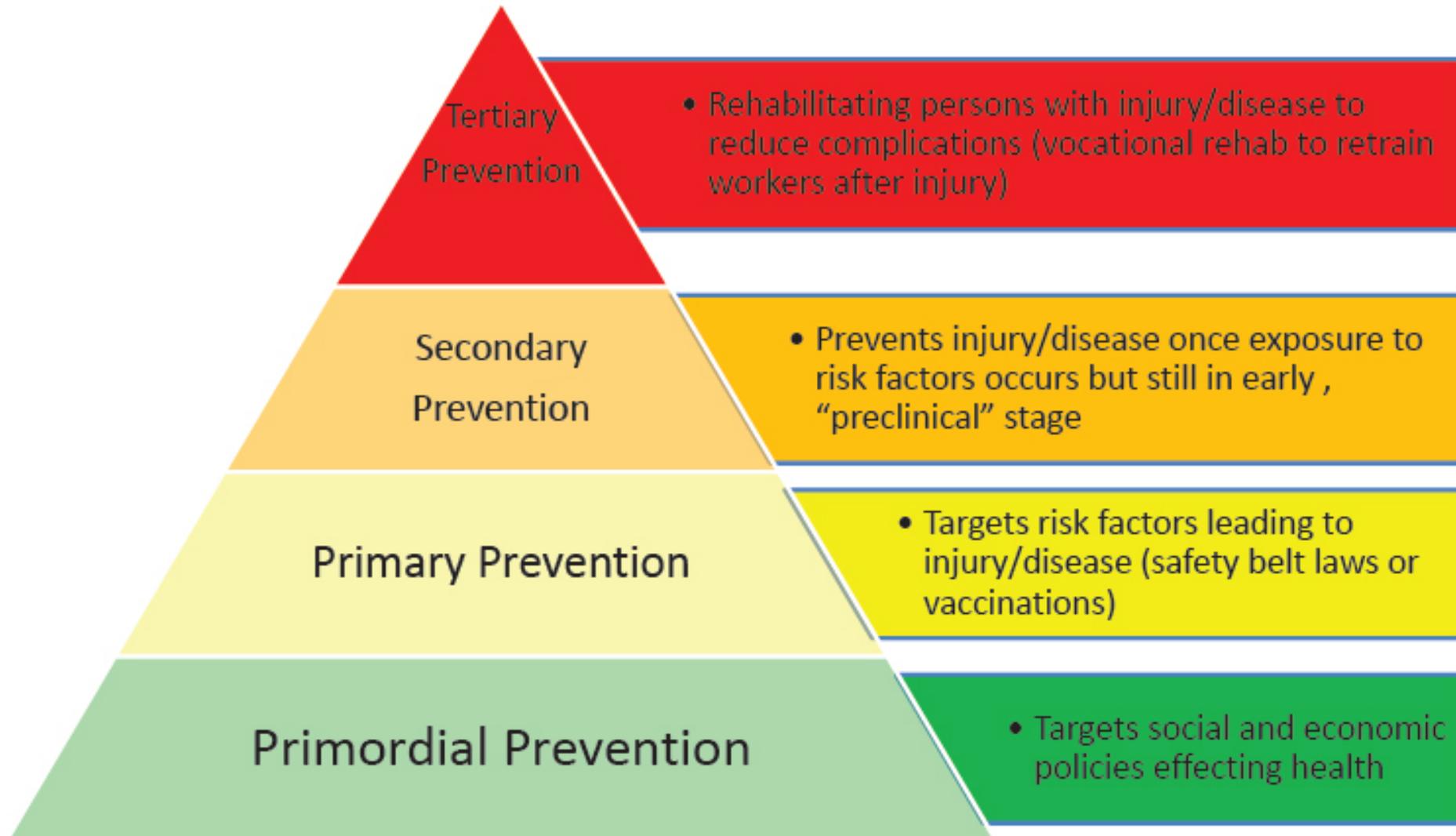
Mental Health Through A Public Health Lens

Risk Factors

- Biological and Physiological
 - Genetics
 - Chronic Medical Conditions
 - Poor nutrition and sleep
- Psychological
 - Stressful life situations
 - Traumatic experiences
 - Negative view of life
 - Poor academic or job achievement
- Social
 - ACES
 - Recent loss
 - Growing up/living in poverty
 - Discrimination
- Spiritual and Existential
 - Hopelessness
 - Feeling that one is worthless, damned, or flawed



Prevention



Primordial Prevention

- Poverty and economic disparities are some of the leading causes of mental illness in the United States
- Lack of medical care/social services contribute to poor mental health
- Exposure to ACEs can be reduced via economic and social policies

Primordial Prevention

- Targets social and economic policies effecting health

Primary Prevention

- Mental health risk factors well understood!
- Reducing them difficult. Requires policies and procedures that change the context
 - Reducing bullying in schools
 - Family centered policies and visiting in hospitals
 - Ensuring connections to medical care



- Awareness is a critical kind of primary prevention!

Secondary Prevention

- Nurses individualize care risk factors exist
- Focus on **having** risk factor rather than populations where specific risk is common.



- Identifying people struggling **before** it gets bad!
 - Screening and referral programs
 - Patient-centered response to hospital traumas
 - Trauma informed care and systems
- Individual and group therapy are often very effective here

Prevention



- Most nurses orient their practice here
 - “Keep things from getting/staying worse”
 - Vital part of healthcare
 - Most work/money to least benefit
- Psychiatric mental health nurses work here
- Therapy and medications often happen here

Strategies for Addressing Mental Health

Gatekeeper Training

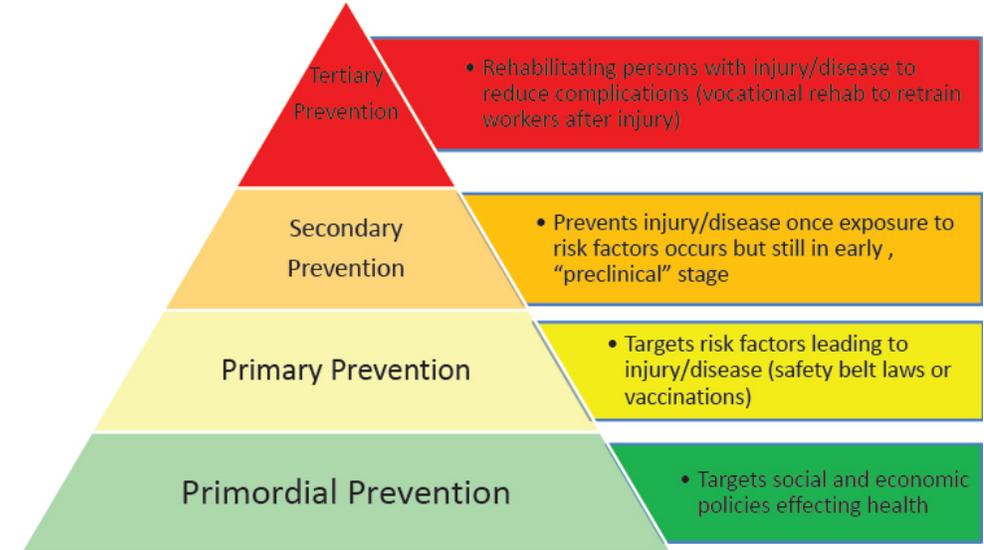
- Train people to recognize and respond to a problem
 - Teachers
 - Priests, Pastors, Rabbis and other spiritual leaders
 - Coaches and youth activity leaders
 - Anybody and everybody else!
- Focuses on: Attitudes, Knowledge, and Self-Efficacy
 - Less stigmatized beliefs about mental health
 - Know what to look for and what to do
 - Feels comfortable and capable having discussions
- Originally for suicide prevention but now taught for a variety of issues including depression, drug and alcohol problems, etc.

Many have been developed. The Suicide Prevention Resource Center has a list that they keep up to date with info about any that cover suicide related topics:

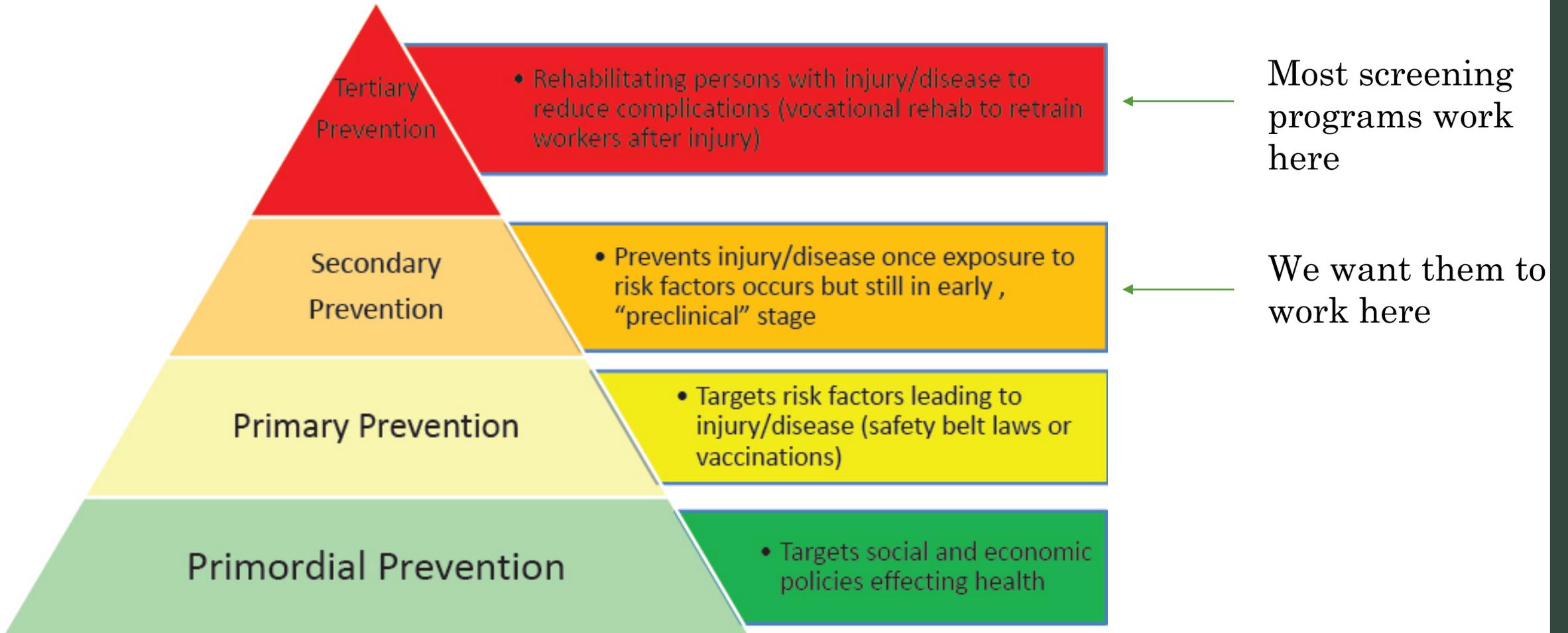
[SPRC Gatekeeper Training Programs](#)

Screening and Referral

- Using **standardized** screening tools on patients to identify those needing support or at risk
- Refer them to **appropriate** services
- Surprisingly hard to implement.
- Most common: PHQ-9
 - Screens for depression symptoms and suicide ideation
 - Many places have a cutoff where someone is referred or given treatment
 - I don't think it's very useful...



Screening and Referral



Screening and Referral

- Tips
 - Know what to do with screening!
 - Train screening AND response
 - Be ready to have conversations about results
 - Have protocols and procedures in place!
 - Must have effective referrals
 - Think Specific, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Sensitive
 - Check in to see if referral led to people going
 - **Don't just hand a phone number over!**
 - 35 and under generally happier with digital screening tools, other ages things vary
 - Many older adults prefer things to be read to them, but not all

Primary Prevention

- Specific to the work environment!
- Are there things in your work environment that may negatively impact mental health for patients? What about nurses?
- What policies could be adopted that would prevent or reduce them?
- Examples:
 - Use of VR headsets with meditations and soothing sounds reduced patient pre-surgical anxiety very effectively
 - Trauma informed care, especially in certain settings, reduces chances of first/further trauma
 - Rotating shifts (switch between night and day on a regular basis) has been shown to very negatively affect mental and physical health of workers

Thank you!

Comments and questions?