

LIFE COURSE APPROACH TO HEALTH AND WELLBEING

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WHAT IS THE LIFE COURSE APPROACH?

The life course approach is a perspective used for explaining human development and wellbeing by considering the effects of experiences and exposures as well as life transitions through various stages in life. This approach highlights the importance of considering time elements such as age, life stages, timing of events and life transitions (Alwin, 2012).

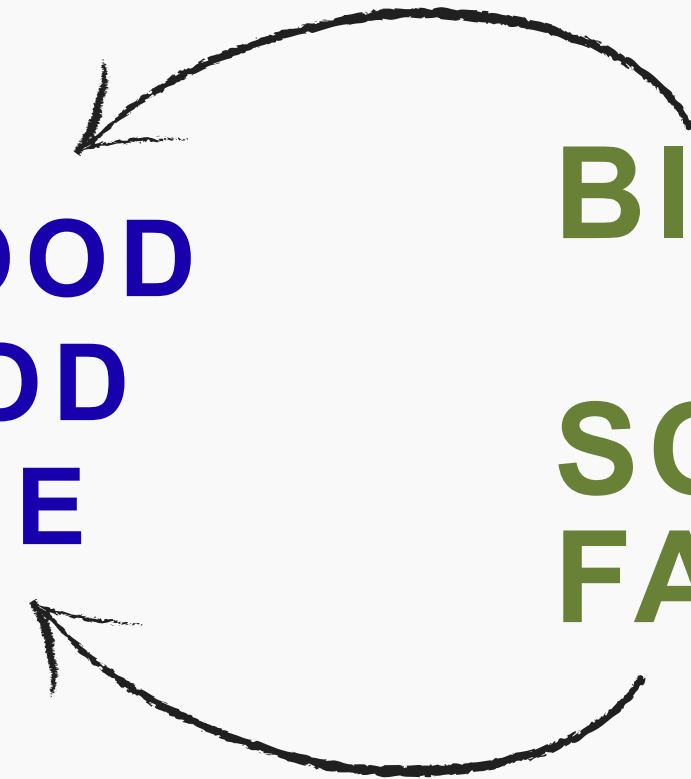


LIFE STAGES

- CHILDHOOD
- ADULTHOOD
- OLDER AGE

BIOLOGICAL FACTORS

SOCIAL/ENVIRONMENTAL
FACTORS

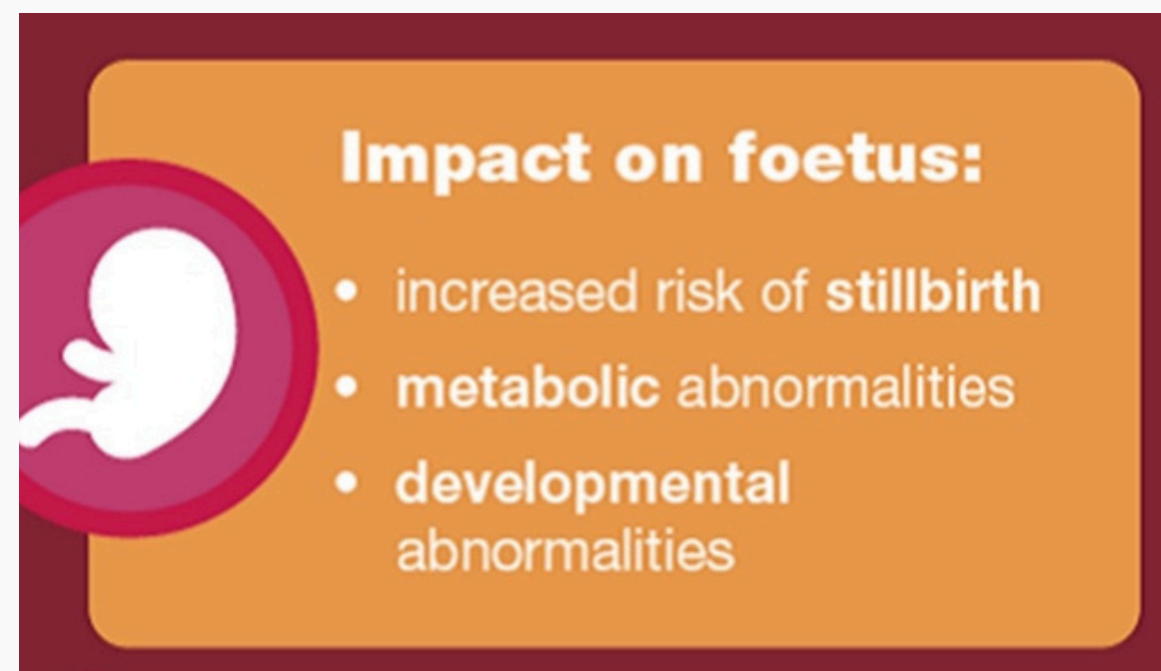


- The life course approach views health as a concept that develops over time and it's influenced by both **biological** and **social** factors, It stresses that health in later life is shaped by not only present conditions, but also by experiences and exposure occurring from gestation, through childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. This approach acknowledges that biological factors like physical growth, ageing, and development work together with social factors, such as socioeconomic conditions, health behaviors, and psychosocial influences (Kuh and Ben-Shlomo, 2004; Kuh et al., 2014).

DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

- Preconception factors:

The health of the mother and lifestyle choices/habits can have a large impact on a child's health



According to Public Health England obesity is a major preconception risk factor. Not only for women but also on the foetus.

Smoking during pregnancy has been associated with problems in fetal development, low birth weight, and increased risk of obesity during childhood. Also, there is an increased likelihood that the child will be affected by different health conditions later in life.

(Public Health England, 2018)



DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

- Early life experiences

Exposure to certain experiences in early life can have a large impact on a child life trajectory.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in Wales

Compared to people with no ACEs, those with more than 4 ACEs are:

4 times more likely to be a high-risk drinker

6 times more likely to have had or caused unintended teenage pregnancy

6 times more likely to smoke e-cigarettes or tobacco

6 times more likely to have had sex under the age of 16 years

14 times more likely to have been a victim of violence over the last 12 months

15 times more likely to have committed violence against another person in the last 12 months

16 times more likely to have used crack cocaine or heroin

20 times more likely to have been incarcerated at any point in their lifetime

(Public Health Wales, 2016)

DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

- Social determinants:
 - Education
 - Income/social class
 - Ethnicity
 - Access to healthcare



- Lifestyle choices:
 - Diet
 - Physical activity
 - Smoking



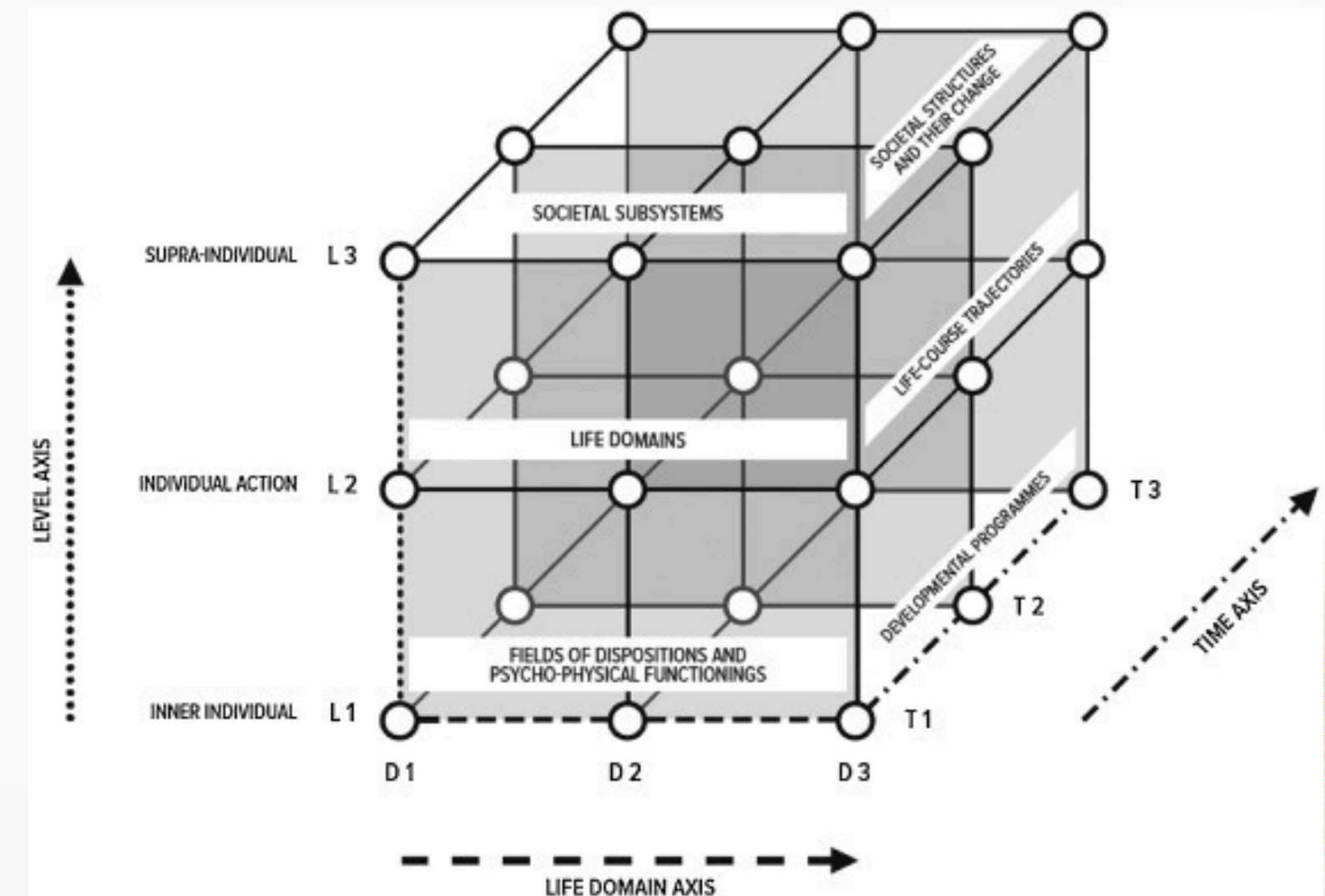
REASERCH AND DIFFERENT FRAMEWORKS

How has the life course approach impacted the Healthcare sector ?

It has helped with PREVENTION

The life course approach has helped preventive healthcare, the framework studies the origins, continuity, and changes in health behaviour overtime (Yingwattanakul, P. and Moschis, G.P, 2017)

The “life course cube”



Bernardi, Huinink and Settersten (2019) illustrate this with the “life course cube”