

# **DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH**

**Dept. of Community Medicine**

# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To define and enumerate determinants of health
- To classify and describe these determinants
- To describe the importance of inter- sectoral contributions to the health of the people
- To describe the concept of “Right to health” and “Responsibility for health”

# What are determinants?

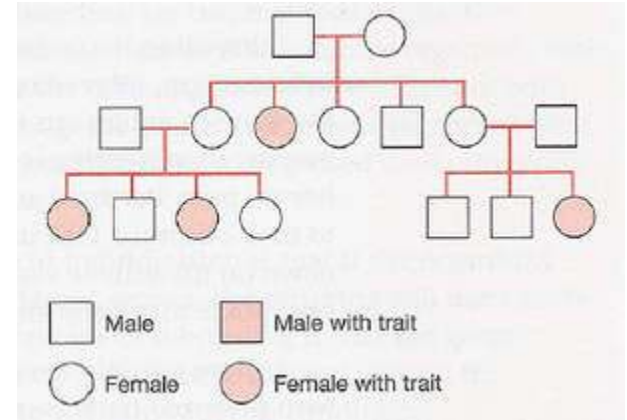
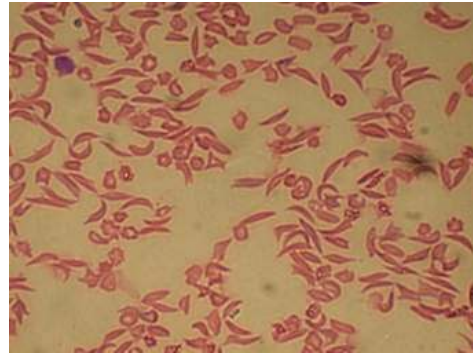
- Many influences have a bearing on health
- The influences which affect our health and well-being are called the “Determinants” of health



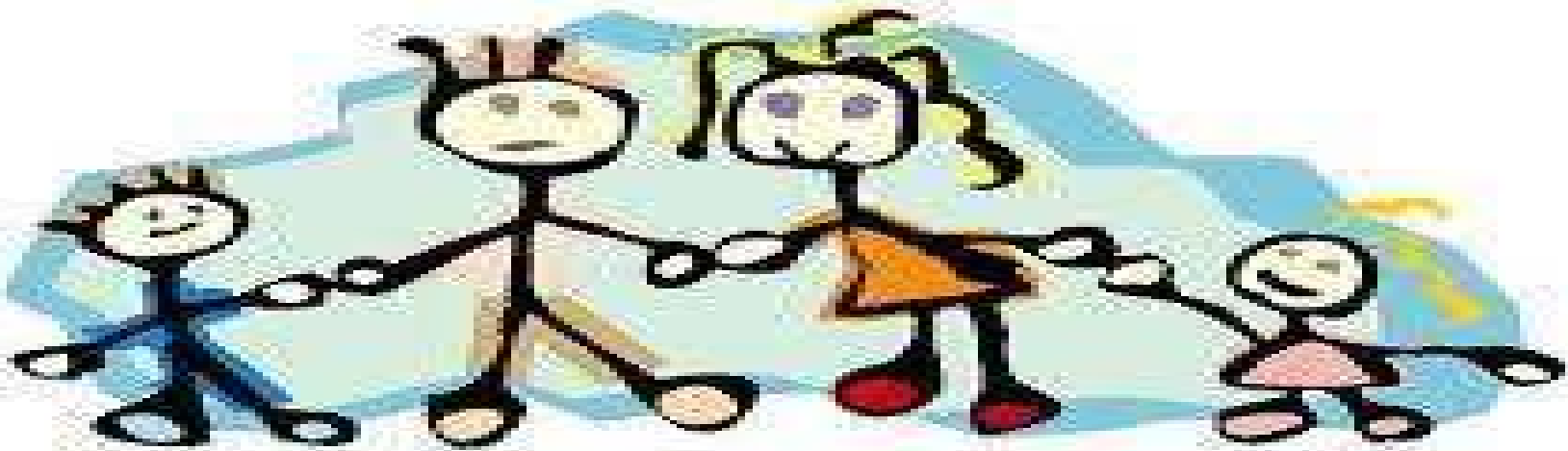
# **BIOLOGICAL DETERMINANTS**

- **The physical & mental traits of every human being are determined by the nature of his genes at the moment of conception.**

- **The genetic makeup is unique in the sense it cannot be altered after conception.**
- **A number of diseases are now known to be of genetic origin, E.g., Chromosomal anomalies, errors of metabolism, mental retardation.**



# Nutrition Matters



**“Don’t dig your  
grave with your own  
knife and fork.”**

English proverb



- **Medical genetics offers hope for prevention & treatment of a wide spectrum of diseases, thus the prospect of better medicine & longer & healthier life.**

- **A positive health advocated by WHO implies that a person should be able to express as completely as possible the potentialities of his genetic heritage.**

# **BEHAVIOURAL & SOCIO CULTURAL CONDITIONS**

- **Life style denotes “ the way that people live”, reflecting a whole range of social values, attitudes & activities.**

- **It is composed of cultural & behavioural patterns & life long personal habits**

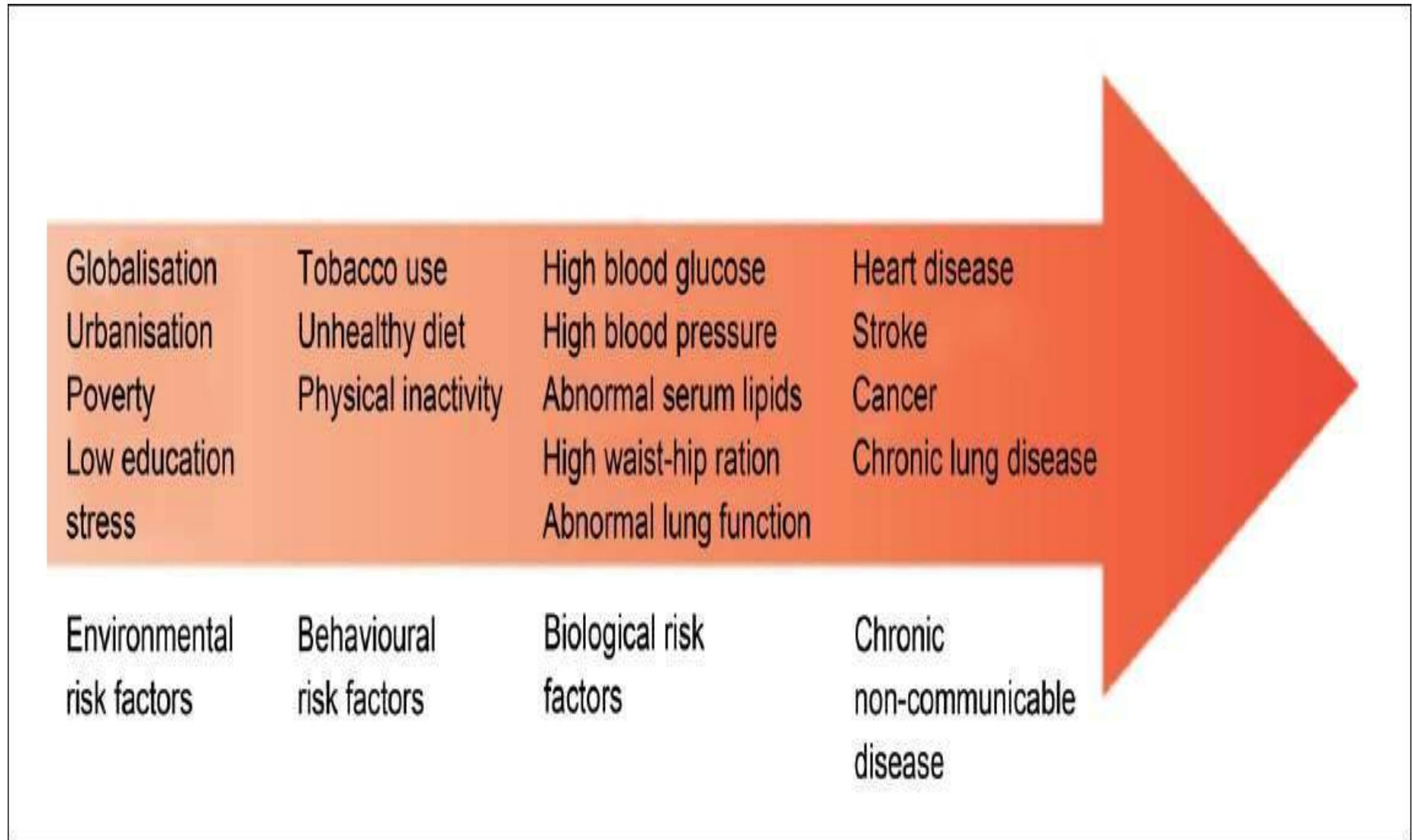
**(Alcoholism,smoking)that have developed through the process of socialization.**

# Behavioral & Socio-cultural conditions

Life style: the way people live



# BEHAVIOUR & LIFESTYLE



- **Life styles are learnt through social interaction with parents & peer groups, friends, siblings & through school & mass media.**
- **Many current health problems such as coronary heart disease, obesity, lung cancer, drug addiction are associated with life style.**

**LIFE  
STYLE  
ISSUES**





- **In countries like India risk of illness & death are connected with lack of sanitation, poor nutrition, personal hygiene, elementary human habits, customs & cultural patterns.**

# ENVIRONMENT

- **It was Hippocrates who first related disease to environment, climate, water, & air.**
- **Later Pettenkoffer in Germany revived the concept of disease – environment association.**

# THE ENVIRONMENT



- **Environment is classified as “internal” & “external”.**
- **Internal environment** of a man pertains to each & every component part, every tissue organ & organ system & their harmonious functioning within the system.

- **External or macro environment** consists of those things to which man is exposed after conception.
- **It is defined as “all that which is external to the individual human host”.**

- It can be divided into physical, biological & psychosocial components , any or all of which affect can affect the health of man & his susceptibility to illness.

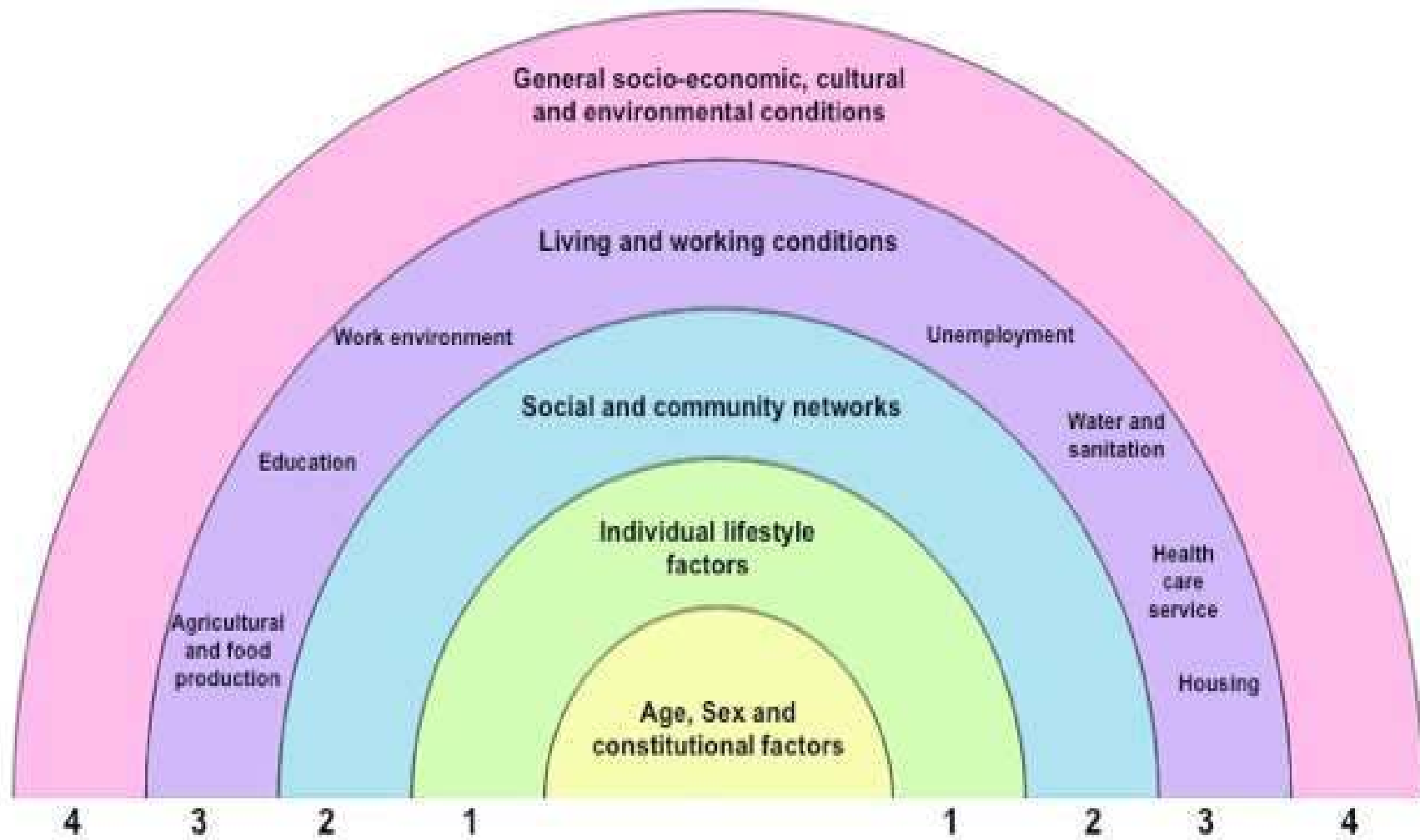
- Some epidemiologists use the term “micro environment” or domestic environment or personal environment which reflects a person’s way of living & lifestyle. E.g., eating habits, personal habits.

- The other environment includes occupational environment, socio economic environment, moral environment.



- **SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS**
- The health of a person is primarily dependent upon the level of socioeconomic development.
- E.g., Per Capita income, GNP, education, nutrition, employment, housing & political system of the country.

# Social Determinants of Health



Dahlgren & Whitehead 1991 Policies and strategies to promote social equity in health. Stockholm: Institute of Future Studies.

- **ECONOMIC STATUS:** The per capita GNP is the most widely accepted measure of general economic performance.
- The economic progress of many countries has been a major factor in reducing the morbidity, mortality, increase in life expectancy & improving of the quality of life, family size, & the pattern of disease & deviant behaviour in the community.

# EDUCATION

- Education is the second major influencing factor in affecting the health of the population.



- The world map of illiteracy closely coincides with the maps of poverty, malnutrition, ill health, high infant & child mortality rates.
- Studies indicate that education to some extent compensates the effects of poverty on health, irrespective of the availability of health facilities.

# OCCUPATION

- Un employment usually shows a higher incidence of ill health & death.
- For many, loss of work may mean loss of income & status.



- It can cause psychological & social damage.
- The very state of being employed in productive work promotes health.



# POLITICAL SYSTEM

- Health is closely related to the political system of a country.
- Often the main obstacles to the implementation of health technologies are not technical rather political.

- Decisions concerning **resource allocation, man power policy, choice of technology & the degree to which health services are made available & accessible** to different segments of the society are examples of the manner in which the political system can shape community health services.

- **The percentage of GDP spent on health is About 3%**

# HEALTH SERVICES

- Health services are seen as essential for social & economic development. There is a strong correlation between GDP & Expectation of life at birth & the overall health status of the given population.

- Health & Family welfare services aim at improving the health condition of the population.
- India being a signatory member , to realize Health For All has chalked out strategies like the PHC, CHC & other peripheral infrastructure.

The National preventive programmes such as Immunization programme, AIDS Control programme, Malaria Eradication Prog, Filaria Control Prog, ICDS, The Mid day Meal programme, Family Welfare programmes & Other non communicable disease programmes aim at prevention, promotion & maintenance of the health status of the population.

# AGING OF THE POPULATION

- By the year 2020 the world will have more than **one billion** people aged 60 & over.
- More than two thirds of them living in the developing countries.

- A major concern of rapid population aging is the increased prevalence of chronic disease & disabilities.
- Therefore aging process needs a special attention



# Aging of the population

With Age comes skills  
It's called MultiTasking  
I CAN  
LAUGH, COUGH,  
SNEEZE, AND PEE ALL  
AT THE SAME TIME.



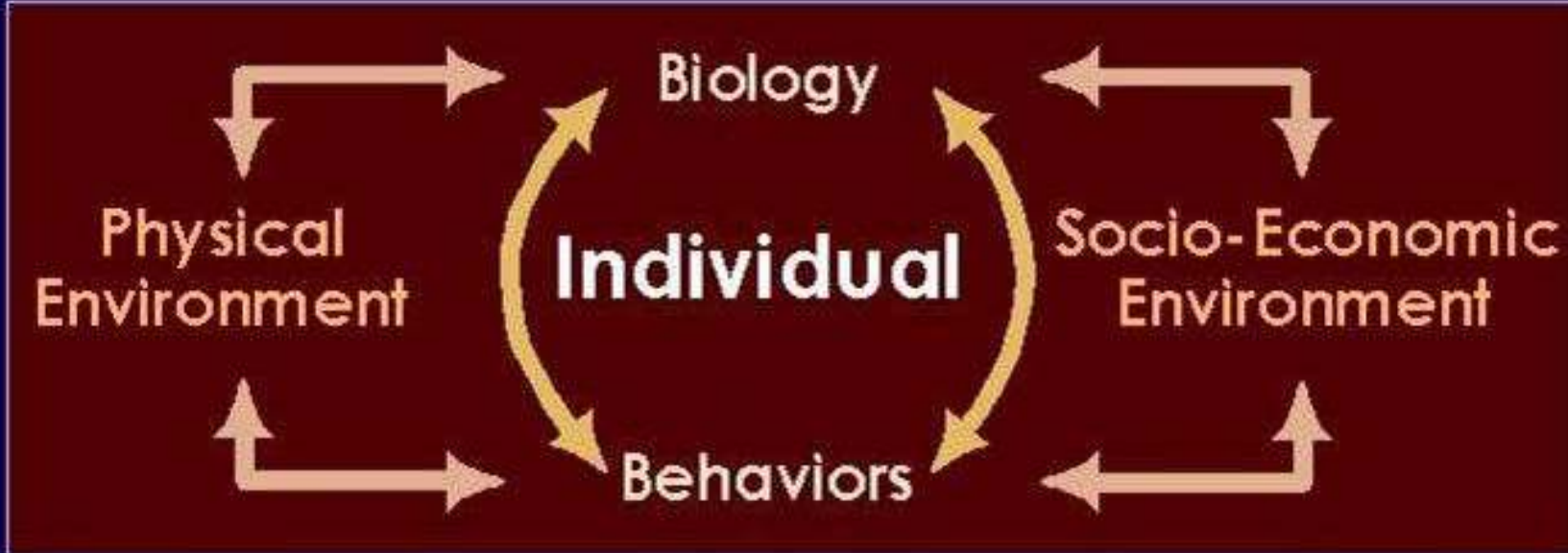
# GENDER

- The 1990s have witnessed an increase in concentration on women's issues. In 1993 The Global Commission on Women's Health was established.

- The Commission drew up an agenda for action on women's health covering nutrition, reproductive health, the health consequences of violence, aging, life style related conditions & occupational environment.
- Inclusion of women's health issues is a major breakthrough in the developmental plans.

# Determinants of Health

Policies and Interventions



Access to Quality Health Care

Healthy People 2010

# OTHER FACTORS

- The revolution in information & Communication Technology offers tremendous opportunities in providing an easy & instant access to medical information once difficult to retrieve.

- It contributes to the dissemination of information world wide, serving the needs of many physicians, health professionals, bio medical scientists & researchers, the mass media & the public.

- Health is not the sole contributor to the health & wellbeing of population, the potential of inter sectoral contributions to the health of communities is increasingly recognized.

# Right to health

Universal declaration of Human Rights:

**“Everyone has a right to a standard of living adequate for the health of himself and his family...” (1948)**

Preamble to WHO constitution: one of the fundamental rights of every human being is to enjoy **“the highest attainable standard of health”**



# Responsibility for Health

## Individual responsibility

self care

## Community responsibility

demedicalization of health

(involvement of communities in  
planning, implementation, Utilization...)

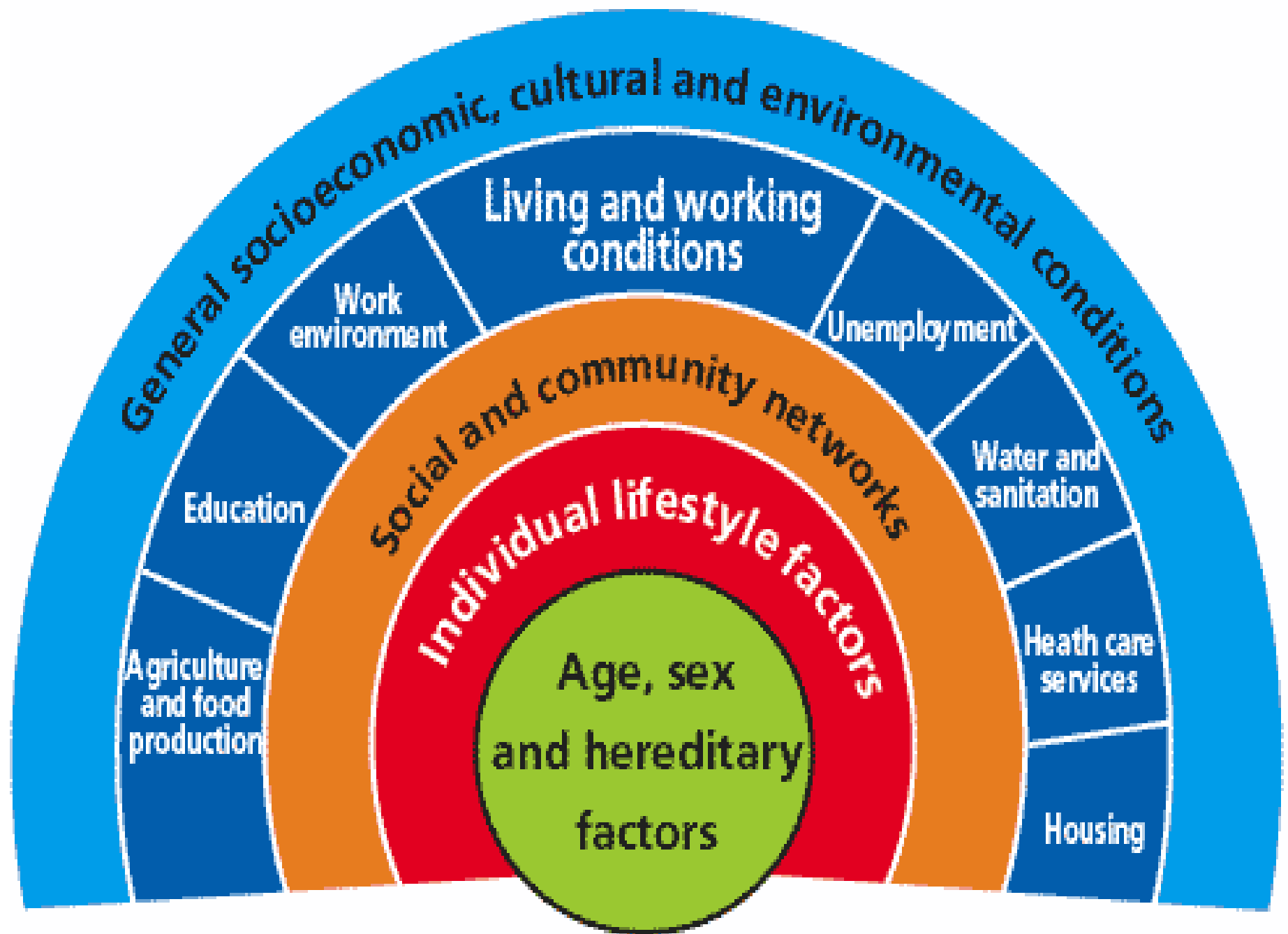
**Henry Sigerist, the medical historian stated:**

***“People’s health ought to be the concern of the people themselves. They must struggle for it and plan for it. The war against disease and for health can not be fought by physicians alone. It is a people’s war in which the entire population must be mobilized permanently.”***

# State responsibility

## International responsibility

- a) **international cooperation:** exchange of experts, provision of drugs and other supplies, border meetings with regard to control of communicable diseases...
- b) **International organizations**



# THANK YOU

