

Comment on Sanjay Kalra et al (JPMA, Vol 71, No-11, November 2021)

A novel definition of health: Crafting a contemporary classic

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Dear Madam, The definition of "health" has evolved with the passage of time, so that today a seemingly perfect definition is offered by the World Health Organization (WHO)¹: "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."

Since the concept of health has gradually evolved in the human's mind, the present definition may seem imperfect considering social, environmental, and scientific changes in the past 70 years. I agree with Dr. Kalra et al. that "An ageing population, advances in prevention and management, as well as increasing impact of non-communicable diseases have led to the need for a novel definition of health."²

In order to develop a new definition of "health", we may rely on visionary scholars from the past. Imam Sadjad has described various aspects of health in his supplications, almost 1100 years ago.³ To study different aspects of health and to define it in the light of these supplications, the sayings of this great visionary scholar about "health" have been reviewed.

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A proposed definition of health based on Imam Sadjad's supplications:

"Health is a steady and dynamic state of well-being characterized by thorough individualized physical, spiritual and social tranquility, while encompassing man's entity as a whole, and therefore results in prosperity of mind, soul and body".⁴

A discussion of this proposed definition and other new concepts in defining health is needed to provide a comprehensive definition of "health".

Disclaimer: none.

Conflict of interest: none.

Funding disclosure: none.

References

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