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Kelly Buettner-Schmidt, PhD, RN, FAAN, is a professor in the School of Nursing at North Dakota State University. As a former public health nurse whose work was immersed in every day social justice issues, and as a current faculty teaching courses frequently guided by social justice philosophies, she strives to increase awareness of and understandings of social justice and injustices. Support for her research on social justice was from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Nursing and Health Policy Collaborative at the University of New Mexico. Dr. Buettner-Schmidt's current research is in public health, health policies, and tobacco prevention and control with ongoing funding since 2000 from a variety of sources including the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the ND Department of Health, and others.

Abstract: "Social justice is a matter of life and death" (WHO Commission on Social Determinants of Health). How do you define and describe social justice? Is social justice a process, a product, or both? Is it easier to describe social justice or social injustice? A broad multidisciplinary review of literature within and outside of the health-related literature resulted in the identification of social justice's attributes, antecedents, and consequences and provided clarification of the concept of social justice. A synthesized definition of social justice was developed. This presentation provides a baseline for a conversation on the meaning and implications of social justice and injustice in today's world.

By Dr. Buettner-Schmidt

[Disparities in Rural Tobacco Use, Smoke-Free Policies, and Tobacco Taxes](#) Tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke (SHS) remain leading causes of preventable disease, disability, and mortality in the United States. Rural populations are among those being left behind in the recent declining smoking rates and have become a focus of discussions on tobacco-related disparities. This article describes tobacco-related

disparities in rural populations including tobacco use, exposure to SHS, smoke-free policies, and tobacco taxes. Nurses, as social justice and tobacco control policy advocates, are needed especially at the local level, where much of the policy work occurs and where nursing's voice is respected and can be powerful.

[Social justice: a concept analysis](#) Nurses can have an important influence on the health of people globally by reinvesting in social justice. Implications for research, education, practice and policy, such as development of a social justice framework and educational competencies are presented.

Articles

[Addressing Health Equity and Social Determinants of Health Through Healthy People 2030](#) The evolution of Healthy People reflects growing awareness of health inequities over the life course. Each decade, the initiative has gained understanding of how the nation can achieve health and well-being. To inform Healthy People 2030's visionary goal of achieving health equity in the coming decade, the Secretary's Advisory Committee on National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Objectives for 2030 (Secretary's Advisory Committee) provided the US Department of Health and Human Services with guidance on key terms, frameworks, and measurement for health equity. Conditions in the environments in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age influence health and well-being outcomes, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks and are mostly responsible for health inequities. No single individual, organization, community, or sector has sole ownership, accountability, or capacity to sustain the health and well-being of an entire population. The COVID-19 pandemic in the United States highlights underlying inequities and disparities in health and health care across segments of the population. Contributing factors that were known prior to the pandemic have led to major discrepancies in rates of infection and death. To reduce health disparities and advance health equity, systems approaches—designed to shift interconnected aspects of public health problems—are needed.

Reports

[Attaining Health Equity](#) (CDC)

Health equity is achieved when every person has the opportunity to "attain his or her full health potential" and no one is "disadvantaged from achieving this potential because of social position or other socially determined circumstances." Health disparities or inequities, are types of unfair health differences closely linked with social, economic or environmental disadvantages that adversely affect groups of people

[Social Determinants of Health](#) (HHS)

Social determinants of health (SDOH) are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks. They are grouped into 5 domains: economic stability; education access and quality; health care access and quality; neighborhood and built environment; and social and community context.

[Closing the gap in a generation: health equity through action on the social determinants of health - Final report of the commission on social determinants of health](#) (WHO)

Social justice is a matter of life and death. It affects the way people live, their consequent chance of illness, and their risk of premature death. We watch in wonder as life expectancy and good health continue to increase in parts of the world and in alarm as they fail to improve in others.

[World Development Report 2006: Equity and Development](#) (World Bank)

Poverty reduction comes about through individuals, families and communities taking advantage of the opportunities available to them by working, investing and innovating to better their lives. But we live in a world of extraordinary inequalities in opportunity, both within and across countries.

Organizations

[World Day of Social Justice](#), United Nations, February 20, 2022

Downloadable [fact sheets and reports](#) about health equity from the American Public Health Association

[North Dakota Human Rights Coalition](#)

[The Human Family](#) promoting human rights and social justice through film and art, based in Fargo, ND but operates state wide.

[Voices for Racial Justice](#) based in Minneapolis, MN but operates state wide

NDSU Libraries

[Anti-racism resources](#) for teaching and learning