

Social Determinants of Health – Competencies

Upon mastering this module, you should be able to:

1. Explain the “rabbit effect” (kindness), including its operative mechanisms (physiologic and hormonal stress), its health outcomes, its relationship to other health-destroying factors (such as diet), and a brief outline of the research that led to its discovery.
2. Review what studies of orphanages versus foster care demonstrate relative to cognitive development, failure to thrive, and (potentially) early death.
3. Summarize the major findings of the ACE trial. Describe the operative mechanisms by which early childhood experience produces reductions in life expectancy.
4. Link findings regarding kindness and positive social interaction to the findings of early childhood studies (orphanages, the ACE trial). Describe how those insights feed studies of “resilient” children, citing Werner and Bronfenbrenner.
5. Outline Marmot’s findings regarding “status syndrome”. Explain the idea of health stress associated with social hierarchy.
6. Graph the cascade of factors that determine human life expectancy. Describe key derivative implications regarding income levels and care delivery system performance. Explain why income is not a primary determinant of health, despite a strong statistical association; including empiric evidence to support that claim.
7. Outline what this implies relative to “the job to be done” in health care delivery, relative to the health of a population.