

Proactive Health: An Imperative to Achieve the Goal of Healthy China

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ABSTRACT

Proactive Health has become a new service model to improve human health. Although the concept of Proactive Health has been proposed by the *Outline of the Healthy China 2030 Plan and the Healthy China Initiative*, the lack of a unified definition of Proactive Health in China's academic community is still the most fundamental and critical deficiency. Therefore, based on the concepts of Proactive Health, this study analyzed and described the natural characteristics and implications of Proactive Health to establish an exact definition.

BACKGROUND

With the application of transformative technologies and rapid socioeconomic development, health demands are increasingly becoming an important core driver of future economic growth. "Proactive Health" has become a new service model to improve human health (1). The concept of Proactive Health has been fully embodied in the *Outline of the Healthy China 2030 Plan* and the *Healthy China Initiative*. To effectively improve the national health level, the *State Council's Opinions on Implementation of the Health China Initiative* clearly pointed out in 2019 that we should accelerate the shift from a focus on treatment of disease to improving people's health and motivate the whole of society to implement prevention-oriented principles (2–3).

Although the concept of Proactive Health has been proposed before, there continues to be a lack of well-developed interdisciplinary systems and independent applications of key technologies. A most fundamental and critical deficiency is that there is no unified definition of Proactive Health in China's academic community. Therefore, based on the concepts of Proactive Health, we analyzed and described the natural characteristics and implications of Proactive Health to establish an exact definition of Proactive Health.

FROM "PASSIVE HEALTH" TO "PROACTIVE HEALTH"

Proactive health has four important transformations from passive health. First, the service philosophy is changed from disease-centered to health-centered. Second, the service objects are changed from patient-centered to people-centered, reflecting the entire life cycle of health. Third, entities that integrate multiple services, such as health, sports, elderly care, and education, become the new service providers. Fourth, service content changes from single disease diagnosis and treatment to a whole-health service chain that covers disease prevention, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, nursing, and health maintenance.

NATURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF PROACTIVE HEALTH

Based on the above transformations, there are six shared, natural characteristics of the Proactive Health services model: Preventive, Precision, Personalized, Proactive, Co-construction and sharing, and Self-rule and self-discipline. "Proactive" is a core element of all natural characteristics, which means that individuals, industries, and society should give full play to initiatives promoting public health. "Preventive" refers to reduction of disease occurrences through a combination of health promotion measures and reduction of adverse prognoses through timely diagnosis and treatment, and rehabilitation after disease onset by taking active and passive measures. Different from Preventive, "Proactive" means that the public takes the initiative to prevent disease. "Precision" implies a combination of modern technology and traditional medical methods to comprehensively assess exposure to various risk factors and the health status of individuals to maximize health benefits for both individuals and society through efficient, safe, and economical health services.

“Personalized” refers to the provision of diverse, multi-level, targeted health services that are tailored to individuals’ health demands. “Co-construction and sharing” implies integration of individual, industry, and social forces to promote health in all fields. “Self-rule and self-discipline” gives full play to individual initiative and motivation, improving self-health literacy and health status of all.

IMPLICATIONS OF PROACTIVE HEALTH

Proactive Health profoundly reflects people-oriented principal concepts in its natural characteristics. With improvement of people’s health awareness, health literacy, and healthcare consumerism, medical demand is no longer the primary demand. What will benefit people the most is a new type of integrated medical and health service that is oriented to the entire population, throughout the life and health cycles, integrating interventions of healthy diet, exercise, physics, psychology, environment, and culture that incorporates the complete health service chain of prevention, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, and nursing and health care.

Thus, Proactive Health is the sum of all social activities that focus on health and prevention, that are based on the whole population and the whole life cycle, and that integrate health goals into all policies. The aim is to promote all people to actively pursue health; reduce occurrence of disease; strengthen early diagnosis, early treatment, and early rehabilitation; and enable everyone to receive comprehensive, equitable, accessible, qualified, and efficient health services. Proactive Health provides important fundamental support for a sound public security prevention and control system and is a major initiative to address the overall situation, serve the people, and serve national strategies and national security (Figure 1).

DEFINITION OF PROACTIVE HEALTH

Based on a synthesis of the concept, natural characteristics, implications, and scope of Proactive Health, we propose the following definition. Proactive Health is the sum of all social activities of human beings that revolve around health, including controlling health risk factors at the source, creating health values in the process, and actively responding to population security crises in all social activities.

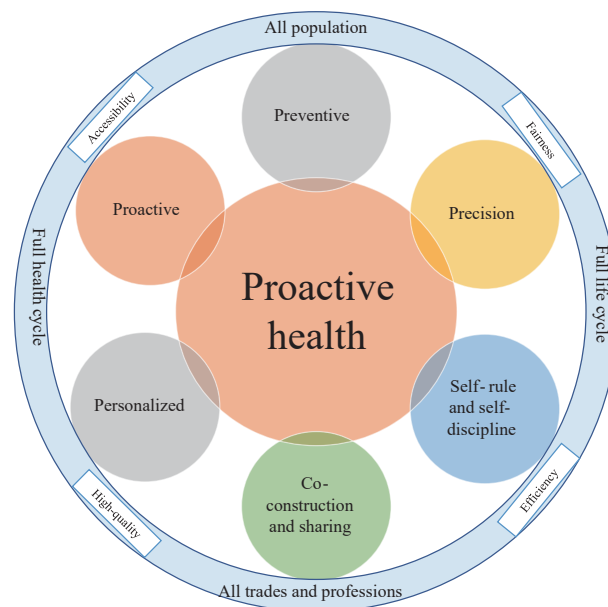


FIGURE 1. The “4PCS” theoretical framework of proactive health.

PROSPECTIVE

In 2021, China released the *Outline of the 14th Five-Year Plan and the Vision 2035 of the National Economic and Social Development of the People’s Republic of China*, which clearly laid out Proactive Health intervention technologies. Health management has become an essential, fundamental, core area for national security and development. Proactive Health will become a new pillar of great power for the whole population throughout the life cycle. Many scholars have explored disease management models, public health system construction, and medicine-body integrative services from a theoretical perspective of active health (4–6). Concerted efforts should be made by all parties to transform research into strategies and plans of action, to mobilize the whole people to act together, and to implement comprehensive measures to truly improve health literacy and fitness levels for Chinese residents. With in-depth development of theoretical research and practical application, it is believed that Proactive Health will gradually form a perfect disciplinary system with mature key technologies that will best serve the construction of Healthy China.

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