

## **BDA Research Symposium 2021 – Definition for the public health stream**

By the BDA Public Health Specialist Group Committee, June 2021.

(Acknowledgements for this definition from *Public Health Nutrition Journal*).

Public health is concerned with promoting and improving health at population level, including by preventing disease and prolonging life. In addition, the field of Public Health Nutrition encompasses research aimed at understanding the causes of, and approaches and solutions to, nutrition-related public health achievements, situations and problems around the world.

Within both, examples of relevant research disciplines include:

- Epidemiology
- Qualitative research
- Populations (and/or as individuals)

Public Health and Public Health Nutrition Research topics are expected to be of interest to dietitians and nutrition professionals, including researchers, epidemiologists, the medical and health care professions and health promotion specialists interested in the role of nutrition in disease prevention; academics and those (including as above) involved in fieldwork and the application of research to identify practical solutions to important public health problems.

Example areas (not an exhaustive list):

- Address monitoring and surveillance of nutritional status and nutritional environments in communities or populations at risk (including any related dissemination and intervention).
- Identify and analyse behavioural, socio-cultural, economic, political, and environmental/sustainability determinants of nutrition-related public health
- Critique and/or develop methodologies needed for assessment, and monitoring, evaluating and reviewing nutrition-related public health issues
- Assess, develop and/or inform efforts to improve communication of nutrition-related information across the range of methods and media available and under development.
- Build workforce capacity for effective public health nutrition action and on-going evaluation and review
- Evaluate or discuss the effectiveness of food and nutrition policies, including to inform future strategies and their development
- Describe/discuss/engage (including with community participation if applicable) in the development, implementation, and evaluation of innovative interventions and programs to address nutrition-related problems
- Realistically relate diet and nutrition to sustainability of the environment and food systems in order to inform future developments, including from a whole systems approach.
- Collaborate with other public health related professionals to conduct research of shared interest, including that focussed on nutrition-related epidemiology of current concern (e.g. non-communicable diseases, COVID-19, gender health, lifespan, health inequalities, vulnerable groups and food insecurity issues, etc).