

Understanding Health Behaviour

Fac. Health, Medicine and Life Sciences

HEP4210

Period 1:

1 Sep 2025

24 Oct 2025

Credits:

6.0

Coordinator:

R.M.M. Crutzen

Teaching methods:

PBL, Lecture(s), Paper(s), Assignment(s), Work in subgroups, Presentation(s), Training(s)

Assessment methods:

Written exam, Final paper

Keywords:

Health behaviour, determinants, cognitions, automaticity, environment, theory

Full course description

In this module we will discuss important determinants that influence the adoption of healthy and unhealthy behaviours. We will have a look at important individual-level determinants as well as environmental-level determinants and discuss theories concerning these determinants to better understand health behaviour. In a separate training we will focus on skills to apply these theories in practice. Students will learn how to develop questions to assess determinants of health behaviour, how to analyse qualitative data and to report these findings. The module will be assessed with an individual written exam and a group paper.

Course objectives

The general aim of this module is to analyse and critically discuss the determinants of health behaviour derived from theories that are commonly used to explain health behaviour. This is essential not only for understanding motives why people adopt certain health behaviours, but also to understand which specific steps are required in order to be able to move to the next step: programme development in order to motivate people and actors in their environment to change the conditions favouring a more healthy lifestyle and healthier conditions.

Recommended reading

[This is the link to Keylinks, our online reference list.](#)

Changing Health Behaviour

Fac. Health, Medicine and Life Sciences

HEP4211

Period 1:

1 Sep 2025

24 Oct 2025

Credits:

6.0

Coordinator:

V.A.J. Verbestel

Teaching methods:

PBL, Lecture(s), Work in subgroups, Presentation(s), Training(s)

Assessment methods:

Written exam, Attendance, Assignment, Computer test

Full course description

Changing behaviour of individuals requires a detailed understanding of the determinants and mechanisms that drive behavior. However, although understanding determinants of behaviour provides insight into what to change, it does not tell you how to change these determinants. Being able to change behaviour requires knowledge and understanding of the theoretical methods and practical applications that can be used to modify the most important individual and environmental level determinants.

In this module, a variety of theory-based behavior change methods are introduced. These methods can be used to influence the most important behavioral determinants, as identified in a parallel course, such as people's perceived risk, attitudes and self-efficacy towards health behavior, or environmental influences on behavior. Furthermore, students learn under which conditions these methods may work and how to translate these methods into practical applications to be used in health promotion interventions. 'Mini-lectures' about these methods will be prepared and presented by small groups of students and supervised by teachers. By presenting one's work and providing and receiving feedback from peers and tutors, students will have a very active role in the learning activities. In addition to the mini-lectures there will also be summary lectures by teachers.

The concurrent training aims at applying the knowledge of theory-based methods to the development of health messages for different media, for different settings and for different target audiences. Students will learn about theory-based principles for developing attractive, comprehensible, persuasive and culturally appropriate health messages through hands on exercises.

Assessment in this module consists of a module exam and a written group assignment about the training.

Course objectives

The aim of this module is that students gain broad knowledge and insight into theoretical methods and practical applications that can be used to modify the behavioural determinants that are derived from the most commonly used theories to explain behaviour. This knowledge is essential as general knowledge of behavior change and the broader field of health promotion, but is also the starting point for the process of intervention development. In addition to knowledge about theoretical methods and applications and insight in how to choose for a method/application, it is also essential to have skills in writing and developing health messages. Therefore, a second aim of this course is that students become proficient in writing health messages that are in line with basic principles of successful health communication, for different target audiences and for different media. In terms of learning skills, the focus in this module will be on teaching fellow-students about selected topics. As a result of this unit, students will be equipped with excellent knowledge and skills that prepare them well for the next modules in the curriculum, but will also prepare them for a career in health promotion research or practice.

Recommended reading

[This is the link to Keylinks, our online reference list.](#)

Intervention Development

Fac. Health, Medicine and Life Sciences

HEP4213

Period 2:

27 Oct 2025

19 Dec 2025

Credits:

6.0

Coordinator:

S. Stutterheim

Teaching methods:

PBL, Lecture(s), Paper(s), Assignment(s), Work in subgroups

Assessment methods:

Written exam, Final paper, Assignment

Keywords:

interventions, health promotion, development, Theory, Evidence, Behaviour change

Full course description

The focus of this course is on Intervention Mapping (IM). IM is an approach for developing theory- and evidence-based behaviour and environmental change interventions. IM can guide intervention planners through program development, implementation and evaluation, thereby demystifying and monitoring the development process and increasing the likelihood of intervention success.

IM comprises six steps:

1. conducting a needs assessment and drafting a logic model of the problem,
2. determining program outcomes and objectives,
3. designing the program with theoretical methods and practical applications,
4. producing the program,
5. planning for implementation, and
6. planning program evaluations.

IM guides intervention developers through each of these steps via specific tasks, which are included in the workbook that students complete in the context of this course. The tasks in each step generates a product that, in turn, provides the basis for subsequent steps. Throughout this course, you conduct these tasks and go through the first five steps of Intervention Mapping.

Course objectives

Knowledge and understanding

- describe the Intervention Mapping approach;
- develop a theory-based health promotion program using the Intervention Mapping approach;
- integrate individual and environmental level explanations and theories.

Application of knowledge and understanding

- integrate their knowledge of theories and evidence concerning health behaviors in the Intervention Mapping approach;
- translate general health promotion goals into specific program objectives;
- integrate ideas, theories and evidence in a new, realistic and promising health promotion program;
- adequately justify the decisions they made in the subsequent steps of the Intervention Mapping approach.

Making judgments

- acknowledge the utility and necessity of using a planned development approach like Intervention Mapping for the development of theory- and evidence-based health promotion programs.
- select determinants using appropriate methodology and statistics.

Communication

- communicate own opinion and ideas;
- critically discuss their own and other's opinions, ideas, and work.

Learning skills

- effectively cooperate in small groups with persons of different background and initial level;
- apply the Intervention Mapping approach to other health problems.

Recommended reading

[This is the link to Keylinks, our online reference list.](#)

Reviewing Evidence for Health Promotion Practice

Fac. Health, Medicine and Life Sciences

HEP4217

Period 2:

27 Oct 2025

19 Dec 2025

Credits:

6.0

Coordinator:

D.F.L. de Ruijter

Teaching methods:

Lecture(s), Skills, Paper(s), Assignment(s), Research, Presentation(s), Training(s)

Assessment methods:

Final paper, Participation, Presentation, Attendance, Assignment

Keywords:

systematic review, Effectiveness of interventions, observational studies, translation to practice

Full course description

When you make evidence-based decisions, the best thing you can do is to use the results of multiple studies that have investigated the same topic. Combining results of multiple studies can be done by means of systematic reviews of the literature. In this course you learn how to conduct a systematic review. Evidence-based working is important in the field of health promotion. Evidence-based health promotion means using the best available evidence for making decisions about health promotion activities. For example, when you work as a health promoter, you should make decisions about determinants that need to be targeted in an intervention to modify a specific behavior for a specific target audience. Or you should make decisions about interventions or intervention components that can be effective in modifying a specific behavior. During this course you will be introduced to, and gain experience in, the process of a systematic review on a self-selected topic. A systematic review provides a detailed overview of evidence regarding current knowledge in a certain area of research, based on a specific research question. It does so by collating all empirical evidence that fits pre-specified eligibility criteria to answer the specific research question. It uses explicit, systematic methods that are selected to minimize bias, thus providing reliable findings from which conclusions can be drawn and decisions made. The aim of this course is for you to formulate such a research question and to find, select, read and evaluate scientific literature critically. You will also learn how to

acquire skills in reporting on the results of this process in an advisory report and in providing and receiving peer feedback. The final end product will be the writing of an advisory report and the developing of an infographic based on your systematic review, following the standard steps described in literature.

Course objectives

This module has several general goals. First, students will get knowledge and skills regarding the formulation of a sound research question and finding, selecting, reading and evaluating literature critically. Second, students will learn how to appraise scientific literature and how to use it in writing an advisory report and in developing an infographic for practice. Third, students will get skills in providing and receiving peer feedback

Recommended reading

Higgins JPT, Thomas J, Chandler J, Cumpston M, Li T, Page MJ, Welch VA (editors). Cochrane Handbook for Systematic Reviews of Interventions version 6.2 (updated February 2021). Cochrane, 2021. Available from www.training.cochrane.org/handbook.

Liberati, A., Altman, D.G., Tetzlaff, J., Mulrow, C., Gøtzsche, P.C., Ioannidis, J.P.A., Clarke, M., Devereaux, P.J., Kleijnen, J., Moher, D. (2009). The PRISMA statement for reporting systematic reviews and meta-analyses of studies that evaluate healthcare interventions: explanation and elaboration. *British Medical Journal*, 39, b2700.

Moher, D., Liberati, A., Tetzlaff, J., Altman, D.G., for the PRISMA Group (2009). Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses: the PRISMA statement. *British Medical Journal*, 339, b2535 doi: 10.1136/bmj.b2535.

Page, M.J., McKenzie, J.E., Bossuyt, P.M., Boutron, I., Hoffmann, T.C., Mulrow, C.D., Shamseer, L., Tetzlaff, J.M., Akl, E.A., et al. for the PRISMA group (2021). The PRISMA 2020 statement: an updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *British Medical Journal*, 372 (71)

Zaza, S., Wright-De Aguero, L.K., Briss, P.A., Truman, B.I. Hopkins, D.P., Hennessy, M.H., Sosin, D.M., Anderson, L. Carande-Kulis, V.G., S.M. Teutsch, Pappaioanou, M. (2000). Data Collection Instrument and Procedure for Systematic Reviews in the Guide to Community Preventive Services. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 18, 1S, 44–74.

Egger, M., Smith, G. D., Altman, D. G. (2001). *Systematic reviews in Health Care. Meta-analysis in context*. BMJ books.

Higgins JPT, Altman DG, Gøtzsche PC, et al. The Cochrane Collaboration's tool for assessing risk of bias in randomised trials. *Bmj* 2011; 343

Heddle NM. The research question. *Transfusion* 2007; 47:15-17

Stroup DF, Berlin JA, Morton SC, et al. Meta-analysis of observational studies in epidemiology: a proposal for reporting. Meta-analysis Of Observational Studies in Epidemiology (MOOSE) group. *Jama* 2000; 283:2008-2012

Leppink J, O'Sullivan P, Winston K. Effect size - large, medium and small. *Perspect Med Educ* 2016; 5: 346-349

Cohen J. The earth is round ($p < .05$). *American Psychologist* 1994

Preparation for Scientific Research

Fac. Health, Medicine and Life Sciences

HEP4214

Period 3:

5 Jan 2026

30 Jan 2026

Credits:

6.0

Coordinator:

J.S. Gubbels

Teaching methods:

Lecture(s), Paper(s), Assignment(s), Work in subgroups, Presentation(s)

Assessment methods:

Final paper, Presentation, Attendance, Assignment

Keywords:

Fundamental issues of science: ethics, integrity, Theory, Methodology, scientific reasoning; preparing research, writing a research proposal and review report.

Full course description

During this module you will write your own research proposal (assignment) and a group paper consisting of a review report about another research proposal.

To enable you to successfully fulfill the assignments, we will offer you opportunities to gain knowledge and skills through the following learning activities: lectures and workshops, self-study guidelines for writing your research proposal, group meetings to practice proposal review, an interactive meeting on reproducible research, a symposium, and individual meetings with your faculty supervisor.

Key learning methods include: reading and assessing the quality of published articles (self-study guidelines), feedback from and to fellow students (group meetings), coaching by a senior researcher (individual meetings with your supervisor), and literature study (self-study guidelines and literature suggestions). You will also use relevant knowledge and skills regarding theories, research methodology and statistics that you gained in the earlier modules.

Full-time students: lectures, group meetings, symposium, interactive meeting and take home exam on Tuesdays and Fridays.

For part-time students this module is offered as an 8-week module and only on Tuesdays; the first 4 weeks (together with the full-time students) in period 3 and the final 4 weeks after period 4.

Course objectives

Knowledge and understanding

You are able to

- Demonstrate understanding of fundamental issues concerning the methodology and ethics of science, and the use of theory
- Demonstrate knowledge of preparing and conducting research
- Demonstrate knowledge of writing a research proposal
- Demonstrate knowledge of writing a publishable scientific article

Apply knowledge and understanding

You are able to

- Prepare your own research
- Write a proposal for your own research
- Write a review report
- Present your research proposal in an oral presentation

Making judgements

You are able to

- Judge the quality of published articles
- Discuss your own progress and your fellow students' progress with respect to the research preparation
- Judge the quality of the research proposals of other students

Communication skills

You are able to

- Write and present a research proposal
- Write a review report
- Present results of individual work to other students
- Present results of individual and group work to supervisor

Learning skills

You are able to

- Critically comment on scientific research
- Collaborate with other students to improve each other's work
- Provide constructive feedback to fellow students
- Respond adequately on oral and written feedback

Recommended reading

[This is the link to Keylinks, our online reference list.](#)

Implementation and Evaluation

Fac. Health, Medicine and Life Sciences

HEP4205

Period 4:

2 Feb 2026

2 Apr 2026

Credits:

6.0

Coordinator:

S.M.P.L. Gerards

Teaching methods:

PBL, Lecture(s), Paper(s), Work in subgroups, Presentation(s), Training(s)

Assessment methods:

Written exam, Final paper, Participation, Attendance, Assignment

Keywords:

Dissemination, Implementation, (cost)effectiveness, proces evaluation, internal&external validity, evaluation designs, Implementation process, health technology assessment

Full course description

To what extent are evidence-based interventions (EBI) that are developed and tested according to scientific standards, practically useful and effective? How should policy makers take costs into account when deciding on the implementation of health promotion interventions? These are some of the key questions in the field of Dissemination and Implementation (D&I) that are addressed in this module. The first step in the intervention process is the development and small-scaled evaluation of EBIs. In this evaluation phase, scientists are concerned with efficacy and internal validity, often by using randomized controlled trials. Internal validity is important for the interpretation of the intervention effects in the experiment. Even though this first step is crucial, using small-scaled experiments is not sufficient for achieving an impact on public health. Besides testing the effects of an intervention under ideal circumstances, it is also important to assess its effect in a 'real world' setting. The second step is therefore to study conditions for the effectiveness of the interventions and the actual use in practice. During this stage of real life intervention implementation, different aspects of external validity should be addressed to facilitate large-scale dissemination and implementation to other settings in the final third stage. This provides information about the settings and populations to which the observed intervention effects can be generalized. In addition,

researchers may try to replicate effects in different settings. This aspect of external validity is very important; after all, why should one invest time and money into D&I if the intervention is unlikely to work in the settings of concern? For health promoters and policy makers, interventions that are not used and implemented in practice, are not only a waste of valuable time and money, but they can also seriously impede effective health promotion.

Course objectives

The first aim of this unit is that students acquire knowledge about the factors and strategies that influence the successful D&I of EBIs in relevant settings and target populations. Of concern here are theories of dissemination, implementation and change, effective communication and marketing, persuasion, reach, adoption, retention, and the tension between fidelity and adaptation if the intervention is implemented in a new context. Related to this, the unit focuses on the importance of cooperation among stakeholders, the sensitivity to local values, and their perceptions of, and responses to the interventions. Second, student will get insight in how to evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention and of the appreciation by its users and target group in real life settings. Health technology assessment associated with the development, testing and successful implementation of EBIs is also treated.

Recommended reading

[This is the link to Keylinks, our online reference list.](#)

Health Promotion

Fac. Health, Medicine and Life Sciences

HEP4215

Period 4:

2 Feb 2026

2 Apr 2026

Credits:

6.0

Coordinator:

L. Abidi

Teaching methods:

Lecture(s), Skills, Paper(s), Work in subgroups, Presentation(s)

Assessment methods:

Final paper, Participation, Attendance, Assignment

Keywords:

Health promotion, Health policy, International context, Public health, Social-economic conditions, Collaboration between health care organization(s) and prevention.

Full course description

It seems that many of today's health issues do not go away. They even worsen over time. One could wonder why certain health problems are so resilient against change. These problems are referred to as 'wicked' problems. These problems can be contrasted with 'tame' problems. Tame problems can be dealt with in a linear fashion: gather data, analyze data, formulate solutions, implement solutions. Although tame problems may be quite complex, solutions can be found by known techniques and it is quite clear when a solution has been reached. In other words, tame problems are as puzzles: there is a solution and they can be or might already have been solved. Unfortunately, many of today's problems are not tame, but 'wicked'. Examples are: addiction, drug and alcohol abuse, overweight, stress-related burnout, depression and suicide, STDs, and most chronic diseases. To solve such wicked problems, the traditional problem-solving approach does not work. Reasons for this are that wicked problems change over time and culture, are multifaceted, and have no straightforward solutions. Wicked health issues need to be tackled within a 'new' 'health promotion' framework that considers the social and political context. The aim of this module is to acquire knowledge and skills on processes and strategies enabling people to increase control over, and improve their health (= health promotion), in a broader context. Students are required to integrate knowledge acquired in this and previous modules by developing a comprehensive strategic plan aimed at promoting health on a

particular issue, setting or community, with a large focus on international settings and communities. For this students will work on a wicked health problem of choice in a small project group with frequent supervision with a coach and interactive exchanges with fellow students (= Part 1). In addition, for students in this master programme, it is important to become able debaters promoting their views and plans to different audiences. To shape these skills, they prepare for and engage in a debate, in which they defend a position in favour of a specific public health approach (= Part 2). Finally, in this course ethical reflections on the meaning, impact and boundaries of health promotion interventions is highlighted and is started by a discussion of Juli Zeh's novel 'Corpus Delicti'. The discussion is furthered by critical reading and lectures of several articles on ethical issues such as social equity, state control, self-regulation, public-private partnership, individual autonomy, and stigmatization (= Part 3). and ethical values in society.

Course objectives

Knowledge and understanding: You will be able to

- Demonstrate knowledge of the philosophical and political background of ideas on health promotion, in an international context;
- Describe the structural factors affecting public health, and their interaction: socio-economic conditions, health services and financing, law and governmental policy, communities' structure, media, education;
- Describe planned approaches in promoting public health, with recent developments such as public-private collaboration, collaboration between health care organization(s) and prevention;
- Describe an analysis of proximal and structural aspects influencing conditions affecting health of individuals;
- Demonstrate knowledge of ethical aspects of health promotion.

Application of knowledge: You know how to

- Plan and analyze a strategic plan aimed at a particular health problem;
- Develop an integrative, community-based strategic plan using collected data;
- Perform a stakeholder analysis in a health promotion context.

Judgement: You will be able to

- Discuss basic tenets of health promotion actions, barriers and ethical constraints;
- Integrate views, perceptions, and devising evidence-based strategies;
- Argue in favor of a particular approach promoting health;
- Reflect on the role and place of health promotion in contemporary society.

Communication skills: You will be able to

- Write a policy plan for a wicked health problem;
- Develop and convey arguments in favor of a particular approach promoting health;
- Write an essay to convey your views on the role and place of health promotion in contemporary society;
- Provide critical and constructive feedback to fellow students

Learning skills: You are able to

- Perform a stakeholder analysis;
- Perform an epidemiological analysis;
- Perform an analysis of structural factors;
- Advocate certain health promotional strategies to different audiences.

Recommended reading

[This is the link to Keylinks, our online reference list.](#)

Scientific Research and Article

Fac. Health, Medicine and Life Sciences

HEP4250

Year:

1 Sep 2025

31 Aug 2026

Credits:

18.0

Coordinator:

J.S. Gubbels

Teaching methods:

Paper(s), Research

Assessment methods:

Final paper

Keywords:

Conducting research for or at FHML or an external organization (placement), Scientific article

Full course description

As part of the Master programme, the student is to gain experience with conducting scientific research under supervision of a senior FHML teacher. This research will be the basis for writing a scientific article. The research will be conducted for or at the FHML or an external organization (placement). The topic of the research and the article will obviously both have to be in line with the programme Health Education and Promotion.

The research and article period for full-time students is in period 5 and 6.

The research and article period for part-time students is in the final 8 weeks of the first study year, and in period 3, 5 and 6 of the second study year.

Course objectives

Conduct scientific research. Write a scientific article about the research.

Recommended reading

[This is the link to Keylinks, our online reference list.](#)

