

Adelaide Recommendations on Healthy Public Policy

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The adoption of the Declaration of Alma-Ata a decade ago was a major milestone in the Health for All movement which the World Health Assembly launched in 1977. Building on the recognition of health as a fundamental social goal, the Declaration set a new direction for health policy by emphasizing people's involvement, cooperation between sectors of society and primary health care as its foundation.

The Spirit of Alma-Ata

The spirit of Alma-Ata was carried forward in the Charter for Health Promotion which was adopted in Ottawa in 1986. The Charter set the challenge for a move towards the new public health by reaffirming social justice and equity as prerequisites for health, and advocacy and mediation as the processes for their achievement.

The Charter identified five health promotion action areas:

- build Healthy Public Policy,
- create supportive environments,
- develop personal skills,
- strengthen community action, and
- reorient health services.

These actions are interdependent, but healthy public policy establishes the environment that makes the other four possible.

The Adelaide Conference on Healthy Public Policy continued in the direction set at Alma-Ata and Ottawa, and built on their momentum. Two hundred and twenty participants from forty-two countries shared experiences in formulating and implementing healthy public policy. The following recommended strategies for healthy public policy action reflect the consensus achieved at the Conference.