

Strand 1 | Health and Wellbeing

Learning Outcome 1.1: Students should be able to explore the determinants of good health.

Pre-learning:

Before addressing Learning Outcome **1.1**, students may need to revisit Junior Cycle SPHE learning about the multifaceted nature of health and wellbeing. It is also important to teach this learning outcome in tandem with LO **1.2** to ensure that students are given an opportunity to consider both the aspects of health that are within their control and aspects outside their control.

What is the important learning?

The purpose of Learning Outcome **1.1** is to open up conversations with young people about the factors that positively or negatively affect people's healthy. Some factors are within our control (See LO **1.2**) and some are more 'determined'. When discussing 'determinants of good health' we are focusing on factors such as where we live, the state of our physical environment, genetics, gender, our income and education level, ability to access health services, and our relationships and social support networks – all of which have considerable impacts on health.

Economic determinants include things like income level and economic supports provided by the State. Amongst the social determinants of health are social norms, cultural practices, education levels, family and community support networks, social status. Physical determinants include clean water and air, healthy and safe homes and workplaces, safe roads, green spaces and sports/leisure facilities. Individual determinants that can affect health include age, genetics, gender and race/ethnicity.

A key message to highlight through the learning activities is that some things that impact on health are within an individual's control, whereas others are less within our control. For example, people might be born with a health issue or develop one that is outside their control. Likewise, most people have little control over where they live, the existence of quality local leisure facilities, clean air, etc. People's health can also be negatively impacted by discrimination, stereotyping and prejudice based on age, ethnicity, disability, gender, income, race, sexual orientation, etc. Understanding this can make young people more aware of health inequities in society and perhaps less inclined to feel self-blame or shame or to judge people based on their circumstances. On the other hand, identifying the factors that can be managed can help young people feel a sense of self-efficacy and empower them to make good decisions about their own health.

It is important to convey a message that while it can be challenging to manage some factors that negatively impact on health, positive changes can be made by individuals in relation to their own health, and when people work in groups to improve public health. In other words, the determinants of health are not immutable and no one's health is completely pre-determined.

Possible questions to explore through this learning outcome:

- What are the determinants of health and how do they impact on our physical and mental health?
- Do the determinants of health effect everyone equally? Why/Why not?
- What can an individual do to improve their own health? Why is this important? (Links to LO **1.2**)
- Why is good public health important at a societal level? What can individuals or groups working together do to improve public health?

Possible questions for deeper inquiry:

- Research one factor that determines young people's physical health and consider how this impacts on young people in different circumstances or backgrounds.
- Research the determinants of food choices.
- Examine research on the health behaviours of young people and discuss how this relates to some of the determinants of peoples' health previously discussed in class.

Possible follow-on learning
outcome: LO 1.2



Go to the SPHE Toolkit
for [classroom resources](#)
[linked to LO 1.1](#)