The Global Health Network

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Abstract

National and Global Health have dramatically improved since the end of WWII. This has been primarily the result of public health actions. Public health is information transfer. The information superhighway can markedly improve public health, but public health and prevention have been neglected. Tele medicine to this point has not included tele-preventive medicine, but it should.

We have outlined a global health network to address this. The global health network consists of 1) connectivity of all people in public health worldwide. 2) tele-monitoring of diseases, the use telecommunication for disease monitoring. 3) establishment of a global health network university. a health network through the internet. 4) connecting health related non-government organizations. 5) establishment of a global health network research server designed to replace biomedical journals. 6) the training of cyberdocs. individuals trained in public health and networking.

As part of our efforts. we have established a global health network home page. helped to get the third largest medical journal (the British Medical Journal) on line. developed Internet based courses and are working towards global connectivity.

It is our belief that there should be a national and global commitment to tele-preventive medicine as the integration of telecommunication systems with public health has the greatest promise for improvement of health of our children. and ourselves.

During the last 100 years, especially since the end of World War II there has been a remarkable change in the health of the United States and the World. In the United States life expectancy has risen from only 40 years of age in the early 1900s to 60 right after WWII to now over 76 years. This change in life expectancy in the US and globally is the greatest seen in human kinds history.

What has caused this improvement? Many attribute the changes to improvements in health care, better medicines, better surgery, better treatment. However this is not the cases. Improved treatment is important, however. it contributed very little to the remarkable increase in life expectancy. The primary reason for the increase in health in the United States has been the result of public health-prevention actions. Life expectancy has improved because we have been very successful in preventing—scourges of man kind. We see very little TB. polio, rheumatic fever, or example. Prevention has been the key to improved health. Integrating prevention with telecommunications can also be the key to the next renaissance of health.

The backbone of preventive medicine and public health is information and data collection concerning diseases in populations. and translation of these data into public health actions to prevent disease The approaches towards information flow. however, are based upon technologies that have developed in the early 1900s. We are now in an information revolution. and it is time that the field of epidemiology comes on to the information superhighway. This is essential for the life of our field, and for health at the local to global level.

During the past year there has been a grass-roots effort by people in and outside of public health to begin to integrate epidemiology and public health with the latest information technologies. Scientists from the health field have begun to look into new technologies that are now common practice in advanced organizations such as NASA. IBM, Digital and AT&T to find answers for health in the 21st Century. There has begun a grass-roots efforts by people from Academia (e.g. University of Pittsburgh, Harvard), federal agencies (NASA. US AID), interna-