

Health promotion and prevention

The working group investigates how health promotion and prevention services must be designed in order to enable health-promoting living conditions for residents in municipalities and to create equal health opportunities.

The Ottawa Charter laid the foundation for health promotion. In addition to strengthening individuals, among other things through empowerment and the strengthening of resources, a focus is placed on creating conditions that enable a healthy life. Besides infrastructural conditions that directly address health, this also includes factors such as appropriate housing conditions, education and income, which still have a strong influence on health today.

For the establishment of equal health opportunities and the strengthening of resources, the municipality is attributed a key function, as it offers diverse opportunities to create health-promoting framework conditions. The Prevention Act (PrävG) has emphasised this importance by prescribing for the first time the targeted financial promotion of environmental prevention by the health insurance funds. The health promotion process describes how health promotion and prevention interventions can be effectively and sustainably implemented step by step in lifeworlds and settings, such as day care centres, schools or communities. The aim is to develop and review interventions that improve both health-relevant environmental conditions and the behaviour of individuals. In this context, it is essential to involve the people in the respective setting. It is of central importance to reach vulnerable population groups, such as socially disadvantaged children and young people, people with a migration background or elderly and morbid people. The municipality with its local facilities offers low-threshold access to these groups that is close to everyday life. In the context of the Health-in-All-Policies strategy, the municipality should network different actors and institutions and coordinate their services so that people are effectively supported across all phases of life with needs-based and tailored services.

The central challenge in implementing the health promotion process continues to be overcoming the prevention paradox. People in high need of preventive healthcare due to their social and economic backgrounds still only rarely make use of opportunities for healthcare, health advice and support measures. Addressing the interests of these groups must be given priority in order to overcome the prevention paradox.

The analysis of primary and secondary data on municipal services is used to evaluate regional health prevention services. The network analysis includes the collection of primary data in combination with the qualitative evaluation of interviews. The secondary data of the German public health service and health insurances are evaluated quantitatively.