



ADDRESSING SOCIAL INEQUALITIES IN HEALTH



The Whitehall II study, part-funded by the BHF, was launched in 1985 and followed a group of more than 10,000 working men and women to identify the social determinants of health.

The initial aims were to investigate the causes of inequalities in disease during working life, such as the disproportionately high rates of cardiovascular disease (CVD) in certain socioeconomic groups in Britain. In 2008, Professor Sir Michael Marmot, who led the Whitehall II study, and his team at UCL were asked by the Secretary of State for Health to chair an independent review and propose the most effective evidence-based strategies for reducing health inequality in England.



Impact

Socioeconomic differences have tended to produce inequalities in health, both from before birth and during life. The Whitehall II study, part-funded by the BHF, was the first to investigate the effect of social factors on health in England. The major outcome of this study – a review published by Professor Sir Michael Marmot – has fundamentally changed attitudes to health inequality in the UK and internationally. It has shaped public health services across England and around the world, guided government and international policy, and has given rise to a new commitment from service providers and health professionals to reducing health inequalities and addressing the social determinants of health.

With your donations, we can fund vital studies into issues like this, and develop an evidence base to influence government and health bodies to institute real change on a national and international level.

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FOR EVERY
HEARTBEAT**
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1985

The Whitehall II study is launched following a group of more than 10,000 working men and women to identify the social determinants of health and wellbeing



1997

The BHF awards £998,000 to Professor Marmot to study the factors that determine rates of cardiovascular disease (CVD) in the Whitehall II study



2005

Professor Marmot is appointed Chair of the Commission on Social Determinants of Health, set up by the World Health Organization



2008

The Commission on Social Determinants of Health publishes its final report, titled 'Closing the Gap in a Generation' – a call to action to all governments to aim for health equality within one generation



2009

The BHF launches Hearty Lives, a multi-million-pound programme aiming to reduce inequalities in heart disease by working with local authorities, the NHS and non-profit organisations to improve the heart health of people at greatest risk of CVD



2010

The UK government publishes a White Paper titled 'Healthy Lives, Healthy People', responding to the Marmot Review and citing Professor Marmot's proposed framework for tackling the wider determinants of health



2013

Public Health England (PHE) is established. The organisation reports that "the recommendations of the [Marmot] report have informed the design of PHE in general, and the Health and Wellbeing directorate in particular".



1992

The BHF awards £507,000 of funding to Professor Marmot for the Whitehall II study

2002

The BHF provides further funding of £1,138,000 for an extended study of CVD rates in the Whitehall II cohort

2007

The BHF awards £1,024,000 for further assessment of CVD in the Whitehall II cohort

2008

Professor Sir Michael Marmot and his team at UCL are asked by the Secretary of State for Health to chair an independent review of the most effective evidence-based strategies for reducing health inequality in England

2010

The Marmot Review ('Fair Society, Healthy Lives') is published, making key recommendations for achieving health equality

2011

The Department of Health's Public Health Outcomes Framework sets out the strategy for achieving health equality, and confirms its intention to follow the frameworks laid out in the Marmot Review. The UCL Institute of Health Equity is established to support NHS bodies and local governments with implementation of the review's proposals.

2014

Over 70% of local authorities are now working to embed 'Marmot principles' in their approaches to improving health and reducing inequality.



Research



Funding



Medical Milestone



Impact