

ENSURING QUALITY OF LIFE AT ALL AGES

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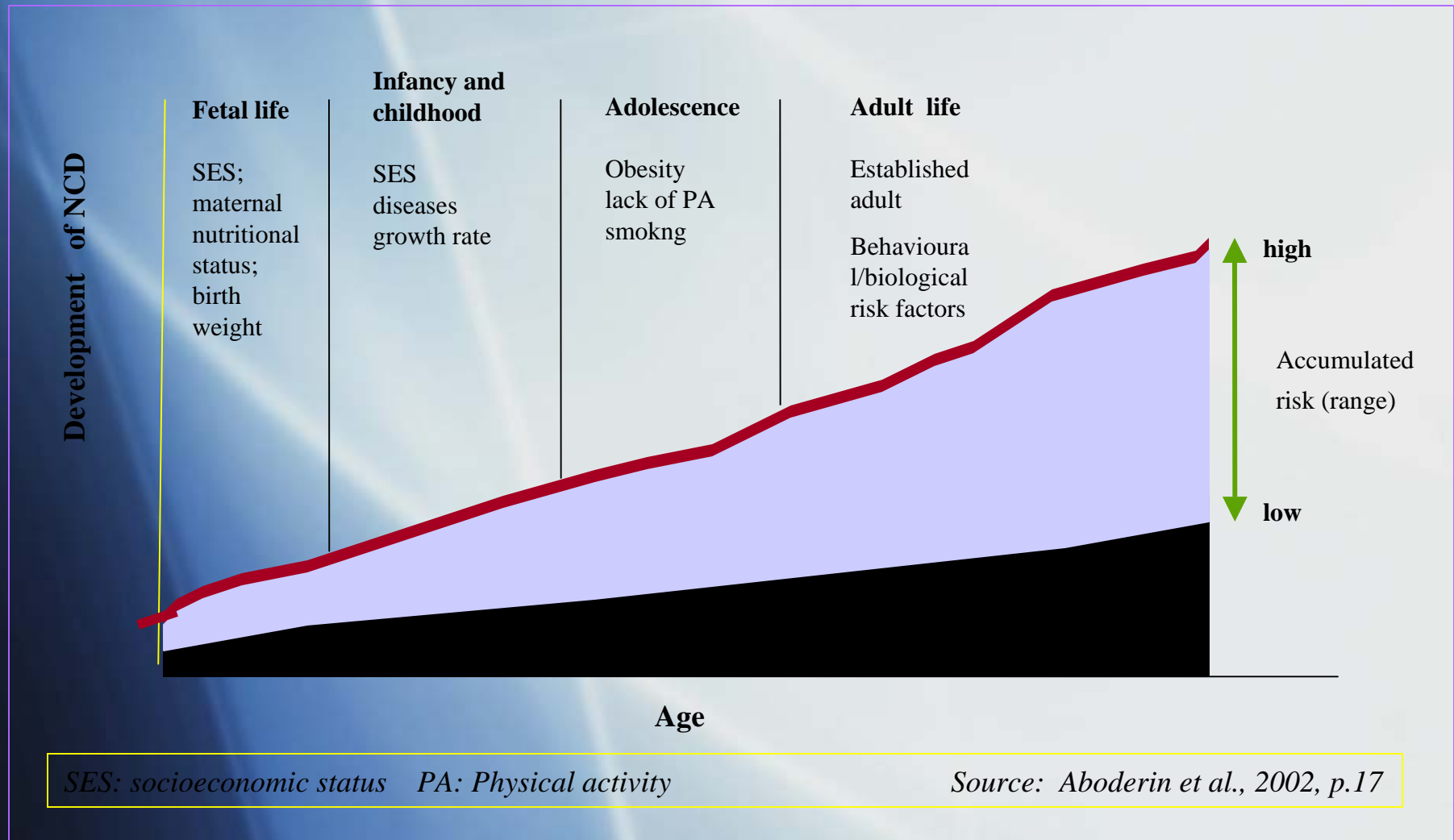
ENSURING QUALITY OF LIFE AT ALL AGES

- Background
- Quality of Life
- Quality of Life in Old Age
- Policy Challenges
- Policy Directions

BACKGROUND

- A life course perspective on well-being/quality of life (the society for all ages)
- The need for a combination of preventative and remedial actions
- A development perspective

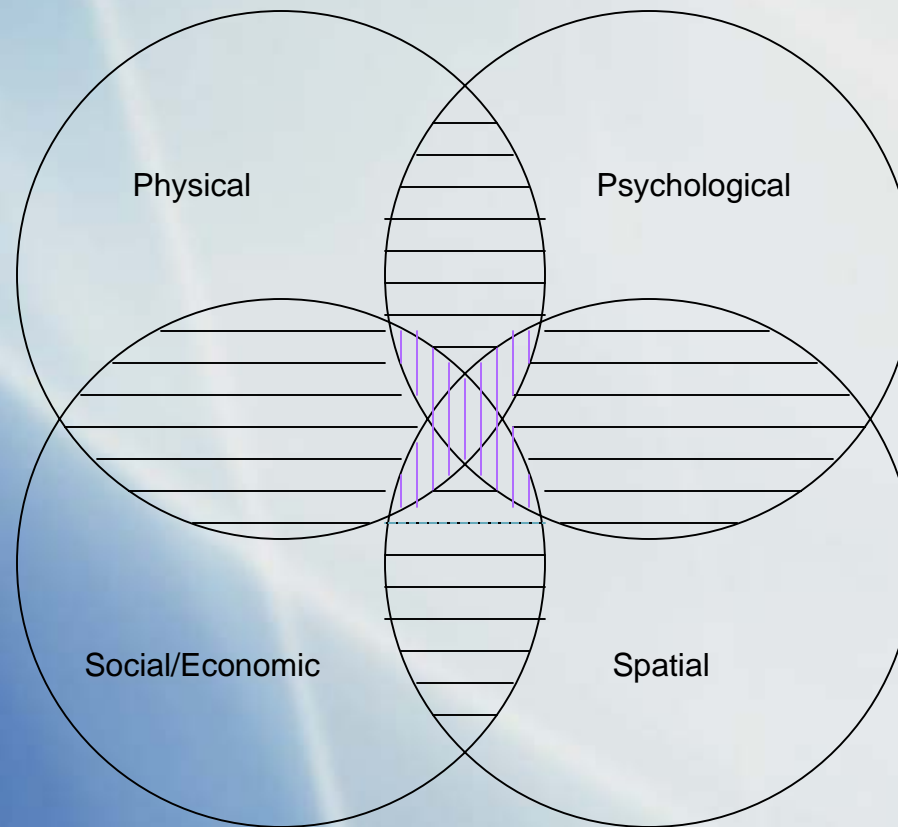
Scope of non communicable diseases prevention: a life course approach



QUALITY OF LIFE

- Dimensions and Scope
 - Amorphous, multi-dimensional, complex
 - Health often used as a proxy
 - Major focus of scientific research BUT precarious relationship between research and actual quality of life
 - Important driver of policy (in EU)

MULTI-DIMENSIONAL NATURE OF QoL



MODELS OF QUALITY OF LIFE

- Objective social indicators
- Satisfaction of human needs
- Subjective social indicators
- Societal networks/social capital
- Ecological/environmental resources
- Health and functioning
- Psychological competence
- Hermeneutic approaches

UNDERSTANDING QoL IN OLD AGE

- Dynamic, multi-faceted, complex concept
- QoL in old age reflects life course and situational factors
- Similarities with other age groups, especially mid-life
- Sources of QoL differ between older people
- Subjective self-assessments more powerful than 'objective' factors

SCIENTIFIC CONSENSUS ON QoL IN OLD AGE

- Psychological variables
- Health and functional status
- Social relations, support and activity
- Economic security
- Environmental conditions
- Leisure activities and mobility

OLDER PEOPLE'S PERSPECTIVES ON QoL

FOUNDATIONS OF A GOOD QoL IN OLD AGE

- Having good social relationships with family, friends and neighbours
- Having good health and functional ability
- Living in a good home and neighbourhood
- Having a positive outlook and psychological well-being
- Having adequate income
- Maintaining independence and control over one's life

Source: Bowling et al (2002)

OLDER PEOPLE'S PERSPECTIVES ON QoL

MAXIMISING QoL

- Maintaining health and independence, social activities and relationships
- Neighbourly and safe areas
- Local amenities and services
- Participation
- Transport
- Finance

Source: Bowling et al (2002)

FROM QUALITY OF LIFE TO SOCIAL QUALITY

- Limitations of quality of life as a policy focus: open-ended, individualistic and atheoretical
- Social quality: theoretically derived, a combination of individual and social elements and bounded by conditional factors

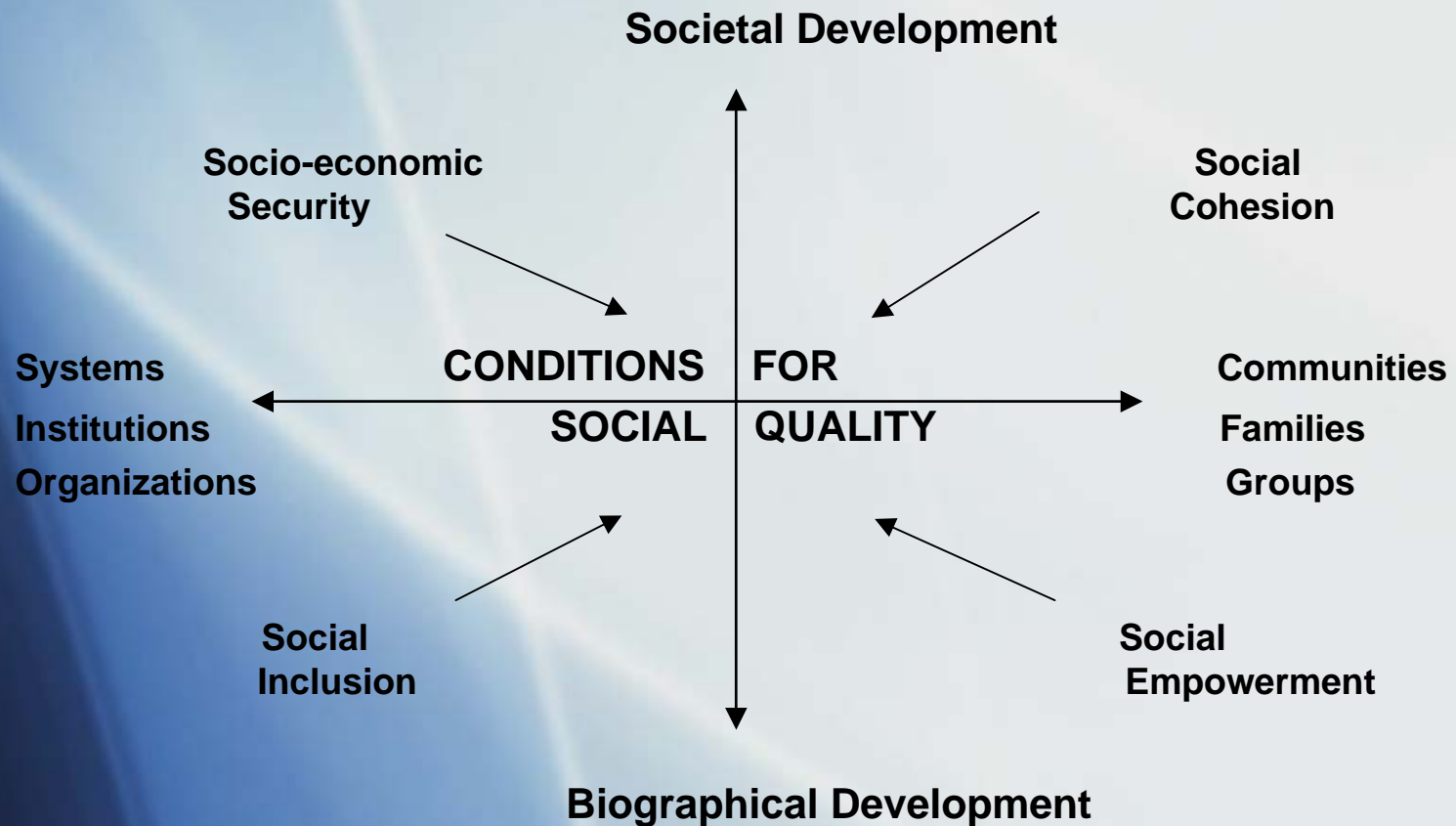
SOCIAL QUALITY

Definition:

The extent to which people are able to participate in the social, economic and cultural life of their communities under conditions which enhance their well-being and individual potential

Beck *et al*, 1997

SOCIAL QUALITY: CONDITIONAL FACTORS



POLICY CHALLENGES

1. Urgent remedial action e.g. poverty/extreme social exclusion, homelessness, elder abuse
2. Dynamic nature of ageing
3. Globalisation
4. Adopting a life course perspective emphasising prevention
5. Joining-up various policy dimensions
6. Combining different actions: mainstreaming, specific, capacity building

POLICY CHALLENGES

7. Sustaining formal and informal resources
8. Empowering older people
9. Recognising diversity e.g. needs, aspirations, cultures, risks
10. Maintaining generational solidarity

POLICY DIRECTIONS

- Challenges vary between regions and countries (EU cf EECCA)
- A comprehensive strategy (e.g. active ageing, the promotion of social quality) is necessary to :
 - combine preventative and remedial actions
 - reflect a society for all ages approach
 - integrate economic and social policies
 - join-up all of the relevant actors
 - ingrain the principle of participation

CHALLENGES IN CEE

- Disillusionment among older people
- Extreme exclusion/early exclusion
- Sense of loss and bereavement
- Threatened personal security
- Lack of appreciation/blaming culture
- Rural/urban divide
- Paucity of information

EXAMPLE 1: ACTIVE AGEING

- Active ageing should be a coordinated strategy to maximise participation and well-being as people age. It should operate at the individual (lifestyle), organisational (management) and societal (policy) levels and at all stages of the life course.

THE CYCLE OF WELL-BEING



The positive effects on health of positive well-being have been found to be even larger than the effects from body mass, smoking and exercise

ODPM (2006)

PRINCIPLES OF ACTIVE AGEING

- 'Activity' is everything that contributes to well-being
- All older people
- A preventative concept: across the lifecourse
- Intergenerational
- Rights and obligations
- Participative and empowering
- Respect for cultural diversity

KEY ELEMENTS OF A STRATEGY FOR ACTIVE AGEING

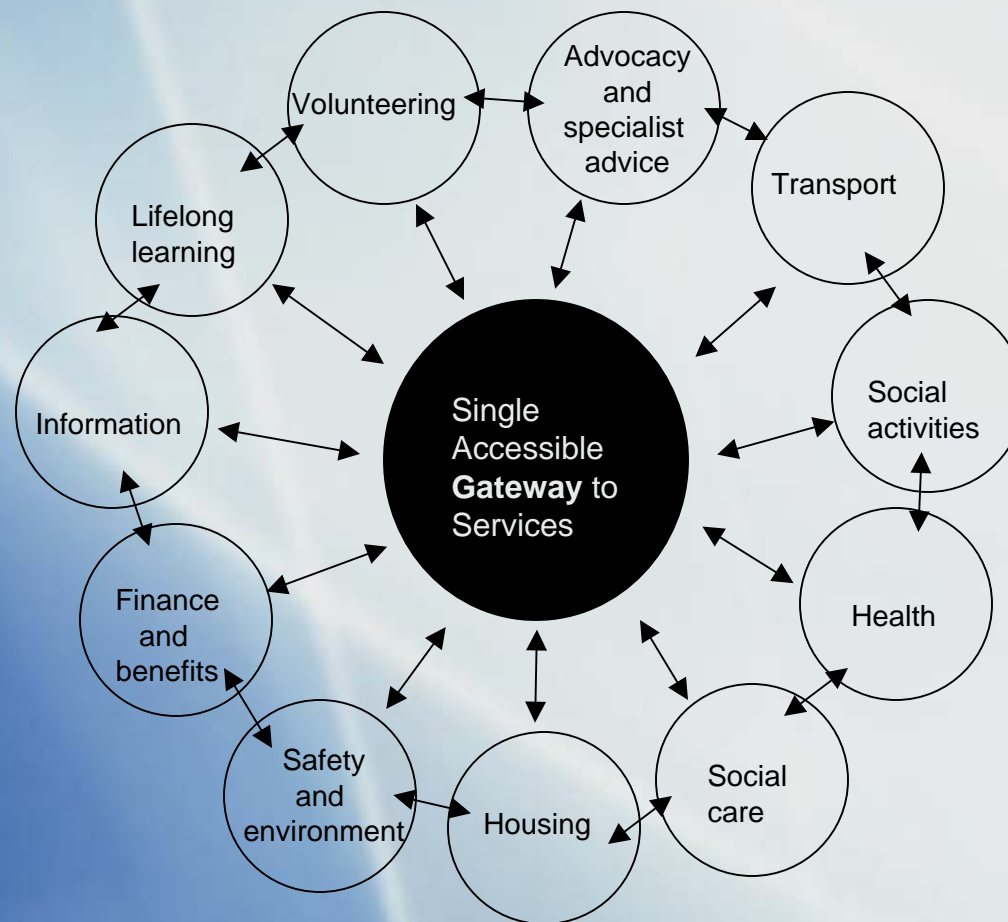
- Root out ageism
- Remove age barriers
- Develop active age management
- Flexible retirement
- Active civic life including volunteering
- Combat social exclusion
- Public health across the lifecourse
- Redistribute resources from cure to prevention
- Target the geriatric giants
- Increase social care
- Establish activity programmes in care homes
- Social quality as the goal of social protection systems

EXAMPLE 2: SOCIAL QUALITY

- Policies to promote:
 - Socio-economic security
e.g. economic security, health and functioning,
environmental security
 - Social inclusion e.g. health and mental well-being, mobility,
crime control/safety, volunteering, neighbourhood activities,
diversity, gateway concept
 - Social cohesion e.g. intergenerational solidarity, anti-age
discrimination
 - Social empowerment e.g. advice centres,
supportive/enabling social care, participative governance.

THE UK'S SURE START APPROACH

A Sure Start to later life - improving participation and prevention



EMPOWERING OLDER PEOPLE

- PRINCIPLES:
 - Listening to them
 - Building on their capacity and commitment
 - Creating partnerships based on honesty/transparency
 - Placing older people at the centre of services
 - Involving them in management/governance

ENSURING QoL AT ALL AGES

- MEANS:
 - A combination of individual and collective actions with policy supports
 - A preventative life course perspective e.g. active ageing
 - Maximising social quality for all ages (security, inclusion, cohesion, empowerment)
 - Spreading risks as widely as possible
 - Enlarging individual/group participation and control