



Epidemiologic Methods for Health Policy

By Robert A. Spasoff

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This book is dedicated to the proposition that health policy should be evidence-based, and that epidemiology can provide much of the evidence. Unlike most textbooks of epidemiology, which focus on etiologic research, it emphasizes the descriptive methods that are more relevant to policy. Part I introduces the subject of policy and its formulation, reviews selected methods that are generally relevant to health policy, and provides an overview of health data and their manipulation. Part II proceeds through the policy cycle: assessing population health status, assessing potential interventions, making policy choices; implementing and finally evaluating policy. At each step it identifies the potential contributions of epidemiology and describes and demonstrates relevant methods. Many practical examples are provided, drawn from several developed countries, but mathematics is kept to an elementary level. A recurring theme is the interaction between health phenomena and the underlying population dynamics, and thus the close relationship of this type of epidemiology to demography.

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Editorial Review

Review

"... an excellent overview of the diverse range of methods that can be applied in the policy cycle. ... A major advantage for Canadian readers is that many of the examples are from this country ... an excellent overview for epidemiologists who find themselves working in settings where they are linked to the policy process or those who would like to learn more about it. The author developed the book from a course in Epidemiology and Health Policy, and the book should serve as an excellent textbook for those planning to offer such a course." Chronic Diseases in Canada (1999)

"Material is well referenced, with each chapter including a list of key references and a comprehensive reference section. While a good overview of familiar material is provided, there are also fresh insights."-- Clinical and Investigative Medicine

"This book should help epidemiologists see how our basic tools can become an essential part of the policy process. This valuable volume should neatly fill an important gap on most epidemiologists' bookshelves." The Epidemiology Monitor

"... I was impressed by the book's overall breadth ... the material is well referenced and the reader is provided with clear direction to locate additional information on relevant topics. ... the outcome of more than 25 years teaching epidemiology and working with decision-makers in government, health services and planning environments. This experience is reflected in the quality of the material presented." " Clinical and Investigative Medicine (Dec 1999)

About the Author

Robert A. Spasoff is at University of Ottawa.

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