Public Health Strategies to Address Asian Men's Health Needs

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Abstract
Men's health discourse has been around for more than 2 decades. The higher mortality rates and the shorter life expectancy in Asian men compared with their women counterparts show the disadvantaged status of men's health. Thus, discussions on men's health should address their health needs and not be confined to sex-specific male urology and reproductive health. In Asia, assessing men's health needs is challenging because of the vast differences in the socioeconomic status and the diverse culture among its member countries. Although, the epidemiology of men's health provides the focus for what to address in improving men's health, having an optimal strategy requires the understanding of men's health-seeking behaviors and the social determinants surrounding them. Thus, public health approaches addressing health behaviors and health promotion in the society should be one of the keys in improving men's health status. Locally relevant information is needed to inform effective public health approaches.

Keywords
men's health, health-seeking behavior, health needs, Asia, masculinity

Introduction
Men have poorer health status compared with women in almost all countries in the world. Men's health discourse started in the early 1990s in a few European countries, Australia, and the United States of America.\textsuperscript{1,2} However, as early as 1984, men were already noted to be disadvantaged in relation to mortality and morbidity patterns compared with women in the United States of America.\textsuperscript{3} More recent reviews have confirmed the same concern around the world.\textsuperscript{4-9} Men's poorer health profiles compared with those of women are also reflected in almost all the vital statistics published by the World Health Organization (WHO), such as life expectancy at birth, mortality rates, disability-adjusted life years and non-sex-specific disease death rates.\textsuperscript{10-12} On an average, men's life expectancy at birth is 5 years shorter than that of women.\textsuperscript{11}

The diseases that contribute to men's mortality are non-sex specific and amenable to early intervention. Although male-specific illnesses have been the emphasis in men's health traditionally, cardiovascular disease is the most common cause of death in men. This is followed by

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