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Dates: Received: 10 July, 2015; Accepted: 03 July,
2015; Published: 05 July, 2015

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Short Communication

The Conflation of Health and Healthcare

Short Communication

Health is difficult to define while healthcare relates to the various services available. Recent election campaigns within the United-Kingdom seemed to conflate the terms health and healthcare. Healthcare investment is not a guarantee of improved health, a point the general public may fully not appreciate. Recently, I attended a meeting in west Wales with a community group. Their interest in health was focused on healthcare, so we discussed an alternative model:

- I. Health determinants include alcohol intake, smoking, diet and exercise. Some of these will have underlying factors, such as poverty, low self-esteem or educational attainment.
- II. Determinants may lead to disease or predict serious adverse outcomes. So smoking and alcohol misuse may contribute to an increased risk of developing high blood pressure.
- III. It may be easier to think about disease as opposite to health. So high blood pressure is an unhealthy condition because it increases the risk of adverse outcomes such as stroke.
- IV. Healthcare is the response to the unhealthy conditions or adverse health outcomes. This includes primary-care blood pressure checks or delivery of specialist stroke care services

Do we need to dilate health and healthcare, educating those in government and the general public on their difference??

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Citation: Morga G (2015) The Conflation of Health and Healthcare . Arch Community Med Public Health 1(1): 006.