

Community medicine

How does law affect your health?

Task 2

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In 1950, at New York, there was American orthopedic surgeon and noted sports car fanatic called Dr John States (جراح عظام امريكي شغوف بالسيارات الرياضية), he was working as a physician at the Watkins Glen International Speedway in New York state.

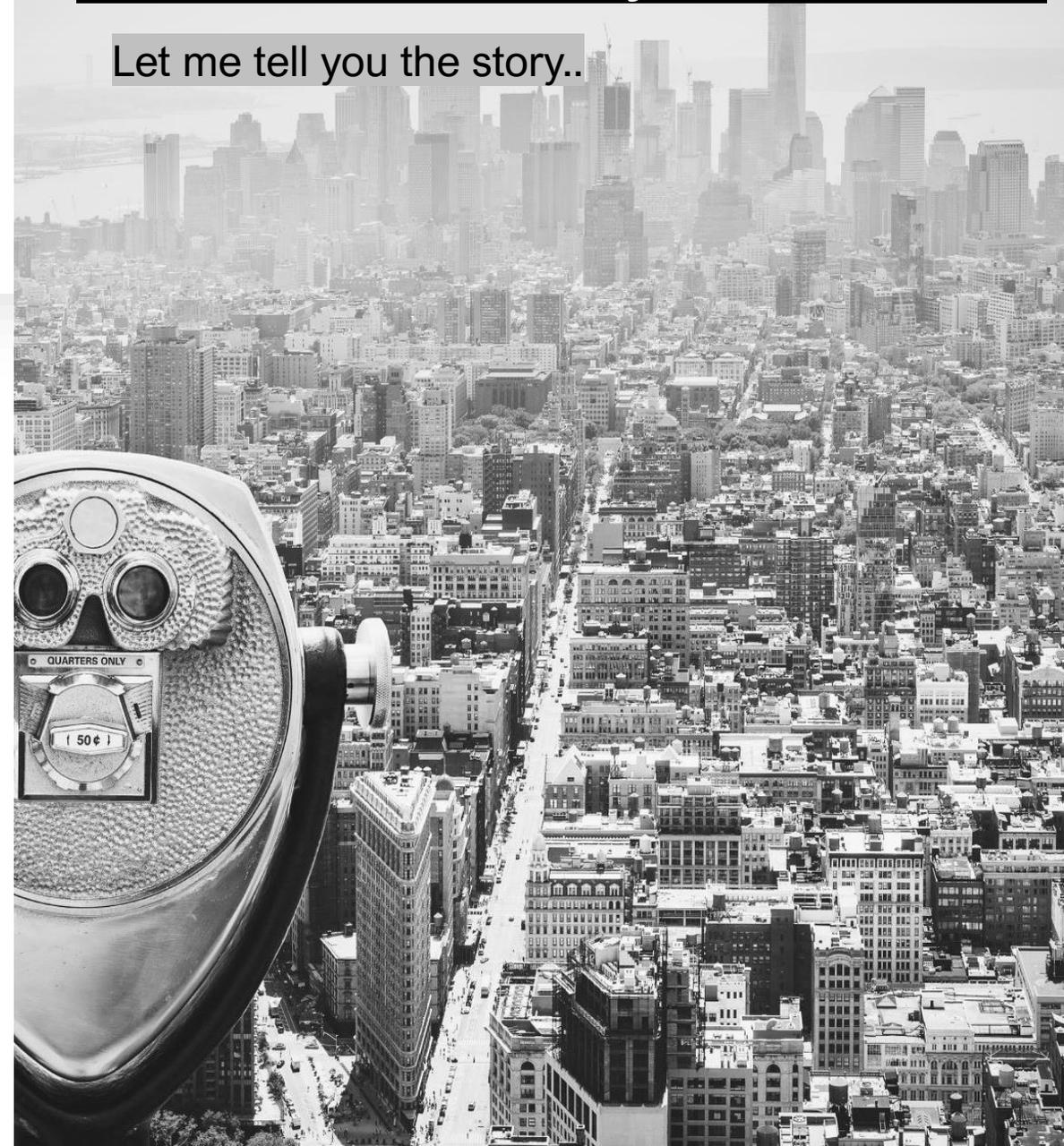
While he was working, he noticed that racecars' drivers have less serious injuries when they have accidents compared to other drivers 😞 although they were much faster.

This was because they wore seatbelts and helmets ☐

At that time, there were few safe driving laws and most cars came without seatbelts! So what happened? 😞

Seatbelts and your health

Let me tell you the story..



Dr. John states is a leading advocate of seatbelt

He conducted research on severe crashes, and even designed and patented his own seatbelt (صمم وكسب براءة اختراع). Finally, in 1984, New York became the first U.S. state to mandate the use of seat belt.

Today, 49 states have adopted similar seat belt laws, and seat belt use has continued to grow-from 11% in 1981 to around 90% in 2020, saving almost 15,000 lives in 2017 alone, while cutting the risk of serious injury by 50%.

So we just saw how public health and policy can come together to improve and save lives.

So, is taking decision related to public health and policy easy?

Not at all,

As we passed through (Covid-19), we saw how much difficult is to take a decision to deal with a crisis ..

When public health crises arise, the people who make policies can often find themselves the difficult position of having to balance some people's freedom to do what they want with other people's right to be healthy.

Understanding health & policy

What do we mean by health & policy?

-When we talk about health and policy, we're talking about policies that change human behaviors or their environments to improve overall health and wellbeing.

Like, consider the issue of smoking in indoor public settings. This impacts the health of the smoker, but also the health of the non-smoking people around them, because they can wind up inhaling the same potentially harmful chemicals that that smoker is inhaling voluntarily.

Governments have struggled for a long time with how to tackle this issue, but it wasn't until 2004 that Ireland became the first country in the world to ban smoking in all indoor workplaces. These smoking bans, as well as seatbelt laws like the ones recommended by Dr. States are an example of a mandate, or a legal order that tells people or companies how to act.

So what mandates mean?
A legal order that tells people
or companies how to act💡

Understanding health and policies

Policies for public health has many tools that policymakers have to improve people's health, as

1. Tell people how to be healthier.
2. Educate people to be healthier.

How (educate)?

For instance, if we had a frozen pizza bagel (البيتزا الجاهزة المجمدة) and flip it, we will see what exactly it's ingredients and nutrition facts, to know what exactly enters our bodies.

In the U.S., those nutrition facts are there because of the Nutrition Labeling and Education Act, (قانون وضع العلامة الغذائية) which was signed in 1990 and basically says that people have a right to know what they're putting into their bodies.

This is why even the most eye-catching, mouth-watering, stomach-grumbling food packaging out there still needs to clearly feature those so recognizable, This can include other information too, Like in some countries, there are warnings on the front of products that contain excessive levels of things like sugar or sodium.





Vaccinations policies

What is vaccination?

Another complicated - and heavily debated but known to be good-issue that policy makers must grapple with (deal with) is vaccination, or boosting the body's defenses against a disease with a vaccine.

Consider measles, a highly infectious disease most commonly associated with health complications among children. In 1912, measles became common enough in the U.S. that it was named a nationally notifiable disease (مرض يجب الإبلاغ عنه على المستوى الوطني).

Measles continued to be so common that, by 1963, nearly every child was expected to get measles by the time they were 15, and up to 4 million people in the U.S. were infected every year. Measles was also responsible for up to 500 deaths and 48,000 hospitalizations each year. However, policies requiring childhood vaccinations over the last several decades have meant that an increasing number of people have become vaccinated against measles, improving overall childhood health. And in the year 2000, measles was declared eliminated from the U.S.

Nationally notifiable disease:
which is a disease that healthcare providers must report to local health departments.

For the record, "eliminated" doesn't mean that there hasn't been a single case of measles, just that there hasn't been an observed spread of the disease that lasted longer than a year.

Vaccination policy

Different countries approach vaccination policy in different ways. In 2019, an analysis of 140 countries, were found that :

Mandatory (إلزامي)



89 were found to have some fort of nationwide mandatory vaccine policy for children.

Only mandatory for entry into school (الزامي عند الدخول للمدرسة فقط)



20 countries, including the **U.S.** vaccination was only mandatory for entry into school.

Recommended but not mandatory (يُنصح به ولكن ليس إلزامي)



33 countries recommended childhood vaccinations but didn't mandate them.

How policies save lives?

Policies also affect our health in ways that aren't quite as obvious (بطرق غير واضحة), as giving our immune systems a boost - like by environmental regulations.

For example, in 1970, with the help of health experts, politicians, and factory workers, the U.S. passed the Clean Air Act (قانون الهواء النظيف) (by Richard Nixon) معلومة للاحتياط بس انه هاد الشخص هو الي صادق عالقانون which regulated the emissions of hazardous pollutants (الملوثات الخطيرة) from things like vehicles and factories. From 1970 until 2020, the combined emissions of six common air pollutants was found to have decreased by 78%.

This has had strong health impacts by preventing premature deaths and other negative health outcomes like asthma, bronchitis, and heart attacks.



The six common air pollutants include: particulate matter, ground-level ozone, lead, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide and sulfur dioxide.

اللهمّ اجعل غزوة ملاذًا
آمنًا لأهلها، وارفع عنهم
الظلم والاضطهاد،
وانصرهم على أعدائهم.

I wish it's clear for you



- Best wishes

اللهمّ انفعنا بما علّمتنا،
وعلمنا ما ينفعنا،
وزدنا علمًا وبارك لنا
فيه.