

Social justice, health equity and Covid-19

Abstract:

Taking action to reduce health inequalities is a matter of social justice. In developing strategies for tackling health inequalities we need to confront the social gradient in health not just the difference between the worst off and everybody else. There is clear evidence when we look across countries that national policies make a difference and that much can be done in cities, towns and local areas. But policies and interventions must not be confined to the health care system; they need to address the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age. The evidence shows that economic circumstances are important but are not the only drivers of health inequalities. Tackling the health gap will take action, based on sound evidence, across the whole of society. The pandemic has exposed and amplified underlying inequalities in society that lead to inequalities in health.