

Community Medicine or Public Health

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First, thank you for the wonderful journal. I was just surprised with its name. Although it is, as written, the official journal of the Sudanese Community Physicians Association (SCPA) still it has been given the name of “Sudanese Journal of Public Health” (SJPH). Why? What the SCPA has to do with the public health? In other words; are the community medicine and public health identical or there are some differences between them? The answer is quite simple; yes they are identical in some aspects and differ in others. Differences are not well defined and often not obvious. They are beyond the scope of this letter. I would rather like to emphasize on the similarity of community medicine and public health. The simplest definition of the public health is that it is the science and art of protecting and promoting health. It is not medicine. It is rather an aggregate of sciences (including medical), strategies and activities the main missions of which are to prevent diseases, maintain and promote the health and prolong life, usually through a societal approach.^{1,2} Community medicine is a study of man as a social being in his total environment. It deals with the diseases as social phenomena and not as a case in individual patient. Historically community medicine has emerged from both general medicine and public health. Hence, public health is the umbrella that encompasses

community medicine and other medical and non-medical disciplines.³ Both community medicine and public health are directed towards prevention and promotion of health.² Both use epidemiological methods to achieve their goals. In this aspect they are identical. Therefore, the community physician can be a public health practitioner. I fully concur with the name. It is not just a name; it is a concept a missions of the SCPA.

Again, I would like to congratulate you on publishing a wonderful journal, wishing you further and long life success.

References

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