



UBC CENTRE FOR
HEALTH SERVICES AND POLICY RESEARCH

Panning for Population Gold: 20 Years of Population Research at MCHP

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a place of mind

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Learning to use data in powerful new ways



*“It says, ‘Get well quickly,’ and it’s signed,
‘Your Provincial Government.’”*



Learning to use data in powerful new ways

- Population-based approach
- Conceptual framework and measurement tools
- Perspective matters: Health vs. disease; Patients & populations vs. providers & organizations
- Measures of population ‘need’ are important

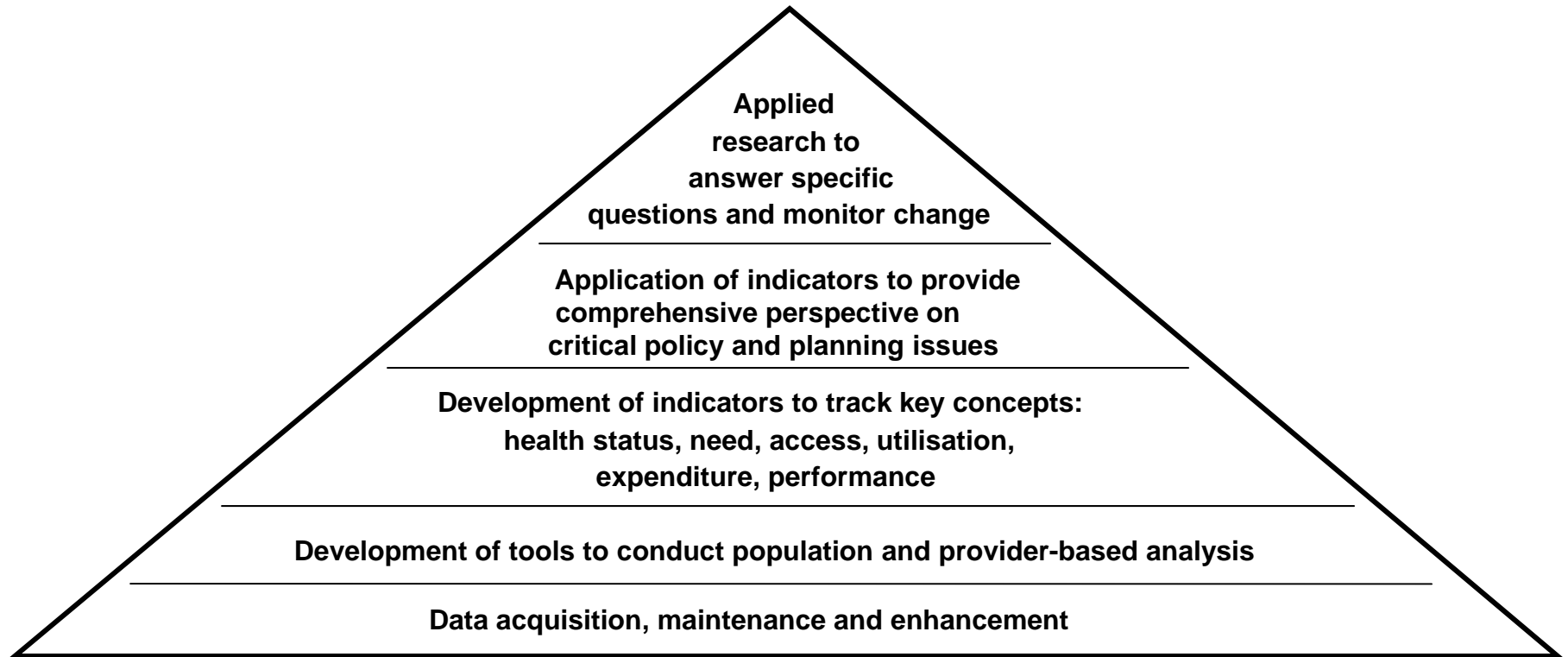


What did we learn?

“Data are unlike other tools... They provide the raw material from which information can be created...unlike printed tables which, like a postcard, provide a larger view of a larger phenomenon, data can act as a camera, allowing the researcher to manipulate the background, change the foreground and more fully investigate the object under study.”

Watkins W. The Data Liberation Initiative: A new cooperative model.
EI Partnerships Dec 1994 - Feb 1995

Translating data into information to support policy and planning





Developing a conceptual model

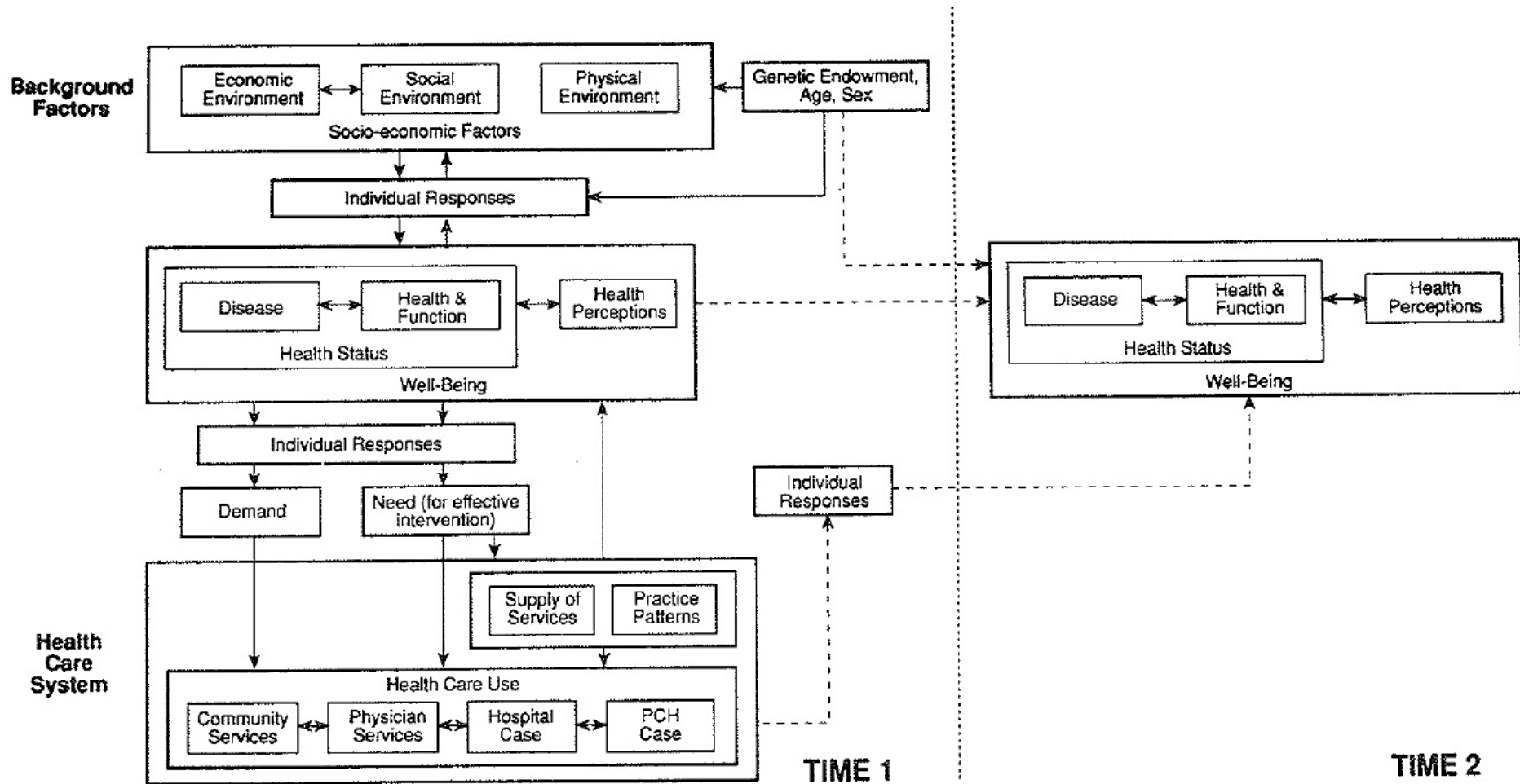
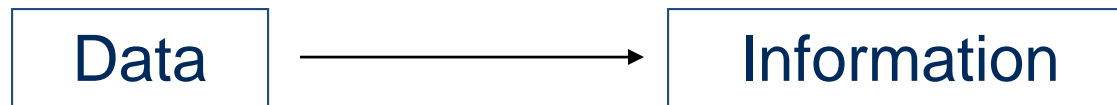


FIG. 3. The conceptual model underlying the Population Health Information System.



Developing key concepts and indicators



- Population registry
- Utilization data:
 - Physician
 - Hospital
 - PCH, etc.
- Census data
- Vital Stats records

- Need
- Health status, health outcomes, morbidity, case-mix etc.
- Utilization of services, intensity of use etc.
- Supply of resources



Learning about strengths of admin data

Surprising ability to provide perspective
on health and health care

Population registry provides a critical
hub for more specific data

While criticized for lack of depth, they
have great breadth

Provide an infrastructure for
development, addition, and
triangulation of other data systems



Developing a health information system

A health information system has as a primary goal the transformation of data into information useful for planning and decision-making about programs and policies relating to health and health care



Learning to use data in relationships with policy makers

- Understanding context
- Listening for challenges
- Identifying ways to use key data and information in defined projects
- Communicating findings to a variety of audiences



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Increasing use of data about health and health care



"Life Expectancy" by Sidney Harris, reproduced by permission of the artist.



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