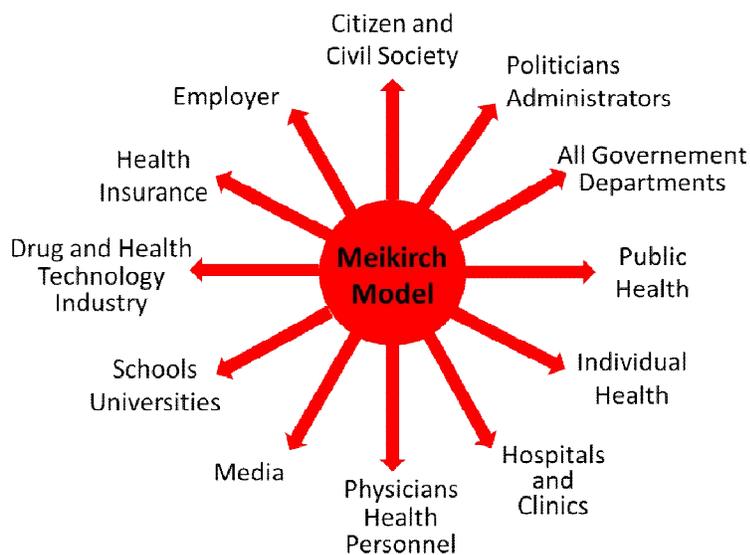


Concern for Health Touches Every Part of Society without Exception

The Meikirch Model is a definition of health, the purpose of which is to help individuals and populations maintain and improve their health. Yet, who must assume the responsibility and who has to take action? The illustration below shows that the Meikirch Model touches on every aspect of society. Everyone is concerned and no one is left out. Obviously physicians, health personnel, hospitals, clinics, and health stations are engaged for the health of the people. In addition, though, the citizens themselves must assume responsibility for their health and the societies they live in can help: all governmental departments and all employers are accountable with respect to the health of the people. Teaching about health must begin already in grade schools and be continued up to the university level. In addition, all mass media have to inform the general public in order to create a culture of health. The health economy, including health insurances and drug and health technology industries, must contribute.

The questions are: What can the different players do? What must they do? And where are the



problems? So far, everyone could interpret the term "health" as he or she liked. This had the advantage that, in addition to the purpose of health, many self-serving objectives could also be pursued. The Meikirch Model offers a shared definition for a shared goal. This will make it easier to discern how many health services are to be offered and the extent to which individuals must deal with their health issues themselves.

Today, most activities in the interest of health are complex. The Meikirch Model structures this complexity and thereby facilitates inter disciplinary and inter sectoral cooperation among the different members and agencies of society. With its help, the objectives of any project for health can now be precisely and clearly formulated. The demands of life, the biologically given potential and the personally acquired potential may all be objectives. The allotted resources for each can be weighed against each other. Depending on the specifics, different projects may be combined in such a way that all aspects of health can be supported adequately. Cost/benefit analyses based on the Meikirch Model will help to reduce costs and to increase benefits. Thus it will be advantageous to base all plans for improving health and health services on the Meikirch Model.