



Faith-Based Solutions for Addiction Prevention in Public Health

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The public health challenges posed by addiction are pervasive and transcend geographical and cultural boundaries, prompting exploration of faith-based interventions, particularly within the Islāmic tradition, to address addiction prevention. Islāmic teachings advocate for holistic health, balanced lifestyles, and self-discipline, offering a unique perspective on addiction prevention grounded in spiritual guidance, education, community support, and personal responsibility.

This chapter examines addiction prevention and public health through an Islāmic lens, highlighting harm reduction strategies and primary prevention principles. Harm reduction strategies encompass practical measures aimed at minimising negative consequences without mandating complete abstinence. Islāmic principles emphasise harm reduction by promoting responsible behaviours and raising awareness without imposing strict abstinence mandates.

The Islāmic approach to public health aligns with primary prevention principles, addressing the root causes of disease and disability. Prophetic traditions advocate for practices such as good hygiene, nutrition, and disease prevention, reflecting modern public health principles. The principle of “La dharar wa la dhirār” underscores the Islāmic commitment to removing harm and avoiding reciprocal harm, providing a framework for harm reduction interventions.

In addressing addiction, the Islāmic response incorporates primary prevention principles through awareness campaigns, psychological interventions, and spiritual development. Islāmic principles endorse harm reduction strategies such as opiate substitution treatment and needle exchange programmes to mitigate the serious consequences of addiction and the spread of diseases such as HIV/AIDS. The ethical imperative to prioritise public health underscores the acceptance of interventions that may entail lesser harm to prevent greater societal harm.

Islāmic jurisprudence recognises addiction as both a community and individual obligation, emphasising collective responsibility in combating addiction through community support and compassionate interventions.

Source

Aboul-Enein, B. H., Rassool, G. Hussein, Benajiba, N., Bernstein, J., & Mo'ez Al-Islam E. Faris (2025). *Contemporary Islāmic Perspectives in Public Health*. Cambridge University Press.

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