

AWARENESS OF HEALTHY LIVING THROUGH HEALTH CHECK-UPS FOR MEDAN CITY ASN

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Abstract

Health is a crucial factor in supporting the work productivity of State Civil Apparatus (ASN). However, busy schedules and high work mobility often lead ASN to neglect their health, including routine health checks. The low participation of ASN in free health checks indicates a limited awareness of the importance of early disease detection and healthy living. This study aims to analyze the level of awareness of healthy living through health checks among ASN in Medan City and to explore the work and mobility factors that influence this behavior. The approach used was descriptive qualitative, with data collected through in-depth interviews with informants from ASN in Medan City government agencies. The results showed that the majority of ASN understand the importance of maintaining health, but awareness of consistently undergoing health checks remains low. The main factors influencing this are high workloads, limited time, and the perception that physical conditions are still "healthy" so that check-ups are not considered urgent. However, some informants stated that support from the agency, easy access to services, and interesting and interactive outreach can increase their motivation to participate in healthchecks.

Keywords: Healthy Living Awareness, Free Health Checks, ASN, Qualitative Methods

INTRODUCTION

Health is a crucial aspect in improving the quality of life. However, public awareness of routine health check-ups remains low. Most people tend to seek medical check-ups only when they experience symptoms of a specific illness. However, regular health check-ups are the first step in disease prevention and early detection, particularly non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as hypertension, diabetes mellitus, and dyslipidemia. This lack of awareness of the importance of early detection is a contributing factor to the increasing number of NCDs in various regions, including Medan. Health is a key asset that determines the productivity and quality of human resources, including for Civil Servants (ASN) as implementers of public policy.

Civil servants (ASN) are required to be in prime physical and mental condition to be able to provide the best service to the public. Research shows that many State Civil Servants (ASN) experience health problems such as central obesity and hypertension due to unhealthy

lifestyles, such as a high-fat diet, low fiber intake, and low physical activity. Research by Masri and Sari (2019) found that 75% of ASN in Padang City suffer from central obesity, while research by Sulistiani and Surury (2022) reported that 55.6% of employees at the Kemanggisan Tax Training Center, West Jakarta, suffer from hypertension. This situation demonstrates the need for promotional and preventive programs focused on increasing awareness of healthy living in government workplaces.

According to data from the Indonesian Ministry of Health in 2019, the prevalence of non-communicable diseases in Indonesia is currently 69.91%. (Ministry of Health, 2019). The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 71% of global diseases are non-communicable. In Indonesia, the death rate from non-communicable diseases continues to rise (WHO, 2023). Diseases such as hypertension and diabetes are the leading causes of death and contribute to national healthcare costs. Preventive measures through increasing public awareness of the importance of health checks are a strategic step in reducing these incidences. One effective preventive measure is the implementation of free health checks that can reach the wider community, both in office environments, schools, and general public areas.

The Medan City Health Office, as a government agency responsible for public health promotion and services, is committed to implementing the Free Health Check program for the community. Regular health checks are crucial for early detection of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as hypertension, diabetes, and dyslipidemia, which are now the leading causes of death in Indonesia (Riskesdas, 2018; WHO, 2023). This program aims not only to detect diseases early but also to raise awareness of the importance of healthy living behaviors. Through this activity, civil servants are encouraged to be more aware of their health and understand that prevention is better than cure. Furthermore, this activity also supports the implementation of the Healthy Living Community Movement (GERMAS) promoted by the Indonesian Ministry of Health.

Health screening is a key strategy in promotive and preventive efforts to identify health conditions early, before severe clinical symptoms appear. Various studies have shown that health screening can reduce the burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and increase opportunities for better treatment. For example, a literature review indicates that routine screening rates remain low, especially in developing countries, despite their clear benefits (Prihanti et al., 2022).

However, individual awareness of health check-ups does not solely depend on the availability of health facilities or services but is influenced by various factors. Several studies have found that sociodemographic variables (such as age, gender, education level, income), psychological variables (health knowledge, risk perception, attitudes toward health), and contextual variables (access to services, cost, location, availability of information) play a significant role in determining a person's decision to undergo a health check-up. For example, a study in Taiwan found that factors such as convenience of service location, affordability, previous experience with health services, and the perception that "I am currently healthy" or "I don't need a check-up" influenced the desire to undergo screening. A study in Indonesia showed that education level was one of the most important factors influencing routine screening examinations (Chien et al., 2020).

Furthermore, research in the Asian population context (Singapore) on diabetes screening indicates that in addition to demographic factors (age, income, ethnicity), individual

factors such as a sense of personal responsibility for health, perceived susceptibility to disease, and reminder systems from healthcare teams facilitate screening participation. Meanwhile, community research in Indonesia on non-communicable disease screening identified that variables such as age, gender, marital status, source of health information, knowledge about screening, and attitudes toward screening were significantly associated with awareness of screening (Asharani et al., 2022).

Based on theoretical frameworks, models such as Andersen's "Predisposing Enabling Need" model and the Health Belief Model can be used to explain how predisposing factors (e.g., demographic and social characteristics), enabling factors (e.g., access, cost, availability of information), and need factors (e.g., risk perception, actual health condition) collectively influence health screening behavior. For example, in a Korean study, factors such as perceived disease sensitivity, cues to action, self-efficacy, and attitudes toward screening were shown to influence intention to undergo a check-up (Cho & Cho, 2022).

For Civil Servants (ASN) with busy field work schedules, implementing health checks can be a challenge. They are faced with the challenge of fulfilling their duties or carrying out these activities simultaneously or at different times to maintain their health amidst their busy work schedule. It is not uncommon to find ASNs actively working in the field who feel they are healthy enough because they are still physically able to work. They tend to postpone health checks until clear symptoms appear (Tarigan, 2023).

There are several pressing matters that can trigger obstacles for ASN to carry out health checks, such as the nature of field work (high mobility), field activities (mobility) usually have a tight schedule, remote locations, or the nature of the work is ad hoc (sudden and situational) (Alhakimi, 2019), some ASN in the field may face a high workload so that adding a schedule for health checks is considered an additional burden on an already limited time, so that the work is considered more crucial (Sutrisno et al, 2022), access to health facilities for ASN who work in remote or border areas (high mobility), access to adequate health facilities for MCU can be difficult or require a long journey (Wulandari et al. 2024).

Therefore, understanding these factors is crucial for designing targeted promotive and preventive interventions, such as increasing health literacy, improving access to screening services, or mitigating psychological and social barriers. This is expected to improve health screening behavior, which will ultimately contribute to reducing the burden of disease and improving the community's quality of life (Konny et al., 2023).

The Free Health Check activity is a concrete form of health promotion that involves the active participation of Civil Servants (ASN). Student interns from the Faculty of Public Health also play a role in the implementation of this activity through mentoring, education, and documentation of activities in the field. Student involvement is an important part in strengthening collaboration between academics and health institutions in realizing a community that is aware of the importance of regular health checks. Based on this description, researchers are interested in further studying "Healthy Living Awareness Through Free Health Checks" as one of the promotive and preventive efforts to increase public awareness, especially State Civil Apparatus (ASN), regarding the importance of regular health checks to prevent and detect non-communicable diseases early.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive research design. This approach was chosen because this study aims to understand in depth the meaning, experience, and level of awareness of healthy living among State Civil Apparatus (ASN) in Medan City in conducting health checks, as well as to determine the work and mobility factors that influence this awareness. A qualitative approach was used because it allows researchers to obtain a comprehensive picture of individual views, attitudes, and experiences based on the social and cultural context of ASN work. This study was conducted in a Medan City government agency that has implemented or implemented a health check program. The time of this study was carried out in October 2025. Informants in this study were State Civil Apparatus (ASN) who work in the Medan City Government environment, both those who have participated and those who have not participated in health check activities. The selection of informants was carried out using a purposive sampling technique, namely selection based on certain considerations relevant to the research objectives.

RESULTS

This study involved three respondents from the State Civil Apparatus (ASN) within the Medan City Health Office. The purpose of the interviews was to determine the extent of ASN awareness of the importance of health checks and the adoption of healthy lifestyle behaviors in their daily lives. The interview results were grouped into seven main questions:

1. Understanding the meaning of healthy living

Most respondents understood that a healthy life is a state of physical and mental balance, enabling a person to function effectively and feel happy. One respondent (State Civil Servant No. 2) emphasized that a healthy life should start with oneself through simple habits like walking every evening. Other respondents also linked a healthy life to the importance of maintaining a healthy diet, getting enough rest, and avoiding excessive stress.

2. The importance of having regular health checks

All respondents agreed that regular health check-ups are crucial for early detection of health conditions. Civil Servant No. 2, who has a history of hypertension, undergoes monthly check-ups at the community health center to monitor blood pressure and blood sugar levels. Other respondents believe that regular health check-ups help prevent chronic diseases and serve as a reminder to improve their lifestyle.

3. Experience participating in health check activities

Some respondents had participated in the free health checkup organized by their office. Civil Servant No. 2 stated that he experienced numerous benefits from participating, including discovering weight gain and high blood pressure that he hadn't previously noticed. Other civil servants stated that the program provided an opportunity for employees to assess their physical health without incurring additional costs.

4. The influence of work and mobility on the opportunity to have a health check

Interview results showed that most civil servants (ASN) have high work mobility due to frequent field trips or official travel. However, they stated that this does not always hinder them from undergoing health check-ups. Civil servant number 2 stated that despite

his busy work schedule, he still makes time to visit the community health center in his spare time. However, other respondents acknowledged that workload sometimes causes delays in health check-ups.

5. Factors that cause ASN to rarely carry out health checks

Some factors cited by respondents included busy work schedules, fear of test results, and a lack of information regarding scheduled health checkups. Civil Servant No. 2 stated that some of his coworkers were reluctant to undergo screenings due to concerns about discovering certain diseases. However, respondents with a history of medical conditions were more diligent in undergoing screenings, recognizing the importance of early detection.

6. Driving factors to make ASN more aware of the importance of health checks

All respondents agreed that support from their agencies and colleagues significantly influences awareness of the importance of health checks. Civil Servant No. 2 stated that sharing personal experiences regarding illnesses can motivate colleagues to get tested. Furthermore, health education, flexible scheduling, and incentive programs are considered to encourage civil servant participation.

7. Changes in lifestyle habits after learning about the health check program

Most respondents experienced behavioral changes after participating in the health screening program. Civil Servant No. 2, for example, began reducing sugar consumption and increasing water consumption after discovering his blood pressure was high. Other respondents also reported paying more attention to their diet, engaging in light exercise, and getting enough rest. This indicates an increased awareness of a healthy lifestyle after participating in the health screening program.

DISCUSSION

The study results indicate that civil servants' awareness of the importance of health checks is influenced by personal factors, the work environment, and previous health experiences. The results indicate that most civil servants understand the meaning of healthy living as an effort to maintain a balance between physical and mental health to optimally carry out activities. Respondents described healthy living as not only being free from disease but also encompassing routine habits such as light exercise, maintaining a healthy diet, and maintaining a happy mood. This understanding indicates that civil servants already have a personal awareness of the importance of healthy living behaviors. This finding aligns with research (M. Iqbal, 2022) which states that an individual's knowledge and perception of the concept of healthy living significantly influence their daily health behaviors. The study confirms that the better a person understands the meaning of healthy living, the more likely they are to adopt a healthy and regular lifestyle. In the context of civil servants, this understanding serves as an important foundation for establishing a work culture that supports health within government agencies.

Based on the interview results, all respondents stated that regular health checks are important, especially for those with a history of certain medical conditions, such as hypertension. Regular check-ups help civil servants monitor their physical condition and take preventive measures before the disease progresses. This awareness reflects the understanding

that health is a vital asset that must be maintained continuously. These results align with research (Dadang Kun, Septianto, 2024), which confirms that regular health check-ups are an effective form of preventive behavior for the early detection of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as hypertension and diabetes mellitus. Regular check-ups have also been shown to increase self-awareness and adherence to treatment. In the context of civil servants, this activity not only benefits individuals but also impacts work productivity and reduces absenteeism due to illness.

Most respondents who participated in the Free Health Check (CKG) program at their office reported immediate benefits, such as noticing changes in weight or high blood pressure that they had previously been unaware of. This activity was considered to help them recognize their physical condition and serve as a starting point for lifestyle changes. Furthermore, implementing the health check program in the workplace was also considered convenient for civil servants because they did not need to leave their office duties. This finding is supported by (Nia Azzahra et al., 2025), who found that implementing mass health checks in government agencies increased employee participation and motivation in maintaining health. The study explained that activities such as CKG play a crucial role in increasing health awareness through a practical, affordable, and accessible approach. Therefore, this activity can be used as a sustainable strategy by local governments to collectively improve the health of civil servants.

In this study, work mobility was not a complete barrier for civil servants (ASN) to undergo health check-ups. Respondents stated that they still made time to visit the community health center outside of work hours or after completing field assignments. However, for ASN with high responsibilities in the field, busy schedules often delayed check-ups. These results are consistent with the findings of (Iin Nurlinawati et al. 2020), which explain that time and workload are the main barriers to implementing healthy behaviors among public sector workers. However, the study also confirmed that flexible working hours and the availability of easily accessible health facilities can mitigate these barriers. This means that office policies that support a balance between work and health for ASN are essential for optimal health check-up programs.

Several key factors that cause civil servants to rarely undergo health checks include busy work schedules, lack of information about the implementation time, and fear of the test results. Some civil servants believe that test results indicating a disease will create new anxiety. On the other hand, civil servants with a history of illness are more active in undergoing check-ups as a form of responsibility for their health. This finding is in line with research (Bulan Simanungkali, 2018), which shows that negative perceptions and fear of test results are major barriers to participation in health activities. In addition, psychological factors such as denial of disease risks also influence a person's decision not to undergo a check-up. Therefore, a reassuring and educational health communication approach is needed so that civil servants do not perceive check-ups as a threat, but rather as an effort to protect themselves.

The most dominant motivating factor emerging in this study was support from the work environment. Respondents assessed that the role of colleagues and leaders in providing real-life examples or sharing experiences significantly influenced increased health awareness. Furthermore, outreach activities, health campaigns, and flexible schedules were additional factors that encouraged civil servants to actively participate in health check-ups. These results

align with research (Eha Farihah, 2013) which stated that peer-based approaches and direct outreach were proven effective in increasing employee participation in health activities. Social support from coworkers strengthens individual motivation to behave healthily due to a sense of togetherness and collective responsibility. Therefore, implementing internal communication strategies and empowering civil servants through testimonials or personal experiences can be effective ways to increase health awareness in the workplace.

Most respondents reported experiencing behavioral changes after participating in the health checkup. For example, they began reducing sugar consumption, drinking more water, and exercising more regularly. This awareness emerged after they learned about risk factors, such as hypertension or weight gain. This means that the CKG program not only increases knowledge but also significantly changes health behaviors. Research (Gita Arisara, 2024) supports these findings, stating that health checkups have a strong educational effect because they provide direct feedback on an individual's physical condition. The results of the checkup serve as a point of self-reflection for improving lifestyle habits, particularly those related to diet and physical activity. In the context of civil servants (ASN), these behavioral changes have the potential to reduce the risk of non-communicable diseases and increase long-term work productivity.

CONCLUSION

Based on research conducted on respondents from agencies in Medan City, it can be concluded that worker awareness of the importance of health checks has begun to grow quite well. Most respondents understand that healthy living is not only about being free from disease, but also about how to maintain a balance between body and mind to stay fit for work and activities. This awareness is evident in the habits they have begun to develop, such as light exercise, maintaining a healthy diet, and trying to avoid things that can trigger stress. The implementation of Free Health Checks (CKG) activities by agencies in Medan City has also had a real impact on changing the behavior of civil servants. Through the CKG activities, they can directly assess their health conditions and are encouraged to care more about their bodies. After participating in the activities, some respondents reported reducing sugar consumption, drinking more water, and paying more attention to their weight and blood pressure. This shows that health checks can foster a new awareness of the importance of maintaining health from an early age. However, civil servants still face several obstacles in carrying out routine health checks. Busy workloads, tight work schedules, and fear of test results are factors that prevent some civil servants from regularly undergoing them. However, on the other hand, support from colleagues, health education, and the presence of real-life examples of workers actively undergoing check-ups serve as motivation for others to start caring about their health. Overall, the results of this study indicate that a culture of health awareness among civil servants has begun to take shape. Local governments are expected to continue providing regular health check-up programs, providing flexible hours for employees to undergo health check-ups, and conducting ongoing outreach to ensure that healthy living behaviors truly become part of the civil servant lifestyle in the workplace.

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