



Policy Doctor—Making the Right Diagnosis

Let us take our understanding a step further. Crafting effective public policy first involves identifying the evidence of a problem, recognizing the community needs, identifying the right authority to deal with a problem, and selecting the right mix of solutions. Just like an emergency-room doctor evaluates a patient to diagnose the correct method of treatment before sending them on to the correct medical team, imagine yourself as a policymaker diagnosing an issue before sending it on to the correct decision-makers. Similar to medicine, knowing who should deal with a problem is just as important as the solution.

In this Policy Doctor activity, put your policymaking skills to the test by examining real-world scenarios. Your task is to determine the best diagnosis for addressing these issues. Note that you will not need to come up with a treatment plan, or policy solution, for these scenarios yet. That is what comes next. The first step is that you can accurately diagnose the situation.



Instructions

In the same small groups, read each scenario and determine, or diagnose, which part of society—the private sphere, civil society, or government—is responsible for addressing the issue described. Then, identify who would be in charge of making the rules or policies to address the problem, just like identifying what kind of doctor you would need to treat a symptom. Share answers for a class discussion about each scenario.

Example Scenario: School Dress Code

- **Issue (symptom):** Students believe the dress code does not apply to all students in the same way.
- **Responsible sphere (area of medicine):** Government
- **Who is in charge of making the rules (kind of doctor)?** Possible answers: school board, administrators, Parent-Teacher Organization

Continued on the Next Page →



← Continued from the Previous Page



Scenario 1: Funding for School Clubs

- **Issue:** Students want more funding allocated for extracurricular clubs and activities.
- **Responsible sphere:**
 Private Sphere Civil Society Government
- **Who is in charge of making the rules?**

Scenario 2: Environmental Pollution in the Community

- **Issue:** Residents are concerned about pollution from factories affecting air and water quality.
- **Responsible sphere:** Private Sphere Civil Society Government
- **Who is in charge of making the rules?**



Scenario 3: Food Insecurity

- **Issue:** Students lack access to enough nutritious food while at school.
- **Responsible sphere:**
 Private Sphere Civil Society Government
- **Who is in charge of making the rules?**

Scenario 4: Teen Curfew in the Community

- **Issue:** Parents are worried about teenagers being out late at night and want a curfew imposed.
- **Responsible sphere:** Private Sphere Civil Society Government
- **Who is in charge of making the rules?**



Scenario 5: Traffic Congestion in the City

- **Issue:** Traffic congestion is a major problem in the city during rush hour.
- **Responsible sphere:**
 Private Sphere Civil Society Government
- **Who is in charge of making the rules?**

Continued on the Next Page →



Policy Doctor—Making the Right Diagnosis

← Continued From the Previous Page



Scenario 6: Bullying Prevention in Schools

- **Issue:** Students are experiencing bullying and harassment at school.
- **Responsible sphere:**
 - Private Sphere Civil Society Government
- **Who is in charge of making the rules?**



Scenario 7: Recycling Program in the Community

- **Issue:** Residents want to implement a recycling program to reduce waste.
- **Responsible sphere:**
 - Private Sphere Civil Society Government
- **Who is in charge of making the rules?**



Scenario 8: Affordable Housing

- **Issue:** Many families in the community struggle to find affordable housing options.
- **Responsible sphere:**
 - Private Sphere Civil Society Government
- **Who is in charge of making the rules?**



Scenario 9: Internet Access in Rural Areas

- **Issue:** Residents in rural areas lack access to high-speed internet.
- **Responsible sphere:**
 - Private Sphere Civil Society Government
- **Who is in charge of making the rules?**