

# Utilization of Preventive Health Services and Social Inequalities: Cancer Screening as a Case Study

## Facilitator

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## Description

Preventive care services (e.g., cancer screening, cardiometabolic and diabetes checks) are essential for healthy aging and reducing avoidable deaths, especially in aging societies where noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) such as cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular and chronic respiratory disease are the leading causes of mortality. However, social inequalities in the use of preventive care remain widespread, even in high-income societies with universal health coverage.

This course introduces the social determinants affecting individuals' participation in preventive care, including socioeconomic and sociodemographic factors such as gender, age, marital status, nationality, and macro-level determinants (e.g., country level factors). It covers both theoretical and methodological aspects, enabling a critical analysis of how these factors influence preventive care use. Specific attention is given to population-based breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening, which will be used as case study.

Students will gain an understanding of the processes driving inequalities in preventive care use across different population groups, which is essential for informing the design of prevention programs and policy interventions.

## Objectives

- Understand key determinants of participation in preventive care at individual and macro levels, using cancer screening participation as a case study.
- Explore different methods and measurements for assessing preventive care participation.
- Familiarize with theoretical frameworks for investigating inequalities in preventive care utilization.
- Apply concepts and methods to research preventive care utilization.

<b>Date</b>	<b>30 June 2026, 14:00 – 17:00</b>
<b>Level</b>	Basic
<b>Eligibility</b>	The course is open to PhD and MD students of the SSPH+ Inter-university Graduate Campus.
<b>Course Structure</b>	The course includes a 3-hour online lecture, as well as pre-course readings.
<b>Work load</b>	Preliminary Work: 2 h; Contact time: 3 h
<b>Credits</b>	(1 ECTS for active participation in 4 short online-courses and 1 passed assessment in 1 course)
<b>Assessment</b>	Students who would like to obtain credits may write a short essay (max. 1500 words) on a methodological or theoretical aspect of preventive care utilization
<b>Location</b>	Online course on zoom
<b>Course Fees</b>	SSPH+ PhD and MD Students: o.- CHF
<b>Registration</b>	<a href="http://www.conftool.com/ssph-phd-courses2026">www.conftool.com/ssph-phd-courses2026</a>
<b>Deadline for registration</b>	30 May 2026

This course is an SSPH+ IGC initiative to provide post-doctoral scientists at SSPH+ network institutions to teach.