

SA3: Health

*The distribution and management of
healthcare resources in times of crises*

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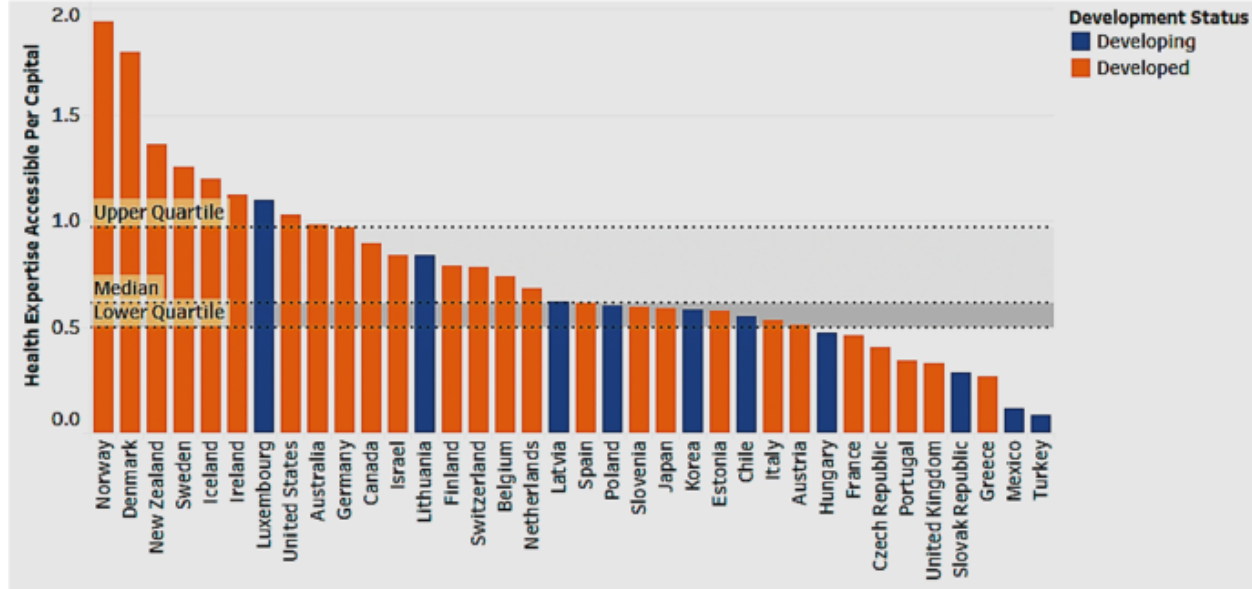
Forum: SA3: Health

Issue: The distribution and management of healthcare resources in times of crises

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Introduction

Healthcare resources refer to the facilities, equipment, personnel, and supplies that are necessary to deliver healthcare services to patients. Healthcare resources can be broadly categorized as physical resources, such as buildings, medical equipment, and supplies like medications, and human resources including providers and administrative staff. Effective management and distribution of healthcare resources are essential to ensuring that patients receive timely and appropriate medical care. In times of crises, such as pandemics or natural disasters, the availability and allocation of healthcare resources can become crucial, and effective resource management strategies are a major factor in responding to the needs of the affected population. The issue in hand relates with the theme of the conference which is the creation of a future through addressing ongoing crises as the global community is currently facing very destructive health crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic, Ebola outbreaks in Africa, and the opioid outbreak.



Healthcare Resource Allocation Around the Globe as of 2021

Definition of Key Terms

Delivery of Healthcare

According to OHCHR, delivery of healthcare refers to the system and processes involved in providing medical services and treatments to populations. It includes all aspects of healthcare, from prevention, diagnosis, and treatment. The process involves medical professionals and treatment such as medicine. The effectiveness of the service depends on the quality of medical facilities, and skills of healthcare professionals. It must be noted that the income, education, and social support of a patient should be taken into account during the healthcare delivery process.

Healthcare Crises

Healthcare crises are events that disrupt the normal functioning of the healthcare system and pose a significant threat to public health. These crises can occur due to a variety of reasons, including infectious disease outbreaks, natural disasters, and man-made disasters such as terrorist attacks. Some examples of healthcare crises include the COVID-19 pandemic that began in 2019, natural disasters such as hurricanes and earthquakes, and terrorist attacks.

Healthcare Technology

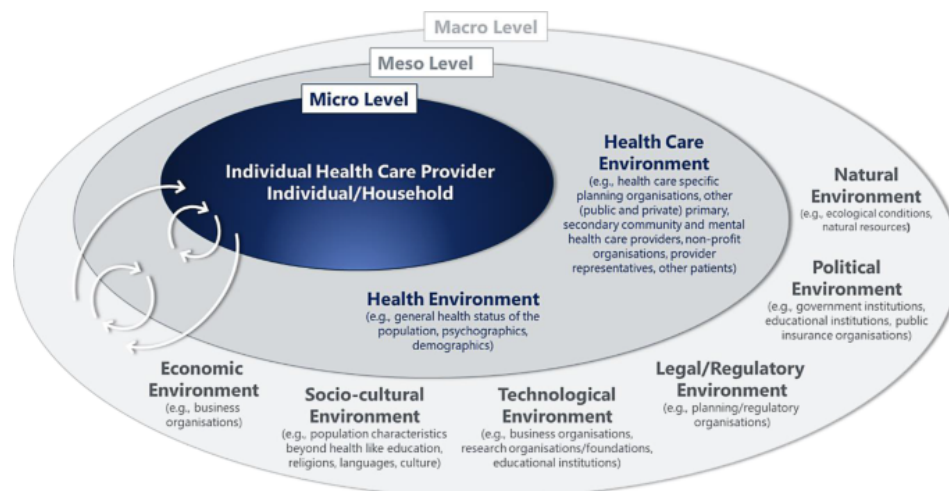
Healthcare technology refers to the use of technology with the purpose of effectively delivering healthcare services (Built In: National Tech & Startups). Healthcare technology includes different types of devices and systems designed to help healthcare providers. A few examples for healthcare technology are medical devices, wearable health products such as smart watches, electronic health records, and telemedicine systems. These technologies help patients who seek treatment as they tend to be cheaper options.

Healthcare Providers

According to UC Berkeley, healthcare providers can be classified as individuals or organizations that provide healthcare services to patients. Examples of medical professionals are doctors, physicians, nurses, pharmacists, therapists, dentists, medical laboratory professionals, mental health professionals including psychiatrists and psychologists.

General Overview

The distribution and management of healthcare resources in times of crises can be classified as an effort to effectively respond to an emergency. Effective management of resources such as medical devices and professionals is essential to provide timely protection as protecting lives requires early intervention. There are many factors that come with managing these sources. Resource allocation is important as there may be an inadequate amount of resources. Therefore, medications should be allocated based on the severity and mortality of one's condition, and the likelihood of recovery. The healthcare workforce is another critical resource as they provide a baseline for diagnosis and treatment. During crises, the workforce likely gets negatively affected as they might have to have longer shifts, or substitute for other medical professionals with different specializations. Moreover, if there is a shortage for healthcare professionals, the situation gets even more complicated. In order to maintain the public's health, public health officials, medical professionals, and government agencies collaborate to effectively manage the distribution. For instance, improved communication channels, and common databases are used for transferring information. Moving on, healthcare technology plays a critical role. As an example, telemedicine is used to provide remote doctor visits. Additionally, geographic information systems are used to track the distribution of healthcare resources. In conclusion, the distribution and management of healthcare resources in times of crises requires a shared effort from healthcare providers, public health officials, and government agencies. The use of technology helps with effective resource allocation and mobilization of personnel to ensure that patients receive the care they need during emergencies.



Environmental Factors in Access to Healthcare

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

World Health Organization (WHO)

The World Health Organization (WHO) plays a critical role in managing healthcare crises at a global level. WHO is responsible for coordinating the international response to healthcare crises and providing technical guidance to member states. WHO provides assistance in terms of technical assistance, emergency preparedness, the development of emergency action plans, surveillance systems, and risk assessments. The organization also provides technical guidance for infection prevention via medicine. Additionally, it works on healthcare infrastructure and educating healthcare workers for better facilities and services. In conclusion, the World Health Organization plays a critical role in managing healthcare crises at a global level.

Government Agencies

Government agencies are responsible for providing resources both as in financial and labor support, and policy guidance. They may also be responsible for forming emergency response teams, coordinating the distribution of resources according to need, and communicating accurate information to the public as their overall well-being is a factor in managing healthcare crises.

Non-Governmental Organizations

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) provide healthcare services and support where government resources are unavailable or limited. They are predominantly funded by donations, grants, or other private funds. Some examples for NGOs that provide healthcare services are Doctors Without Borders, which provides care to people affected by armed conflicts, epidemics, natural disasters, and other crises; Partners In Health, which aims to bring sufficient healthcare in impoverished communities; Direct Relief, which gives medical provides healthcare providers in areas affected by crises; Save the Children, which specializes in helping children with malnutrition in affected areas; CARE, which works to prevent and treat diseases such as HIV/AIDS and malaria. Non-governmental organizations hold a vital role in supporting affected communities in healthcare crises.

Timeline of Events

The Spanish Flu (1918-1919)	The Spanish Flu was a global pandemic, infecting around 500 million people and causing the death of around 17-50 million people. The event increased attention towards public health, development of vaccines and other measures.
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The establishment of the World Health Organization (WHO) (1948)	The WHO gets established as a United Nations agency for maintaining and improving international public health .
The HIV/AIDS Epidemic (1980s-present)	The HIV/AIDS epidemic has had, and still is an important impact on public health worldwide, and it specifically brings attention to sexual health, and access to healthcare.
The establishment of the International Health Regulations (2005)	The International Health Regulations is a treaty that sets up how nations should respond to infectious disease outbreaks.
The Ebola Outbreak (2014-2016)	The Ebola outbreak in West Africa leads to international concerns as it's vital. Therefore, the importance of global health security and the need for effective responses to infectious disease outbreaks is demonstrated once again .
The COVID-19 Pandemic (2019-present)	The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on public health with over 17 million cases and 100.000 deaths all over the globe. Moreover, how a healthcare crisis can lead to economic disruption is demonstrated. The pandemic raised attention to matters such as vaccine development, access to healthcare, and public health measures in preventing the spread of disease.

Treaties and Events

The International Health Regulations (2005): The International Health Regulations are a binding treaty that sets up how countries should respond to outbreaks. The treaty requires states to report outbreaks to the World Health Organization (WHO), and to take measures to prevent the spread of disease across countries across its borders.

The Global Health Security Agenda (2014): The Global Health Security Agenda is an international partnership of stakeholders including governments and international organizations for improving global health security. It involves surveillance systems, diagnostic tools, laboratories, and educating the workforce.

The Joint External Evaluation (2016): The Joint External Evaluation is a tool of the WHO which is used to evaluate member states' preparedness for outbreaks, and their capacity to respond.

The United Nations Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health (2015): This provides a framework for improving the overall well-being of women, children, and adolescents around the globe.

The World Health Assembly Resolution on Strengthening Emergency and Essential Surgical Care and Anesthesia (2015): The World Health Assembly Resolution on Strengthening Emergency and Essential Surgical Care and Anesthesia specializes in improving surgical care and anesthesia services.

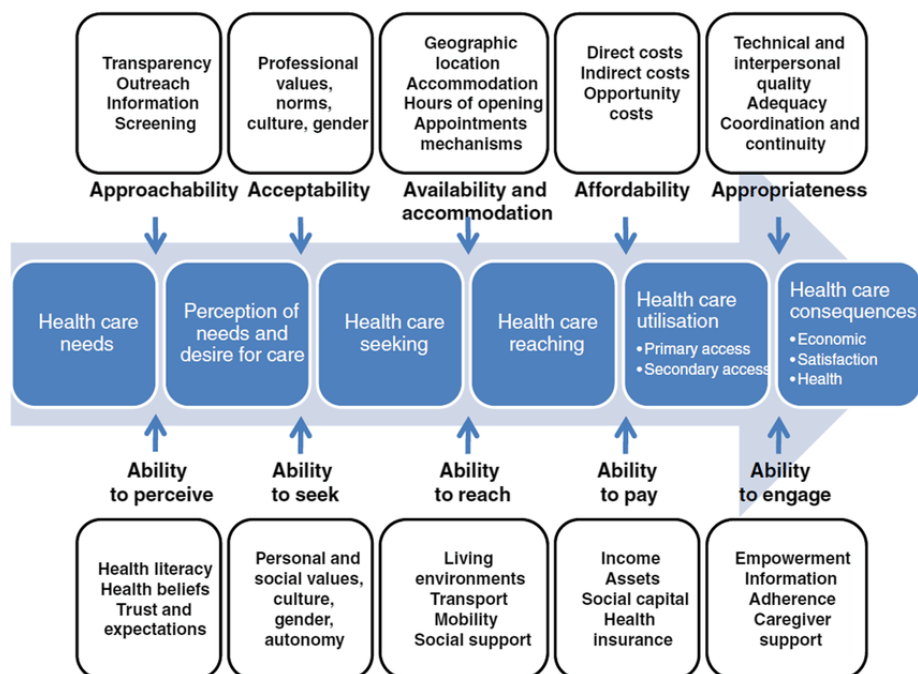
Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

The distribution and management of healthcare resources in times of crises has been a major concern for governments and healthcare organizations for many years. The World Health Organization's Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN) was established in 2000 to improve the overall global preparedness and response to infectious diseases. The network includes over 200 institutions and provides technical assistance, mobilizes resources, and coordinates the response effort during outbreaks. And, the Joint External Evaluation (JEE) process of WHO was established to evaluate a country's preparedness for public health emergencies. The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Emergency Operations Center (CDC EOC) was established in 2004 to provide a centralized pinpoint of command for public health emergencies. The United States Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) was established in 1999 to store medical supplies, pharmaceuticals, and equipment to stock up for healthcare emergencies. The European Union's Early Warning and Response System (EWRS) is the European Union's healthcare communication system. These systems enable a rapid exchange of information and coordination. In the end, it can be stated that there have been several attempts in the past to improve the distribution and management of healthcare resources in times of crises including the establishment of global networks, and tools for improving preparedness.

Possible Solutions

Managing healthcare services is a complex process which requires prioritization. During a crisis, medical equipment, supplies, and personnel may be limited. Hence, it is beneficial to prioritize their use while keeping the severity of the case and changes of recovery of a patient. Moving on, systems need to be flexible in their resource allocation in order to keep up with the changing needs of the population. Hospitals may need to be relocated, or their capacities might need to be increased. Communication plays a crucial role in managing all these efforts, and it should be centralized to ensure that the process works in the most efficient way. Therefore, it's important to have a joint database where needs, capacities, and risks of nations are individually assessed by experts. For that purpose, already existing programs such as the Joint External Evaluations (JEE) could be reinforced and further advanced. Additionally, collaboration might increase the efficacy of the efforts. For instance, public-private partnerships can be encouraged. In summary, effective management of healthcare resources in times of crises requires flexibility and prioritization, centralized point of coordination and communication, and collaboration. To sum up, the main area of focus should be supply chain management. By employing these strategies, healthcare

systems can respond effectively to crises and ensure that the affected population receives timely and adequate medical care.



General Factors in Access to Healthcare

Related Documents

[Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons](#)

[UNSC Resolution 1540 on Non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction](#)

[Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction](#)

[Disarmament: A Basic Guide – Fourth Edition \(2017\)](#)

[The Biological Weapons Convention](#)

[UNDAF Capacity Development Guidance](#)

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