

## World Primary Health Care: Capacity Building and Status Update

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### Commentary

Sustaining and promoting world health is at the core of world development. Primary Health Care (PHC) is perhaps closest to the communities and is the direct means and way of uplifting world health status. However, there are several challenges such as geographical variability, climatic and ecological diversity that necessitate distinct health services, infrastructure and therapeutics. Implementation of primary health care service is mainly governed by the political will and the financial grants in addition to the guidelines, policies and recommendations of WHO and UNICEF. Primary health care is an essential service and not optional that could provide first and direct point of contact between the community and the health care providers.

As it has been evident from several studies and observations that Primary health care is central to the socioeconomic development, education and environmental sustainability. All the development indicators and growth without the inclusive participation of PHC is always incomplete. PHC may not have all the wisest possible range of expertise and infrastructure but it can definitely prevent major health issues from cropping up and aid in epidemiology of diseases and can identify most vulnerable and risk groups that need immediate attention. PHC is more of empowering and propelling people towards good and sustainable health and can be integrated with the primary education system, non-governmental organizations and international funding for better functioning. If it is done so, then it can even address the pandemic preparedness and response just similar to a national disaster response force, if not in a better and effective way. PHC need to be adequately furnished with preventive medications and vaccines. Community participation and assistance greatly helps strengthening the serviceability of PHC. Providing proper sanitation, clean drinking water and food subsidies can lessen the burden on the PHC. Naturally, the focus of any PHC will be on the health of mother and child health but with sufficient resources can address health issues across demographics.

Most of the recent studies in this area of primary health were focused on the readiness of the PHC during the pandemic times and adequately strengthening and financing the PHC [1,

2]. PHC perhaps serve as the best centers for comprehensive health surveillance, acquisition of health care data, health education information and medical meta-research. E-medicine and e-delivery has great potential for integration with the PHC. The usage of e-health approaches such as disease coding and classification, e-prescriptions, digital image analysis, smart wearable devices is showing an increasing trend in PHC [3]. Low resource interventions for treatment of depression [4] and hypertension are possible at PHC and recent studies have emphasized on this health care delivery. Some studies have even suggested outpatient surgical care [5]. Particularly, male birth control procedures are feasible in PHC.

Primary health center can take up the role of mental health diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation and those affected by substance abuse and alcoholism. Disbursal of mental health medication such as essential psychotropic medicines by PHC can prove to be greatly beneficial for the socioeconomic productivity. PHC has the potential to address not only the physical health but also the social and emotional health that often ramify to various disease and disorders via reduced immunity, food insecurity, nutritional deficiency, substance abuse and alcoholism. PHC are evolving into a comprehensive health care resource. The efficiency and PHC can also be enhanced substantially by integrating with telemedicine thus functioning as regional nodal centers. Greater public private partnerships and technological up-gradations in terms of communication if not health care infrastructure can expand the range of services provided by the primary health centers.

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