

Access to Health Care may vary across Countries, Communities, and Individuals Influenced by Social and Economic Conditions as Well as Health Policies

Andrea Shepherd *

Department of Nursing Clinical Faculty at Baylor University, USA

Corresponding Author*

Andrea Shepherd

Department of Nursing Clinical Faculty at Baylor University, USA

E-mail: andrea_shepherd@baylor.edu

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Introduction

Health care is the maintenance or improvement of health via the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, amelioration, or cure of disease, illness, injury, and other physical and mental impairments in people. Health care is delivered by health professionals and allied health fields. Medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, midwifery, nursing, optometry, audiology, psychology, occupational therapy, physical therapy, athletic training, and other health professions are all part of health care. It includes work done in providing primary care, secondary care, and tertiary care, as well as in public health. Access to health care may vary across countries, communities, and individuals, influenced by social and economic conditions as well as health policies. Providing health care services means "the timely use of personal health services to achieve the best possible health outcomes". Factors to consider in terms of health care access include financial limitations (such as insurance coverage), geographic barriers (such as additional transportation costs, the possibility to take paid time off of work to use such services), and personal limitations (lack of ability to communicate with health care providers, poor health literacy, low income). Limitations to health care services affect negatively the use of medical services, the efficacy of treatments, and overall outcome (well-being, mortality rates).

Health care systems are organizations established to meet the health needs of targeted populations. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), a well-functioning health care system requires a financing mechanism, a well-trained and adequately paid workforce, reliable information on which to base decisions and policies, and well-maintained health facilities to deliver quality medicines and technologies. An efficient health care system can contribute to a significant part of a country's economy, development, and industrialization. Health care is conventionally regarded as an important determinant in promoting the

general physical and mental health and well-being of people around the world. An efficient health care system can contribute to a significant part of a country's economy, development, and industrialization. Health care is conventionally regarded as an important determinant in promoting the general physical and mental health and well-being of people around the world.

Home and Community care

Many types of health care interventions are delivered outside of health facilities. They include many interventions of public health interest, such as food safety surveillance, distribution of condoms and needle-exchange programs for the prevention of transmissible diseases. They also include the services of professionals in residential and community settings in support of self-care, home care, long-term care, assisted living, treatment for substance use disorders among other types of health and social care services. Community rehabilitation services can assist with mobility and independence after the loss of limbs or loss of function. This can include prostheses, orthotics, or wheelchairs.

Many countries, especially in the west, are dealing with aging populations, so one of the priorities of the health care system is to help seniors live full, independent lives in the comfort of their own homes. There is an entire section of health care geared to providing seniors with help in day-to-day activities at home such as transportation to and from doctor's appointments along with many other activities that are essential for their health and well-being. Although they provide home care for older adults in cooperation, family members and care workers may harbor diverging attitudes and values towards their joint efforts. This state of affairs presents a challenge for the design of ICT (information and communication technology) for home care.