

Mental Health in National Health Strategies: Addressed or Neglected?

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Abstract

Mental health is increasingly recognized as a cornerstone of overall well-being, yet its integration into national health strategies remains inconsistent and often inadequate. Despite growing awareness, many countries still struggle to prioritize mental health within their broader health agendas. This article explores how mental health is addressed—or neglected—in national health strategies, examining global trends, policy gaps, and promising solutions.

Keywords: Immunotherapy • CART Cell • Mental health

Introduction

These dynamics have led to a system where life-saving medications are often out of reach for those who need them most. International Reference Pricing: Drug prices are benchmarked against those in other nations. Government Negotiation: National health systems negotiate directly with manufacturers, leveraging bulk purchasing power. Price Caps and Value-Based Pricing: Prices are tied to clinical effectiveness, ensuring fair value for patients and payers [1].

The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) has begun allowing Medicare to negotiate prices for select drugs, a move expected to lower costs for millions. Requiring disclosure of pricing structures, rebates, and R&D costs would illuminate hidden markups and empower consumers. Accelerating approval processes and banning “pay-for-delay” agreements can introduce competition and reduce prices [2].

Linking prices to clinical outcomes encourages manufacturers to focus on efficacy and long-term health benefits. Drug pricing reform is not just a

policy issue—it's a moral one. Ensuring that life-saving medications are accessible to all is a cornerstone of a just healthcare system. By embracing transparency, competition, and value-based models, we can create a future where innovation and affordability go hand in hand. The prescription for change is clear. Now it's time to act. Allowing safe importation of drugs from countries with lower prices could offer immediate relief to consumers [3].

Pharmaceutical companies argue that high prices are necessary to fund research and development. However, public funding often supports early-stage research, and marketing expenses frequently exceed R&D budgets. Moreover, countries with stricter price controls continue to produce innovative treatments. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) notes that while some reforms may slightly reduce future innovation, the trade-off is justified by the immediate benefits to public health [4].

Despite bipartisan concern, major drug pricing legislation has struggled to pass Congress. However, recent momentum—fueled by public pressure and advocacy—suggests that change is possible. Policymakers must adopt a comprehensive framework that addresses out-of-pocket costs, systemic incentives, and the pricing of specific drugs. A piecemeal approach risks exacerbating existing problems. Nearly one in four Americans reports difficulty affording their prescription medications. Stories abound of patients rationing insulin, skipping doses, or going without treatment due to cost. These personal struggles underscore the urgency of reform. [5].

Conclusion

Mental health is slowly gaining ground in national health strategies, but progress is uneven. While some countries have made commendable strides, others continue to neglect this vital area. Bridging the gap requires political will, sustained investment, and inclusive policies that treat mental health as a fundamental human right.

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