

Can India Produce Enough Doctors and Ensure ‘Health for All’?

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Abstract

There is an acute shortage of doctors in India, especially in rural areas. It does not even meet WHO’s 2008 benchmark of a minimum requirement of 25 healthcare professionals per 10,000 population. These shortages are expected to become acuter in future with rising demand for healthcare owing to both increase in incomes of people and growing burden of diseases. India is also aspiring to achieve universal healthcare for its population. The announcement of “National Health Protection Scheme” with an annual cover of Rs. 500,000 to each of the 100 million low-income families in the Union Budget 2018 made a starting point. United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aims to achieve ‘health for all’ by 2030. All this would mean an increased need for healthcare workers, mainly doctors, who constitute the leading category of the health workforce in India. In the midst of all this, India is also one of the most important source countries for international recruitment of doctors by the advanced nations.

Keeping in mind the increasing need for more number of doctors, the paper critically analyses the current and required capacities of production and distribution of doctors in the country to ensure ‘health for all’ by 2030.

Key Words: Healthcare, India, Doctors, Migration, Sustainable Workforce, SDG Goals.

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