

Indian Medical Education, Migration of Doctors and Sustainable Workforce

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Abstract

Given one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) objective to ensure health and wellbeing for all by 2030, the paper critically reviews the current capacity of Indian medical education and highlight concerns of Indian health workforce to ensure timely intervention towards achieving this objective. It investigates the existing and emerging shortfall of doctors, one of the key determinants of the health workforce in India, taking into account current capacities of production, distribution, retirement and emigration of doctors with their growth prospects and projections until 2030. The paper also critically analyses the policy measures of the Government of India on access of doctors in rural areas and suggests policy to ensure 'health for all' by 2030. The paper found that there is only 4.8 doctors per 10,000 population available for practice in India in 2014, as against the belief of availability of 7 doctors per 10,000 people. Rest of the registered doctors have either retired or emigrated from the country to practice abroad. It is estimated that the country would be able to achieve a ratio of about 6.9 practicing doctors per 10,000 people only by 2030. Finally, it recommends to train and employ B.Sc. Community Health practitioners (a special cadre of personnel) in rural areas on pan-India basis in order to jettison the shortage of health practitioners for 'health for all' by 2030.

Key Words: Medical education, Migration, Doctors, Health and Sustainable Workforce.

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