



Why Should Access to Healthcare be Considered a Human Right?

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Introduction

In 2023, nearly 3.5 million people lost their lives as they could not get to a doctor. This high death count mainly hit the poorer nations, which shows the big walls that are still there in getting to healthcare, such as location, money, red tape, or cultural barriers, which should be a right for all. Every year, a lot of people dip into deep poverty because they have to pay out of pocket when they are sick. Access to good healthcare should be open to all, not just a privilege for those who can afford it. This is the core belief of the World Health Organization (WHO), made clear since it began in 1946. They say, “The joy of the best health one can get is a basic right for every person.” The point of this text is to show that we should view health care as a right for all humans. We will see what this health right really is, what blocks it, and how we can make sure all gets the care they need.

Access to Healthcare: What is the Right to Health?

Human rights are what all people should have, no matter who they are or where they come from. These rights are for all races, genders, nationalities, ethnic origins, etc. The right to health means you should get the best care for both your body and mind. It's not about always being healthy, but having a health system that gives everyone the same chance to be in good health,' says the WHO. In 1948, the UN agreed that every person should have a life good enough for their health and happiness. Which meant enough food for everyone, good housing, and access to medical help. In short, the right to health means each person should get good care. The

UN sees this right, and the WHO keeps it safe. It tells us that real value starts when all can hope to be healthy, no matter their background or living place.

Why is Access to Healthcare a Fundamental Human Right?

Good health lets us live well, work, learn, and survive in the world. When someone can't get health care, they are pushed away from the world and their normal life, unable to meet their most basic needs. The World Health Organisation (WHO) says health is a state of full body, mind, and social well-being' and not just not being sick. This full well-being is needed to live with respect. For example, if a pregnant woman can't get medical care due to her social status or lack of money, she can't reach the state of complete well-being. In a lot of places, people with HIV face bad marks and can't get the right care. This cuts down on their respect and basic rights. So, making sure all can get to health care shows we see each one's worth and lets them live with pride, no matter where they're from, how much they earn, or their life's tale.

Consequences of a Lack of Access to Healthcare

The lack of fair access to care has big human, social, and monetary costs in both rich and poor countries. In poor lands, many die every year from sicknesses like TB, diarrhea, malaria, and more because they don't have simple care. For instance, the WHO says about 94% of malaria cases and 96% of deaths from it happen in Africa. It shows that not many can get to prevention and cure, even though we can stop and treat malaria now. At the same time, in Afghanistan, there are 638 women out of every 100,000 who die when they give birth, as per UNFPA. This happens because they can't get to emergency care when they need it. People with disabilities and those from different ethnic groups also get left out or don't get good care in some health systems. But it's not just the patients who suffer. In fact, facing these big problems of fairness, many health workers are leaving their home countries to find better jobs in rich countries. They are overworked, work in tough environments, and don't have enough tools (like medical gear and supplies) in their home countries, which drives them away. When these doctors and nurses leave their home countries, such as countries in Africa and South Asia, they leave people behind with even less health care than before. This results in one doctor taking care of over 20,000 folks in some care spots, while the WHO says there should be one doctor for every 1,000 people. In the same way, rich lands face their own care setup troubles. The United Kingdom, for instance, depends a lot on staff from other lands, making it vulnerable to moves or troubles in politics. To put it simply, such gaps in getting health help keep feeding a bad loop of shaky times, little growth, and unfairness. Fighting this is not just about being good; it's key to the health of the world.

Barriers to Accessing Healthcare

A Global Goal: Access to healthcare for all is a big aim known to the world. It is on the list of top things in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the push for health care for everyone. Still, in many lands, even those that are far ahead, big gaps exist that make it hard to get healthcare for all.

Three Main Roadblocks:

1. Hesitation to Seek Medical Advice: An Invisible Barrier

The gender gap makes it hard to get health care. How society sees women, what they should do, and their low power create this tough spot. For instance, in some places, women must have their man's okay before they decide on health matters. Also, women often lean on others for money, which means they can't afford health care costs. Secondly, in poor and not-so-rich places, folks go to old-time healers first. They do this often if they think their illness is more about spirits than body pain. So, they only go to regular doctors when things get really bad. For example, in parts of Africa, if a lady starts bleeding, people say she's got a spell on her. In rich places, though, people like to try medicines on their own or look for different cures. Many times, it's because they feel the usual doctor visits don't fix their problems well.

Even with all these hard parts, not having enough money is one of the main barriers to getting health help. The cost of medical care, often seen as too much, is mostly paid by the people who need help. So, a lot of families face hard times when someone they love needs care. This is very true when family members must ask for money help from their friends, as loans are hard to get or have too high costs to pay back. Even when health care is free or has good things added (like when having a baby), extra costs like travel, places to stay, and losing money can still stop people from going. In other high-income countries, financial barriers were associated with gaps in insurance coverage or indirect costs of obtaining healthcare.

2. Difficulties in Reaching an Appropriate Health Center

Hard-to-reach spots for healthcare are more seen in not-so-rich countries. In every place, how far a person is from healthcare stops them from getting it. Still, this trouble does not hit everyone the same way. It changes based on where you are. In Rich Countries, often a small bother: going far to meet a doctor or paying a lot for travel. In Lower-Income Countries Here the issue is bigger. There are not many health places. Folks have to go far, at times on foot, on bad roads or hard paths. This makes it tough to get care, more so in urgent times. It

should be said that in lower-income countries, not having enough services often makes it late to get to a good place. In richer places, long waits and slow referrals are usually the big hold-ups.

3. Delays in Receiving Care

In every place, those who work in health care deal with a lot of work since many people need care. But this issue is bigger in poor and not so rich countries, where they have way less medical staff for the needs. Due to this, some people get little care. They might get the wrong diagnosis, not enough check-ups, or the busy staff may not have time to talk about the treatments properly. For example, a pregnant woman died after waiting seven hours in the observation room because her severe pre-eclampsia was not assessed quickly enough.

Not only are there not enough staff, but there is also a lack of medical supplies, such as meds, blood, and tools, in many poor and mid-income places. For instance, in health areas, people need to buy their own gloves, wraps, cotton, and cleaning booze to have their cuts looked at. This shows how very little there is, even for simple health care. In rich countries, the systems for medical supplies are much stronger and better watched over.

Infrastructure Issues: Not only are there not enough staff, but there is also a lack of medical supplies, such as meds, blood, and tools, in many poor and mid-income places. For instance, in health areas, people need to buy their own gloves, wraps, cotton, and cleaning booze to have their cuts looked at. This shows how very little there is, even for simple health care. In rich countries, the systems for medical supplies are much stronger and better watched over.

Solutions

Equitable access to healthcare remains a major challenge in many parts of the world, particularly in low-income countries. This complex problem requires systemic, sustainable responses that are tailored to local realities. Several solutions can be considered to improve the situation:

- **Strengthen public health policies:** governments must build more districts or hospitals in rural and disadvantaged areas. They should also initiate affordable or even free screening and prevention programmes.
- **Improve universal health coverage:** guarantee health insurance and offer affordable rates for the most vulnerable populations.

- Develop telemedicine and telehealth services, such as remote consultations, health apps, and mobile clinics.
- Reduce waiting times: This can be achieved by increasing the number of healthcare professionals and ensuring an equitable distribution of medical staff.
- Raise public awareness and provide information: Prevention and awareness campaigns inform individuals about the steps they can take to protect their health.

Conclusion

In summary, ensuring access to healthcare for all is much more than an act of empathy: it is a fundamental human right, at the heart of dignity and equality. Due to economic, geographical, cultural, or financial barriers, men, women, and children are unable to enjoy better health. Urgent action is needed. Guaranteeing this right not only saves lives but also combats poverty and promotes a more equitable global health system.

References

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