



Transforming the Philippine Health System for Greater Inclusivity: Aiming for Equitable Healthcare for All

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The Philippine health system faces significant challenges in providing equitable access to quality healthcare, especially for marginalized populations. Many people live in rural and underserved regions, coupled with high poverty levels, leading to ongoing disparities in healthcare access and results. This abstract proposes strategies to make the Philippine health system more inclusive, addressing the specific needs of vulnerable groups, including low-income communities, workers, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, LGBTQIA+, and senior citizens. Expanding geographic access by establishing more rural health units and mobile clinics is essential. Investing in telemedicine services can bridge gaps in remote areas, offering consultations and healthcare services to those with limited access. Additionally, integrating community-based healthcare models by empowering local health workers and enhancing their care capabilities can reduce barriers to service delivery. Moreover, policy reforms are needed to ensure equitable financial protection in healthcare, including expanding the Universal Health Care (UHC) Law by increasing enrollment for informal sector workers and low-income individuals in PhilHealth and reducing out-of-pocket expenses. Furthermore, tackling social determinants of health, such as education, housing, and nutrition, through collaboration among different sectors, communities, and government agencies will improve overall health outcomes and promote inclusivity. Additionally, addressing health literacy disparities and enhancing cultural understanding are crucial. Educating healthcare professionals about the languages and customs of marginalized populations can help alleviate distrust and promote more equitable treatment. By prioritizing these actions, the Philippine health system can transform into one that is more inclusive, equitable, and responsive to the diverse needs of its citizens.