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Empowering Universal Health Coverage: Innovative Approaches through Community Networks

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Abstract

Social capital, encompassing trust and networks, is essential for enhancing community-based health insurance (CBHI) in the Philippines, particularly in Negros Oriental. It strengthens collective efforts, facilitating universal healthcare coverage by bridging gaps in access and service. This study employed a cross-sectional correlational descriptive type, which involves one-time interaction with groups of people through a structured questionnaire and strictly observed the necessary ethical considerations before and after the conduct of the study. The results revealed that within groups and networks, most members were professionals who showed moderate engagement in organizational decision-making. Although a foundation of trust and solidarity existed, it had not markedly improved over time. Challenges included community leadership issues and a lack of organizational flexibility, which affected collective action and cooperation. To address these problems, it was suggested to use Internet and television platforms and enhance information dissemination through personal connections to improve communication within the community and organization. Disparities related to landholding, social status, and political affiliations were identified as key issues affecting social cohesion and inclusion. Additionally, members' levels of empowerment and political engagement were relatively low, indicating a need for increased focus on these areas. It is recommended to encourage broader household and CBHI member participation in organizational activities and decision-making and mobilize available social capital and utilize media platforms like social media, television, radio, and newspapers to enhance social capital among CBHI members for effective program implementation. Also, explore diverse methods to inform members about CBHI services, expand service offerings, and strengthen linkages between health units and CBHI organizations.