

Issues and Challenges in Developing Essential Health Package in Federal States

The aim of the conceptual research is to discuss the work done by PHFI in developing National Essential Health Package for India focusing on issues and challenges of political and administrative structure in federal states.

Owing to the fact that health being state government's prerogative, promoting universal health coverage at National level in federal states is exigent. Similarly, developing an "Essential Health Package" for implementation of UHC in federal state (like India) is more challenging. The research focused on discussing issues and challenges in developing National Essential Health Package in federal states based on national and regional priorities using effective cost containment mechanism.

The project used global evidence on developing essential health packages from 12 countries, WHO technical brief on "*developing essential health package*", detailed situation analysis of existing health policies in India at all level of care and available secondary data from HIMS to develop the framework for essential health package in consultation with stakeholder from clinical, economics, civil societies and government representatives. The detailed list of essential services under each broader category is prepared to attain overall objective of UHC. The detailed costing exercise was performed using data from two sample districts to project financial burden on regional and national government for attaining universal health coverage.

Universal Health Coverage (UHC) is the most discussed topic across international forums in recent years. Many developing countries including India are restructuring their health policies towards attainment of UHC. Development of National Essential Health Package for India is a stepping stone for health sector policy reforms in India and the output of the research can serve as a major contribution for developing essential health package for other developing countries having federal structure.