

# The Role of Health Policies and their Relevance in Promoting Public Health

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## ABOUT THE STUDY

Health policies are an essential component of any country's healthcare system, which aims to provide quality healthcare services to its citizens. The policies address various aspects of healthcare, including financing, access, quality, and delivery. The importance of having effective health policies cannot be overemphasized as it helps to improve health outcomes and reduce health disparities. Health policies play a critical role in financing healthcare services, ensuring universal access to healthcare, and improving the quality of care. A well-designed health policy can help reduce healthcare costs while ensuring that healthcare services are affordable and accessible to everyone. Governments use different financing mechanisms to fund healthcare services, including taxation, social health insurance and private health insurance. For example, in countries such as Canada and the United Kingdom, healthcare services are funded through taxation, while in countries such as Germany and Japan, social health insurance is used. Private health insurance is commonly used in countries such as the United States.

Health policies also help to improve access to healthcare services by addressing various barriers to healthcare, including geographic, financial, and cultural barriers. Policies aimed at improving access to healthcare services include the provision of mobile clinics in remote areas, the establishment of community health centers, and the expansion of health insurance coverage. For example, the Affordable Care Act in the United States of America aimed to expand health insurance coverage to millions of Americans who previously had no access to healthcare services. Furthermore, health policies can help improve the quality of healthcare services by setting standards for healthcare providers, implementing quality improvement programs, and promoting evidence-based practices. Policies that promote quality healthcare services can help reduce medical errors, improve patient outcomes,

and increase patient satisfaction. For example, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services in the United States of America use various quality improvement programs to improve the quality of care in hospitals and other healthcare facilities.

Another essential aspect of health policies is the promotion of public health. Policies aimed at promoting public health include those that address infectious diseases, chronic diseases, and environmental health issues. For example, policies aimed at reducing tobacco use, promoting physical activity, and improving access to healthy foods can help reduce the burden of chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. Policies aimed at improving environmental health can help reduce the incidence of environmental diseases such as asthma and cancer. Mental health is another critical area that health policies should address. Mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and substance abuse are prevalent and can have significant impacts on individuals and society. Health policies should aim to promote mental health and prevent mental health issues. This can be achieved through measures such as increased funding for mental health services, public education campaigns, and the integration of mental health services into primary healthcare.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, health policies play a crucial role in promoting and maintaining the well-being of populations. These policies aim to improve access to healthcare, prevent diseases, promote healthy behaviors, address mental health issues, and respond to health emergencies. It is essential to note that health policies must be evidence-based and tailored to the specific needs of the populations they serve. Health policies must also be implemented through effective governance and collaboration among stakeholders, including healthcare providers, policymakers, and the public. By prioritizing health policies, we can create a healthier and more equitable society.

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