

Health Care Systems: Primary, Secondary, Tertiary and Quaternary Care

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ABOUT THE STUDY

The enhancement of one's health through the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, amelioration, or cure of disease, illness, injury, and other physical and mental impairments in humans is known as health care or healthcare. Health professionals and other allied health areas provide healthcare. Health care encompasses all fields related to medicine, including dentistry, pharmacy, midwifery, nursing, optometry, audiology, psychology, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and athletic training. It encompasses work done in the fields of public health, primary care, secondary care, and tertiary care.

Health regulations, as well as social and economic factors, can have an impact on how accessible healthcare is to people in different communities, nations, and even within the same person. "The timely use of personal health services to achieve the best possible health outcomes" is what it means to provide health care services. Financial restrictions (such as insurance coverage), geographic and logistical obstacles (such as additional transportation costs and the possibility of taking time off work to use such services), sociocultural expectations, and personal restrictions are all factors to take into account when it comes to health care access (lack of ability to communicate with health care providers, poor health literacy, low income). Limitations on health care services have a detrimental impact on how often people utilize them, how well treatments work, and how things turn out in general (well-being, mortality rates). Organizations designed to address the health requirements of certain populations are known as health systems.

The World Health Organization (WHO) states that in order for a health care system to operate effectively, it needs a funding mechanism, a workforce that is properly trained and compensated, reliable data on which to base decisions and policies, and well-maintained medical facilities that can provide high-quality drugs and technologies.

An effective health care system can play a vital role in the economic growth, industrialization, and development of a nation. Conventionally, health care is seen as a key factor in promoting the overall physical and emotional health and well-being of individuals

worldwide.

There is some agreement that primary care is the first step in a continuing health care process and may also include the provision of secondary and tertiary levels of care, despite the fact that the definitions of the various types of health care vary depending on the various cultural, political, organizational, and disciplinary perspectives. There are two categories of healthcare: public and private.

Primary care

Primary care describes the activity of medical practitioners who serve as all patients' initial points of contact within the healthcare system. A primary care physician, such as a general practitioner or family doctor, would typically be such a specialist. A licensed independent practitioner, such as a physiotherapist, or a non-physician primary care provider, like a physician assistant or nurse practitioner, would be another vocation. Depending on the region and the structure of the healthcare system, the patient can first see a pharmacist or nurse before seeing a doctor. Patients may be referred for secondary or tertiary treatment depending on the nature of their medical issue. The term "primary care" is frequently used to refer to the medical services that are provided to the neighborhood. It can be offered in a variety of venues, such as walk-in clinics or urgent care facilities that offer same-day appointments.

Primary care encompasses the broadest range of medical services, including patients of all ages, from all socioeconomic backgrounds and geographic locations, who seek to maintain optimal health as well as those with acute and long-term physical, mental, and social health issues, including multiple chronic diseases. As a result, a primary care physician needs to be well-versed in a variety of subjects.

Primary care emphasizes continuity because patients typically prefer to see the same doctor for regular checkups, preventive treatment, health education, and if they need an initial consultation for a new health issue. Based on the purpose of the patient's visit, the International Classification of Primary Care (ICPC) is a standardized framework for comprehending and analyzing data on treatments in primary care.

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Secondary care

Acute care is a type of secondary care that is required for a brief time in order to treat a dangerous but transient disease, accident, or other medical condition. The emergency room of a hospital is frequently where this care is offered. In addition, trained birth attendants, acute care, and medical imaging services are included in secondary care.

Sometimes, the terms "hospital care" and "secondary care" are used interchangeably. The majority of dental specialties, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, and other secondary care providers, however, do not always work in hospitals. Hospitals are where some primary care services are provided. Patients may need to contact a primary care physician for a referral before they may get secondary care, depending on the structure and policies of the national health system.

Some doctors restrict their practice to secondary care in nations with mixed market health care systems by mandating that patients first see a primary care physician. According to the conditions of the payment agreements in private or group health insurance plans, this restriction may be put in place. In some situations, people may

see medical professionals without a recommendation, and they may choose whether they would prefer to self-refer.

Tertiary care

A facility that has staff and resources for advanced medical investigation and treatment, such as a tertiary referral hospital, provides tertiary care, which is specialized consultative health care typically provided to inpatients on referral by a main or secondary health professional.

The management of cancer, neurosurgery, heart surgery and plastic surgery, therapy for serious burns, advanced neonatology services, palliative care, and other intricate medical and surgical procedures are a few examples of tertiary care services.

Quaternary care

When referring to highly skilled, in-demand levels of medicine, the phrase "quaternary care" an extension of "tertiary care" is occasionally used. Quaternary care includes experimental medicine and some rare diagnostic or surgical techniques. Typically, only a small number of regional or national health care facilities offer these services.