

# Goals and Principles Involved in Primary Health Care

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## Opinion Article

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### DESCRIPTION

PHC, or Primary Health Care, refers to "Basic Health Care" based on scientifically sound and socially acceptable methods and technology. This makes universal health care available to all members of a community's individuals and families. PHC programs allow for complete community engagement in implementation and decision making. In the spirit of self-reliance and self-determination, services are supplied at a cost that the community and country can pay at each stage of development. In other words, PHC is a health-care approach that goes beyond the standard health-care system and focuses on health equity producing social policy. PHC encompasses all aspects of health, such as access to health care, the environment, and lifestyle. Thus, primary healthcare and public health initiatives may be seen as the foundations of universal health systems. The World Health Organization, or WHO, defines PHC goals as empowering people and communities, multispectral policy and action, and primary care and key public health functions as the basis of integrated health services. According to these definitions, PHC can not only assist an individual who has been diagnosed with a sickness or disorder, but can also actively avoid such disorders by comprehending the individual as a whole.

This ideal model of healthcare was approved in the Alma Ata Declaration of the International Conference on Primary Health Care in 1978, and it became a basic notion of the World Health Organization's goal of Health for All. The Alma Ata Conference launched a "Primary Health Care movement" of professionals and institutions, governments and civil society organizations, researchers and grassroots organizations to address "politically, socially, and economically unacceptable" health disparities in all countries. PHC was motivated by a variety of reasons, one of which being the Barefoot Doctors of China.

### Goals and principles

The ultimate purpose of primary healthcare is to provide improved health services to all people. As a result, the World Health Organization (WHO) has highlighted five critical components to reaching this goal:

- Reducing health exclusion and social disparities (universal coverage reforms)
- Organizing health services around people's needs and expectations (service delivery reforms)

- Integrating health into all sectors (public policy reforms)
- Pursuing collaborative models of policy dialogue (leadership reforms)
- Expanding stakeholder participation

Behind these features is a set of fundamental principles articulated in the Alma Ata Declaration, which should be enshrined in national policy in order to launch and sustain PHC as part of a complete health system and in collaboration with other sectors:

- Equitable distribution of health care according to this principle, all persons, regardless of gender, age, caste, color, urban/rural location, or social class, must have access to primary care and other services to address the community's major health concerns.
- Community participation to make the most use of available resources at the local, national, and international levels. Because of its grassroots orientation and emphasis on self-sufficiency, community participation was seen more sustainable than targeted (or vertical) initiatives reliant on international development support.
- Health human resource development complete healthcare is dependent on a sufficient quantity and distribution of qualified physicians, nurses, allied health professionals, community health workers, and others functioning as a health team and supported at the local and referral levels.
- Use of appropriate technology Medical technology that is accessible, affordable, viable, and culturally acceptable to the community should be offered. Refrigerators for cold vaccine storage are examples of acceptable technology. In many situations, less acceptable examples of medical technology could include body scanners or heart-lung devices, which help mainly a small percentage concentrated in urban areas. They are often inaccessible to the poor, but they consume a significant amount of resources.
- Multi-sectorial approach understanding that health cannot be improved alone by involvement in the formal health sector; other sectors are equally vital in fostering community health and self-reliance. Agriculture (e.g., food security); education; communication (e.g., about current health problems and methods for preventing and controlling them); housing; public works (e.g., ensuring an adequate supply of safe water and basic sanitation); rural development; industry; community organizations are among these sectors (including Panchayats or local governments, voluntary organizations, etc.).

To summarize, PHC understands that healthcare is a long-term process of improving people's lives and addressing the underlying socioeconomic factors that contribute to ill health. The concepts connect health, development, and calling for political interventions as opposed to passive acceptance of economic realities conditions.