

GHW Newsletter 2 – July 2004

Welcome to our second edition!!!

Please pass on this newsletter to anybody that might be interested in the GHW
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Hot topic - Responding to commercialisation of healthcare

In many parts of the world, health care costs have become a leading source of poverty. Recent research from rural China shows how medical spending raised the number of rural households living below the poverty line by 44.3%. Qualitative work by the World Bank shows that poor people around the world have great anxiety about health costs.

Yet out-of-pocket spending on health care appears to be rising in many low-income countries, especially the poorest ones facing economic or political crisis. Primary care, in particular, is becoming increasingly commercialised in these contexts, and regulation is lacking.

In richer developing countries, similar processes have been at work, but have also involved more formal types of commercialisation, such as the consolidation of private insurance markets or the entry of foreign health care providers.

In other words private care often appears to be growing in the developing world, and the public sector shrinking. This is despite evidence from both developed and developing countries of the importance of a strong government health care sector.

GHW and Commercialisation

The Global Health Watch wants to address the problems of commercialisation in poor contexts. Central questions we want to look at include: how can governments shape messy health care markets so that they serve the needs of the poor and vulnerable? How can relationships of redistribution and cross-subsidy be built up and sustained in health care, even in very poor circumstances?

We are interested in short (800-1000 word) case studies in the following areas and others:

- Successful attempts at universalizing health care in developing countries;
- The role of health professional associations in blocking commercialisation and defending the interests of patients;
- Government collaboration with private providers to maintain access for poor and vulnerable men and women
- Problems with increasing commercialisation of health care

Please contact Patricia Morton if you wish to contribute patriciamorton@medact.org

News - Busy June for the GHW in DURBAN

The GHW Secretariat team had a very busy time this June in Durban – South Africa where several global health events took place, such as the ***GEGA, ISeqH and Equinet Conferences***. Delegates and organisers were very keen on getting involved in the GHW, and many of them have committed their time and expertise for the ambitious aim to make this project a truly GLOBAL initiative. We came back to the secretariat headquarters full of new ideas and a great list of contacts. Thank you all for the inspiration and support!

Get involved! Let us know how can you/ your organisation contribute to the GHW... Please send your response to ghw@medact.org

- Country and/or regional case studies
- Translation
- Launching the report in your country/ region
- Produce an accompanying country or regional paper or report
- Funding or fundraising

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