

Public Policy and Health Management: Explorations in Theory and Practice

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Abstract: In modern society, public policy and health management are increasingly closely integrated, working together to improve the national health level and the quality of medical services. Health policy, as an important means of government intervention in the field of health, aims to improve the health status of citizens and optimize medical and health services through the formulation and implementation of a series of measures. Health management, on the other hand, as a comprehensive intervention strategy, aims to improve the health status of individuals and groups through early prevention, disease management and health promotion. In this paper, we will discuss the theoretical basis of health policy and health management, analyze the successful practices in the international arena, and put forward the challenges and strategies to cope with the current situation in China.

Keywords: Public policy, Health management, Theory, Practice.

1. The Meaning and Objectives of Health Policy

Health policy is a set of guiding principles and strategies for action formulated and implemented by Governments to improve the health status of the nation and the quality of health services. This policy area covers a wide range of topics, including, but not limited to, the provision of health-care services, health education, disease prevention, health promotion, social support systems and the management of environmental and lifestyle factors. The World Health Organization definition emphasizes that health policy is a formal statement or process of government that sets out priorities and parameters for action in the field of health.

Health policy formulation is usually based on an assessment of health needs, an analysis of available resources and consideration of the socio-economic context. Policymakers need to integrate social justice, economic efficiency and sustainability to ensure that policies are responsive to current health needs and adaptable to future changes. The process of policy formulation usually includes extensive consultation and negotiation to ensure that the policy is scientifically sound, practical and acceptable.

The content of health policy can be broken down into the following key elements.

Goal-oriented: Health policy is driven by the achievement of specific health goals, which may include reducing morbidity, increasing life expectancy, ameliorating health inequalities, and improving the accessibility and affordability of health services.

Cross-sectoral cooperation: The implementation of health policies requires the concerted efforts of a number of government departments and social institutions, such as health, education, finance and environmental protection, to ensure that the policies are comprehensive and effective.

Systemic: Health policy is concerned with the health of the entire social system, not limited to the health-care system, but also involving social, economic and environmental factors, which constitute the broader context of health.

Prevention: Health policies often emphasize prevention

over cure, reducing the incidence of disease through early intervention and health promotion measures.

Resource optimization: Policy makers need to allocate and effectively utilize limited resources to ensure maximum health benefits.

Social justice: Health policies should aim to reduce health inequalities and ensure that the right to health is enjoyed equally by all.

The core objective of the health policy is to protect and promote the health of the nation, raise the level of health of the entire population and realize the strategic goal of basic medical and health services for all. The realization of this goal requires the joint efforts of all sectors of society, including the Government, non-governmental organizations, health professionals, educators, scientific research institutions and every citizen. Through the implementation of an effective health policy, it is possible to ensure the rational utilization of public resources, reduce the pressure on the health-care system and, at the same time, improve the quality of health and productivity of society as a whole. In addition, the formulation and implementation of health policy is an important means of realizing the goal of sustainable development, reflecting the Government's responsibility for the health of its citizens and the public interest nature of public health.

2. Theory and Practice of Health Management

Health management, as an important component of health policy, has a far-reaching impact on the improvement of individual and group health through its theoretical basis and practical application. Theories of health management aim to promote health behavior change, prevent disease and improve quality of life through scientific methods and strategies. This section will focus on several key health management theories and discuss their application in practical health interventions.

Health Belief Model (HBM) is one of the core theories in health management. This theory believes that individuals' cognition of disease threats (perceived severity,

susceptibility), beliefs about taking action (perceived benefits, barriers), and self-efficacy (ability to take action) will affect the change of their health behavior. In practical application, HBM encourages people to improve their awareness of disease risks and stimulate their willingness to take preventive and health management actions through education and information dissemination. For example, by spreading health knowledge to people at high risk of diabetes, such as the importance of regular blood sugar check, balanced diet and regular exercise, we can promote them to change their lifestyle and reduce the risk of disease.

The Protection Motivation Theory (PPT) focuses on the motivation of individuals to take protective actions driven by their fear of avoiding negative consequences. In health management, PPT emphasizes to stimulate individuals to adopt healthy behaviors by strengthening their fear of adverse health consequences and improving their sense of efficacy in taking healthy behaviors. For example, in smoking prevention education, by showing the terrible consequences of smoking leading to lung cancer and other diseases, as well as the successful cases of smokers, smokers can be motivated to take action to quit smoking.

Rational Action Theory believes that individuals will conduct cost-benefit analysis when choosing behaviors, and select those behaviors with the greatest expected benefits. In terms of health management, this theory emphasizes that by providing understandable health information, individuals can balance the long-term costs of unhealthy behaviors and the benefits of healthy behaviors, so as to make more healthy decisions. For example, by explaining in detail the comparison between the cost of regular physical examination and the cost of possible future disease treatment, people are encouraged to carry out regular physical examination.

3. International and National Health Management Practices

At home and abroad, the practice of health management has shown a diversified trend, with both successful international examples and challenges and coping strategies faced by our country in the exploration. Through comparative analysis, we can learn from international experience to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of health management in China.

International health management practices, such as the Great Manchester Population Health Plan (GM Plan) in the UK and the *Gesundes Kinzigtal* integrated service model (GK model) in Germany, have provided fruitful cases for the world. GM plan focuses on individuals and communities. Through early intervention, healthy life, healthy aging and other action plans, it has significantly improved the health outcomes of residents and achieved budget surplus. The success here lies in the collaboration of multiple departments, the effective integration of resources, and the accurate identification of health needs. GK mode improves population health, patient experience and cost-effectiveness by establishing a regional integrated health service system, which benefits from the innovation of service mode and close cooperation across departments.

In contrast, China has made remarkable progress in the construction of health management system in recent years. Top level system designs such as the Outline of the "Healthy China 2030" Plan and the "Fourteenth Five Year" National Health Plan provide strong support for reform. At the grass-

roots level, health management services such as healthy lifestyle advocacy, health communication and education are being promoted, but there are still insufficient interpersonal health communication and uneven distribution of health management resources between urban and rural areas. At the health service level, the promotion of the integration mode of medical treatment and prevention and the construction of the national demonstration area for comprehensive prevention and control of chronic diseases also face the challenges of inadequate service integration and difficult to meet personalized service needs. At the social governance level, the coordination and cooperation between government departments on health governance needs to be strengthened, and the health impact assessment mechanism is in its infancy. In terms of security support, the problem of isolated health management data and information and insufficient health oriented economic incentive measures have restricted the comprehensive development of health management.

Summarizing international and domestic health management practices, we can see that successful health management cannot be separated from policy guidance, optimal allocation of resources, multi-sectoral cooperation and exploration of innovative service models. For China, while learning from international experience and taking into account national conditions, innovation-driven optimization of resource allocation, enhancement of service precision and coverage, establishment of a sound evaluation mechanism and improvement of incentive mechanism are the keys to the future development of health management practice in China. Through such efforts, China is expected to make a breakthrough in the improvement of national health and the sustainable development of social health governance.

4. Conclusion

The exploration of the theory and practice of health policy and health management is a dynamic and complex process that requires the joint efforts of the government, society and individuals. By learning from international advanced experience, strengthening departmental coordination, optimizing resource allocation, improving assessment mechanisms, and innovating incentives, China is expected to make greater progress in the integration of health policy and health management, and to achieve a continuous improvement in the health level of the whole population towards the ambitious goal of a healthy China. Future research and practice should pay more attention to the refinement of health policies, the personalization of health management, and the scientific assessment of health impacts, with a view to contributing China's wisdom and strength in the arena of global health governance.

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