

Abstract

Background and Objectives: While the primary health care (PHC) services in Iran were appropriate to the needs of the population in the past, the changing burden of disease and shifting demand patterns have rendered the existing PHC system no longer suitable for meeting current and emergent needs. This has serious implications for the PHC system in Iran, especially in urban areas. This research aimed to assess weaknesses and challenges of PHC system in urban areas of Iran and prepare solutions in case of East Azerbaijan.

Methods: this study included three parts: literature review of national and international studies about Iran PHC, qualitative research included interviews and Focus Group Discussions analyzed with Framework Analysis Method and quantity part to measure practicability of solutions.

Results: This paper categorized PHC system weaknesses into two groups: (i) those related to the key functions of PHC, and (ii) others, which refer to health system weaknesses existing with the current PHC model.

Conclusion: Iran can draw on international experience and evidence regarding interventions, which can be used to develop an effective and responsive PHC system designed to address current and emerging needs, in particular the NCD burden. To do that, there are three vital things: human resource development, strengthening health system leadership and developing of PHC-based information system.

Key words: primary health care, weaknesses and challenges, urban areas, Iran

**Surveying new challenges and weaknesses of Primary Health Care
(PHC) system in urban areas of Iran and preparing solutions
Case study in East Azerbaijan**

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