**Environmental Science**

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Acute hospital care involves treating patients suffering from severe illnesses that are a result of trauma or after going through surgery for a short period. Various health practitioners provide Acute hospital care at health centers using medical supplies, pharmaceuticals, and technical equipment. In summary, an acute care hospital is an institution that has medical personnel and resources that help care for and treat patients who are suffering from injuries and severe medical issues (The Health Foundation, 2023). Primary healthcare is a society-driven approach that targets having the best possible well-being and health. This is made possible by focusing on what people need early to aid disease prevention, treatment, palliative care, and rehabilitation (WHO, 2023). According to research done by Dr. Kerr white in 1961, which is still relevant today, the primary care workforce in the United States has reduced to a disturbing 31% while the number of specialists in the country continues to grow (Willis, 2020). Most governments have often picked to fund and mainly focus on acute hospital care, leaving behind sectors such as primary care for citizens less funded. This approach method is effective in ensuring that immediate health crises are mitigated. However, more is needed to take care of the long-term health challenges. This essay proposes a shift toward a more holistic way of addressing chronic diseases that encourages governments to increase the amount of resources in disease prevention and management as opposed to acute hospital care.

According to Health Care, 2023, preventive care is any effort made through medical services that minimizes the likelihood of health emergencies through screenings, patient counseling, and check-ups. The United States healthcare system is said to be more reactive than proactive since it has, for the longest time, been more divulged in treating patients after they have already suffered from illnesses rather than preventing the spread of the illnesses. There are two major challenges that arise from this; namely, the illnesses are left to accrue to severity before they are treated, which leads to a high cost for both healthcare providers and patients. Preventive care helps keep the costs incurred in health care low. This is because preventive care catches health problems before they happen or become acute, reducing the number of economic resources that would have been used to treat or reduce the effects of the acute illness (Online Healthcare MBA, 2021). When preventive care is made accessible or affordable, it makes it easy for citizens to get health care before they require acute hospital care (Shrank et al., 2021).

Pay for performance (Jamili et al., 2023): This approach mainly favors specialists who work in surgeries while showing minimal appreciation for the primary healthcare providers. Paying doctors for how they perform after a surgery or encounter with patients increases the financial burden on the health care system while undervaluing workers who work hard to prevent the spread of diseases (Jamili et al., 2023). Using a scenario such as COVID-19, it would have been cost-effective to spend more funds preventing the spread of the contagious disease rather than treating the people who were already infected. Shifting to preventive measures is cheaper than allocating more economic resources to acute hospital care.

Quality of health care should not be related to the amount of money the patients can pay but rather should be the backbone of every healthcare facility (Kruk et al., 2018). According to Margaret Kruk and other writers’ article in 2018, healthcare quality has often been a purview of the rich in society, making the right to health meaningless since there cannot be good healthcare if the health systems do not embrace fairness and accessibility for all. The systems in place should ensure that health care is redefined to promote fairness and accessibility regardless of the societal classes the patients hold. By shifting focus to preventive healthcare measures and ensuring they are accessed equally by all people, it creates higher chances of a better healthcare system. Moreover, health equity should be a vital topic of discussion since it has been highly experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic, where patients were discriminated against due to their economic status, race, or ethnicity (Shrank et al., 2021).

Prevention will always be better than cure since it creates better conditions for people to have good health and, in turn, increases life expectancy. Hence, investing more in prevention is feasible for the healthcare system (Department of Health and Social Care, 2018). Technology and telemedicine are effective methods to ensure that the prevention of diseases approach is feasible. Technology provides a fast, low-cost, virtual pathway for patients and health practitioners to communicate and offer services. Telemedicine would have worked best considering crises such as COVID-19, where health centers created the highest viral exposures. Telemedicine reduces patients' risks from contagious diseases and reduces the daily workload that health workers have to handle. According to research done by Shokri Faziollah, 2023, the COVID-19 encounter clearly indicates that healthcare facilities should adopt proper methods to prevent and treat illnesses. Systems were developed that allow consumers access to global healthcare information through the Internet, showing that telemedicine can be applied in curbing illnesses before they get acute (Shokri et al., 2023). The primary purpose of using telemedicine and technology is to ensure that disease management and prevention are feasible.

Personal and societal responsibilities play a massive role in the prevention of illnesses all over the world. Moving onto a preventive healthcare mindset requires people to have evolved mindsets and embrace taking care of themselves from a personal and societal level without having to depend on health practitioners (WHO, 2023). Consumers play a part in preventing diseases, referred to as primary prevention. It is achieved through various activities such as ensuring they take supplements and nutrients and parents or guardians ensuring their children are vaccinated and immunized against illnesses. Communities should ensure that they hold community outreach programs and educational campaigns that pass crucial information to consumers. This helps create an environment that promotes healthy living and that is tailored towards promoting proactive and healthy behaviors in society (WHO, 2023).

In as much as more focus is driven on the prevention and management of chronic illnesses, acute hospital care should be supervised. When the above measures are incorporated to prevent the spread of diseases, the load on acute hospitals is reduced, meaning that the hospitals can focus on treating the already present patients and help prevent the spread of diseases. This is evidence that acute hospital care is impacted positively when disease prevention and management are implemented. Patients with dementia are the most common visitors to acute hospital care. However, there is no available cure for dementia, which promotes the need for prevention and management of the illness before it gets acute (Godard-sibilate et al., 2019). Approximately 71% of all deaths are caused by chronic illnesses per annum (Dona et al., 2021). This means that when the focus is shifted to preventing the spread of chronic diseases, funds will be used to fund the treatment of chronic diseases.

Chronic diseases are a considerable burden for both the healthcare givers and the patients. Research in America showed that at least 60% of their citizens had one chronic disease, while 42% had other diseases. Chronic diseases are the leading causes of death, long-term disability, and a leading cause of poor health. Research showed it was better to prevent the spread of a disease rather than provide treatment after patients were already sick. In addition to resources being strained from treating chronic illnesses, chronic illnesses cause many deaths, much suffering, and high costs. All these challenges promote the need to incorporate prevention and management of diseases rather than acute hospital care. There are several ways to intervene before people get chronic diseases, such as early stages of treatment, primary prevention, and managing chronic illnesses to prevent further spread (Levine et al., 2019). When countries invest in lifestyle changes, community-based interventions, and vaccinations, there will be a massive reduction in preventable diseases, which means fewer resources are dedicated to treating the illnesses. The number of deaths from the illnesses will gradually reduce. Preventing diseases instead of treating them after they have occurred helps people to live their best possible lives. Additionally, it minimizes any strain on funds allocated for health purposes and increases equity for patients who suffer from chronic illnesses (Department of Health and Social Care, 2018). In order to implement the prevention and management of diseases, it is paramount to ensure that society focuses on the individual's health since it directly impacts the community's health.

Economic implications from preventive health care strategies are focused on more than just the direct cost of health care itself. Disease events highly affect the continuation of businesses, travel, and trade bans, which lead to unemployment, an increased number of orphans, and the closure of markets. Considering the recent COVID-19 crisis, there were many unemployment rates since most of the firms had to be closed due to the incorporation of curfews; the high number of deaths led to a loss of the working population, which caused a massive recession in most economies. A healthier population is more fruitful since they are focused on their jobs instead of fighting illnesses (Smith et al., 2019). Additionally, governments benefit from a healthy population since there is a minimal need to focus resources on health care, which impacts economic growth.

For a nation to build a successful healthcare system, there is a need to fully collaborate with the stakeholders in the study cycles of the processes. Stakeholders are an essential asset when it comes to shifting from acute hospital care to preventing and managing illnesses. They provide the overall economic oversight that, in turn, shows whether the idea to shift is feasible. The feedback received from the stakeholders will provide chances to improve the implementation of studies. As the system evolves, the interactions between stakeholders and the participants will provide the critical information that is required to better the innovations needed to better the health of a nation (Al-murani et al., 2019). Engaging stakeholders should incorporate open communication and the addressing of concerns that are facing the health care system. Openness between participants and stakeholders allows for the best transitions and approaches to be put in place (Al-murani et al., 2019).

In conclusion, changing the healthcare system to prioritize disease prevention, chronic illnesses, and population health is a strategic way to create a fair, cost-effective, and sustainable healthcare system. Many challenges exist in the assimilation of a preventive healthcare system, but long-term benefits to society exist in terms of health and economic growth of the society. Societies can build resilient healthcare systems that can quickly meet the needs of future generations by nurturing and incorporating preventive healthcare strategies. This holistic approach requires innovative solutions and collaboration from all parties in society to make it a success.

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