

Advanced Level

World healthcare system for the rich



A new United Nations report has found that healthcare systems across the world are becoming more unequal. The annual World Health Report, launched on October 14th by the World Health Organization (WHO), found that the healthcare gap between rich and poor people is wider today than it was thirty years ago. Even people living in the same city experience enormous differences in the quality of medical care they have access to. The WHO said in its report: “In far too many cases, people who are well-off and generally healthier have the best access to the best care, while the poor are left to fend for themselves.” Perhaps the saddest conclusion of the report is that health care today is frequently treated as something which hospitals can make profits on.

The WHO recommends a return to a more basic “primary health care” system that many countries developed in the 1970s. Back then, the sick could visit a family doctor and get the treatment they needed. The report says healthcare no longer focuses on poorer members of society: “Health care is often delivered according to a model that concentrates on diseases, high technology, and specialist care,” it stated. WHO Director-General Dr. Margaret Chan said: “Viewed against current trends, primary health care looks more and more like a smart way to get health development back on track.” She added: “We are, in effect, encouraging countries to go back to the basics.” More than 100 million people are pushed below the poverty line each year because they cannot afford healthcare.

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TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true or false:

- a. The UN has made a special healthcare system just for rich people.
- b. The gap between rich and poor is 30 times wider than it used to be.
- c. People who live in the same city generally receive the same healthcare.
- d. A UN report says it's sad that hospitals are out to make profits.
- e. The UN recommends a return to the healthcare system of the 1970s.
- f. Healthcare today is based on a system of visiting family doctors.
- g. The UN said today's healthcare systems follow the wrong model.
- h. Healthcare costs push 100 million a year below the poverty line.

SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. unequal | a. huge |
| 2. gap | b. one-sided |
| 3. enormous | c. cope alone |
| 4. well-off | d. suggests |
| 5. fend for themselves | e. in the right direction |
| 6. recommends | f. care |
| 7. treatment | g. difference |
| 8. current | h. pay for |
| 9. on track | i. present |
| 10. afford | j. rich |

PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one. combination is possible):

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. healthcare systems across the world are | a. on track |
| 2. the healthcare gap | b. quality of medical care |
| 3. enormous differences in the | c. are well-off |
| 4. people who | d. could visit a family doctor |
| 5. the saddest conclusion | e. below the poverty line |
| 6. Back then, the sick | f. basics |
| 7. healthcare no longer focuses on | g. becoming more unequal |
| 8. get health development back | h. poorer members of society |
| 9. go back to the | i. of the report |
| 10. 100 million people are pushed | j. between rich and poor people. |