



PUBLICATION UPDATE

Policy briefs:

ASEAN mutual recognition arrangements for doctors, dentists and nurses:

Launched by the APO in September 2019, this policy brief on the ASEAN mutual recognition arrangements (MRA) for doctors, dentists and nurses, presents insights on the current implementation of the ASEAN MRAs from the literature and country case studies. It was developed in collaboration with the School of Public Health at the University of Queensland, and the International Health Policy Program, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand. [Read more here](#)



Strengthening primary health care for the prevention and management of

cardiometabolic disease in low- and middle- income countries: Primary health care is a critical component in the fight against increasing cardiometabolic diseases (CMD). It is essential to the provision of long-term, people-centered care the which is sustainable, accessible and affordable to the people. This policy brief presents findings from China, Kenya, Nepal and Viet Nam to provide insight and policy options in strengthening PHC services for the prevention and management of CMDs in LMICs. [Read the brief here.](#)

Journal publication:

Hanson K, Barasa E, Honda A, Panichkriangkrai W, Patcharanarumol W. *Strategic purchasing: the neglected health financing function for pursuing universal health coverage in low- and middle-income countries: Comment on “What’s needed to develop strategic purchasing in healthcare? Policy lessons from a realist review.”* Int J Health Policy Manag. 2019;8(8):501–504. doi:10.15171/ijhpm.2019.34. [Read the article here](#)



FUNDING UPDATE

We are finalizing negotiations with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for an additional US\$200,000 to support the development of the *Evolution of centralized national health insurance schemes in China and India*

RESEARCH UPDATES

Secretariat-led activities

Evolution of centralized national health insurance schemes in China and India: A comparison

China and India are undergoing major structural changes as they rollout Universal Health Coverage, particularly in the financing of health. Along with the role and impact of the central government towards steering and implementing reforms towards UHC, the two countries need to find a way to complement or bring together the multiple public insurance schemes which exist in the countries. This piece of work aims to present an overview of the current situation, challenges and achievements in the two countries on issues which need to be addressed towards the amalgamation of the different insurance schemes.

The work will be undertaken by a team of authors from China and India led by Professor Shankar Prinja from the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research in Chandigarh, and Professor Qingyue Meng of Peking University's China Center for Health Development Studies (CCHDS).

Health issues that should be considered in developing migrant policies in ASEAN

This comparative country study is being led jointly by UNU-IIGH and APO. It is part of a series of publications on migrant health issues that is being developed by the APO. We aim to publish the full series during HSG2020 in Dubai.

How to make UHC policies responsive to the needs of migrants in ASEAN.

This is the second of secretariat-led work on migration. While the first project identifies the challenges of pushing the health agenda on the migrant discourse, this second publication focuses on how to meet the needs of migrants within the health arena.

Update on current research activities by research hubs

Comparative Country Studies

- Comparing healthcare integration models in Singapore, China, Philippines, India, Viet Nam and Fiji. We hope to get the first draft by end of the year.
- Capacity assessment of Health Policy and Systems Research (HPSR) in China, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines. We should get the first draft by end of the year.
- Health system cultural competency for migrant service use in Thailand and Malaysia: a comparative study. We aim to have a soft launch of the findings during PMAC 2020.
- Specialized medical services in the Pacific Island nations, an analysis of current practices and policy options done in conjunction with SPC and WPRO. This is now at the peer review stage.
- The Role of the Private Health Sector in UHC: Challenges and Opportunities in Asia: comparing Japan, Korea, Thailand and the Philippines. We should get the first draft by end of the year.

Health System in Transition Reviews (HiT)

- Mongolia HiT: Expecting a draft by the end of 2019
- Viet Nam HiT: The author team has been identified, and a kick off meeting held.
- Sri Lanka HiT: The draft will be sent for peer review by end of November 2019
- India HiT: Expecting the final draft for peer-reviewing by end November 2019



Viet Nam HiT kickoff meeting, October 2019

Policy briefs

- Strengthening Urban Primary Healthcare Service Delivery through the use of eHealth Programs in China, Nepal and Philippines and Peru. We should get the first draft by end of the year.

Proposed activities by new consortia

In 2019, the APO received a total of 13 proposals from its consortia for activities starting in 2020. We are currently in the process of reviewing them before agreeing on which ones should be supported by the APO next year. Below is the list of proposals submitted by our new research consortiums:

1. Health and labour protection for both immigrants in, and emigrants from, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam: exploratory study
2. Preparing for epidemics of Emerging/re-emerging infectious and neglected tropical diseases in LMICS of south/south-east Asian region: challenges of delivering frontline (PHC) services in the context of Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA)
3. A comparative case study of integrated care for tuberculosis and diabetes in Bangladesh, China, and the Philippines: health system challenges & opportunities
4. Identifying strategies to enable greater use of health information systems data in the Asia-Pacific Region for policy making: Comparative case studies of China, Hong Kong, and the Philippines [and possibly 2 more if other partners can be identified]
5. The development and implementation of National Action Plans on Antimicrobial Resistance in Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, the Philippines, and Singapore: Challenges and Lessons learned for policy makers
6. An assessment of the current level of readiness at the meso level for delivering basic non-communicable disease (NCD) services: Comparative case studies of Cambodia, Vietnam and the Philippines
7. Effectiveness of national NCD control policy and implementation in Pacific Island states
8. Mobilization of domestic resources to finance universal health coverage – An assessment of current situation in Pacific Island Countries
9. Strengthening health systems by integrating care between hospitals and primary health care: Evidence from Asia Pacific countries
10. Integration of health services for older persons in the urban context: an analysis of practices in select countries in the Asia-Pacific region
11. Gender Equity in Access to Health in the Pacific: how do health systems in Fiji perform and what can we learn
12. Transitioning to digital health in low-middle income Pacific island countries and territories: A policy brief for health policymakers

ENGAGING WITH OUR AUDIENCE

New communication tools are being used by the APO to engage with our audience and reach out to new ones. Presentations based on APO publications, particularly those on the Health system in transition reviews (HiTs) are available to view on the new [APO SlideShare](#) account. Recordings of presentations, webinars and APO publications can now be watched on the APO's newly launched [YouTube Channel](#).



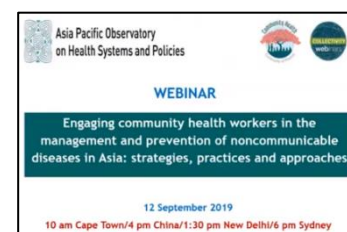
Click on the link to browse through the 14 presentations currently uploaded, and follow the [APO's new SlideShare Account](#)



YouTube Subscribe to the [APO's YouTube channel](#) here!

Other External engagements

Webinar: The APO, in collaboration with the [Community Health – Community of Practice](#), presented a webinar on *Engaging community health workers in the management and prevention of noncommunicable diseases in Asia: strategies, practices and approaches*. Nearly 300 people registered for the webinar which featured an engaging presentation on the way in which four Asian countries – Bangladesh, China, Nepal and Viet Nam – involve CHWs in the prevention and management of NCDs. [Watch the recording of the presentation here](#).



Conference Presentations:

2nd International Symposium on Community Health Workers: The APO will launch its policy brief [Use of community health workers to manage and prevent noncommunicable diseases: policy options based on the findings of the COACH study](#) at the 2nd International Symposium on Community Health Workers in November 2019. A **panel discussion** on the use of CHW to manage and prevent NCDs, followed by a **discussion** on using policy briefs to provide evidence to policy makers will also be held at the CHW Symposium. Dr. Nima will deliver a keynote speech on *'Paying for CHW's to do a good job. Why the reluctance?'*

International Trade and Health [ITH] Conference: Dr. Nima will present the work of the APO at the [International Trade and Health \[ITH\] Conference](#) scheduled to be held in November 2019. His presentation will focus on migrant health and the mutually recognized agreements for healthcare workers in ASEAN member states as examples of seeking common ground for achieving SDG targets within the ASEAN community.

Global Symposium on Health Workforce Accreditation and Regulation: Professor Peter Hill as the main author of the APO policy brief on [ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangements for doctors, dentists and nurses](#), will present findings from the brief at the 2019 [Global Symposium on Health Workforce Accreditation and Regulation](#) to be held in Istanbul from 10-12 December. Prof Hill will present results related to the regional educational standards for health professionals, and on issues of registration, licensing and mobility which are critical in understanding the mobility and migration of health professionals.