Addressing health inequalities through co-ordination with social protection systems: a perspective on social determinants of health

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International Seminar
Inequalities in access to health: the centrality of Primary Health Care to advance towards universal health
Wednesday, 19 July 2023
This presentation covers two topics

1. Socioeconomic inequalities are reflected in health systems and outcomes, and vice-versa

2. Overcoming these inequalities requires action beyond health and integrating health and social protection
SOCIOECONOMIC INEQUALITIES AND HEALTH – A TWO-WAY RELATIONSHIP
Health gains have been large on average, but gains have not been evenly shared

Spatial distribution of life expectancy at birth in men

Maps of cities with subcity units indicated. Categories are quintiles of life expectancy at birth in each city

Socioeconomic disparities drive health inequalities – under 5 mortality

Under age 5 mortality by education

Deaths per 1000 live births

Under age 5 mortality by income quintile

Deaths per 1000 live births

Source: Chao et al. Lancet Glob Health 2018; World Bank World Development Indicators 2022; Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) and Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS)
Similarly, geographical disparities translate into inequalities in access to basic health
In Chile, socioeconomic disparities are reflected into inequalities of risk factors, access & health outcomes.

Source: OECD (2019), Health for Everyone?: Social Inequalities in Health and Health Systems (link)
A two-way link: Ill-health also worsens economic prospects throughout an individual lifecycle

- **Young infants & children**
  - Cognitive development
  - Educational outcomes

- **Adolescents and Youth**
  - Core skills development
  - On-the-job-training

- **Adults**
  - Employment prospects
  - Wage prospects
  - Absence from work
  - Presenteeism

*intergenerational transmissions*
### Poor health damages labour market outcomes

#### Unemployment
- Unemployed in UK ~2x as likely to have long-standing illness/disability (UK Office for National Statistics 2012)
- Being unemployed further worsens mental health

#### Absence from work
- Across 15 OECD countries, 11 days lost per person in 2013
- Rates particularly high in Germany (18) & Norway (16)

#### Presenteeism
- Estimated to have cost US economy $150bn pa in early 2000s (Hemp 2004)
- Worse for those in mental ill-health

#### Lower wages
- Men in good health earn 8% more than peers in bad health, difference widens to 16% by age 64
- For women, gaps rise from 4% to 15% respectively

OVERCOMING THESE INEQUALITIES REQUIRES MULTIPRONGED ACTION
1. Stronger health systems, centred on primary care

Expenditure on Primary Health Care, 2019

Spending on primary health care services as a share of current health expenditure

- Outpatient generalist care
- Dental care
- Home care
- Preventive care

Percentage of total health expenditure

Mexico
OECD 28
Brazil
Colombia
Costa Rica
... and equipped with better data on what care delivers for people

PaRIS
Patient-Reported Indicators Surveys
2. Better integration of health and social services has multiple benefits: access, cost, quality

Integration of healthcare
- Patient-centeredness
- Care coordination
- Data integration
- Alignment of payment systems

Integration of health and other social services
- Vulnerable families
- Children and youth with mental health concerns
- Homelessness
- Long term care
How do we move forward?

1. Strengthen Governance
2. Financial integration
3. Patient centeredness
4. Data strategies
5. Use and develop evidence
3. A stronger focus on prevention: costs little and delivers a lot

Example: Preventing Overweight Is a Good Investment for OECD, EU 27 and G20 Countries

Return on investment: USD returned in GDP for every 1 USD invested in the intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Return on Investment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food advertising regulation</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food labelling</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass media campaign</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menu labelling</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile apps</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescribing physical activity</td>
<td>0.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>School programmes</td>
<td>0.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workplace sedentary</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace wellness</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications package</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed package</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical activity package</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Annual weighted average over 2020-2050, total for 31 countries. Source: OECD SPHeP NCD model & OECD ECO long term forecast model – oe.cd/obesity2019
Less than 3% of total health spending goes to disease prevention and health promotion.
4. **Access to care is part of the story:** Life expectancy gains associated with a 10% change in the main determinants of health...

Analysis based on 35 OECD countries for the time period 1995-2015

- ** ↑ Health spending**: 3.5
- ** ↓ Out-of-pocket spending**: 0
- ** ↓ Smoking**: 1.6
- ** ↓ Alcohol**: 1.0
- ** ↑ Healthy diet**: 0
- ** ↑ Income**: 2.2
- ** ↑ Education**: 3.2
- ** ↑ Unemployment**: 0
- ** ↓ Air pollution**: 0

*Source: OECD Health at a Glance 2017*
...but the policy response is often not balanced across sectors

- Health
- Income / social factors
  - Education, health-seeking behaviour
  - Unemployment, poor working conditions
  - Living environment
A better policy response delivers improved outcomes

- Health
  - Illness in childhood
  - Capacity to work
  - Costs of health care

- Income/social factors
  - Education, health-seeking behaviour
  - Unemployment, poor working conditions
  - Living environment

Costs of health care

Income/social factors

A better policy response delivers improved outcomes
Thank you

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OECD publications on the integration of healthcare and other social services

- OECD (2015), *Integrating Social Services for Vulnerable Groups: Bridging Sectors for Better Service Delivery* ([link](#))
- OECD (2022), *International comparisons of the quality and outcomes of integrated care: Findings of the OECD pilot on stroke and chronic heart failure* ([link](#))
- OECD (2022), *Integrating Services for Older People in Lithuania* ([link](#))
- OECD (2023), *Integrating local services for individuals in vulnerable situations* ([link](#))
- OECD (2023), *Integrating Care to Prevent and Manage Chronic Diseases: Best Practices in Public Health* ([link](#))

**Forthcoming:**
- Towards person-centred integrated care in Ireland - Aligning the health service workforce in Ireland with the needs of the person and population
- Community participatory processes, focused on equity in health, at local level (Basque country)
- Strategy for building synergy among health and social sector (Italy)
Recent OECD publications on Latin America

- OECD (2023), *Health at a Glance: Latin America and the Caribbean 2023* (link)
- OECD (2022) *Primary Health Care for Resilient Health Systems in Latin America* (link)